

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly. Vol. 16 No. 6a

We are Westmount

May 31, 2022

'Inconvenient but critical': Mayor Smith Major city work already begun on lanes, roads, buildings

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

With the start last week of the city's summer work on road reconstruction and other major infrastructure projects, Mayor Christina Smith laid out a summary overview and update, and explained the magnitude of the work that residents can expect before the winter.

"We are aware that some of these projects may cause some inconveniences," as well as being dusty and dirty, "but I can assure you we're not doing anything that isn't critical," she said.

While many of the projects had been announced as part of this year's \$26.5-million capital works budget and in the sub-

sequent awarding of contracts, it was when presented together that they provide a schedule and impact of the variety of work being undertaken

Public lanes

Work to rebuild and improve two public lanes has been under the radar, so to speak, except to those impacted. During this work begun May 23, "measures have been taken to limit the impact on waste collection and parking," Mayor Smith said.

The affected lanes are the one between Elm and Greene, and between 6 Springfield and 424 Metcalfe. For the former, the city will take the opportunity to "completely re-build" *continued on p. 20*



Family Day returns!

The city of Westmount's 45th annual Family Day took place in Westmount Park May 28 after a 3-year/2-event COVID hiatus. Ominous clouds passed by overhead most of the day, but there were only a few drops of rain at opening time, 10 am, and the main field was already crowded by 10:30 am. Above: three-and-a-half-year-old twins Martey (left) and Maple showed off their freshly spun cotton candy. For an aerial view of the event, see p. 26. There will be more coverage next week. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

Issue: Leaking irrigation pipe

Clay tennis courts in Westmount Park still not open

BY JENNIFER BALL

The Westmount tennis season started May 2, according to the spring 2022 Westmount Sports and Recreation activities guide that is currently available on the city's website. But tennis players and students are not yet able to smash, volley or lob on the clay courts in Westmount Park

near Lansdowne Ave.

Westmount resident Eleanore McNaughton, who has played tennis on those courts for five decades and whose mother has played since the 1950s, said there is a big difference between playing on hard courts and clay. "I can't play on the hard courts anymore," McNaughton said. "Many of" *continued on p. 10*



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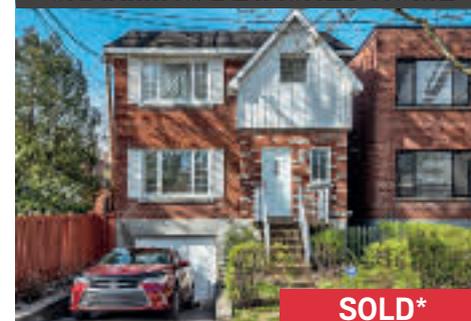
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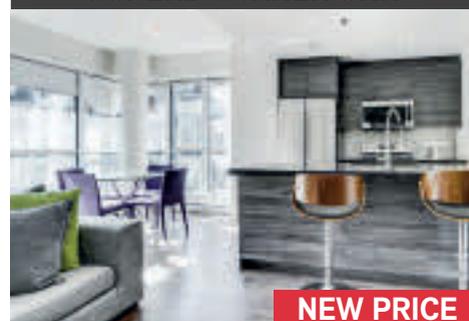
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Westmount Lives Remembering Patches the white squirrel

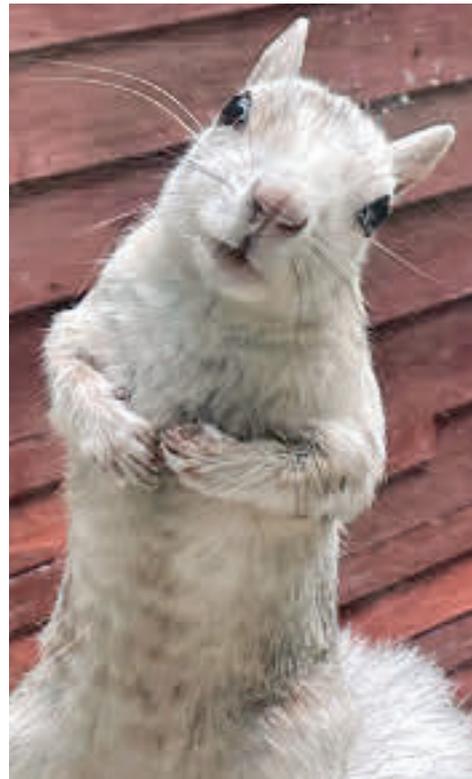
BY SORYL ROSENBERG, GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

It is with sadness that we announce the untimely death of “Patches.” She was the victim of a hit-and-run late Friday afternoon, May 20, outside her home on Côte St. Antoine Rd.

Twice featured in the *Westmount Independent*, she delighted hundreds of passers-by through the years.

Patches, a white squirrel and not an albino, lived to the exceptional age of four and a half years, much longer than the two- to three-year lifespan of the average Westmount squirrel.

Though slighter and less fluffy than



your average grey, her intelligence, perseverance and alacrity enabled her to outlive them all.

She endured the destruction of her home, twice, due to felling. She was pregnant every year, until this ultimate one. Some of her offspring did not survive her, and none were white, in case you were wondering.

Patches seemed well on her way to fully enjoying her fifth year when struck down. She is at rest, shaded by a crab-apple tree, under a bed of lilies of the valley.

For those who consider squirrels as only pests, rodents, rats with fluffy tails *et cetera...*, we can only say that you have not observed them enough to appreciate how intelligent, playful and clever they are. Most people focus solely on squirrels’ penchant for eating their flower bulbs – and not what wonderful tree pruners and lawn aerators they are.



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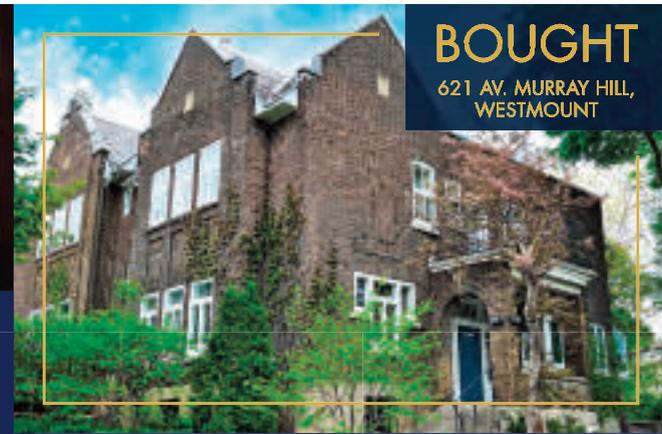


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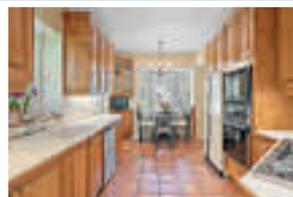


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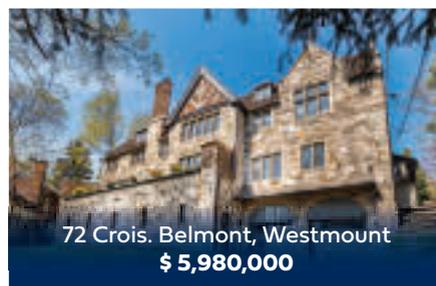
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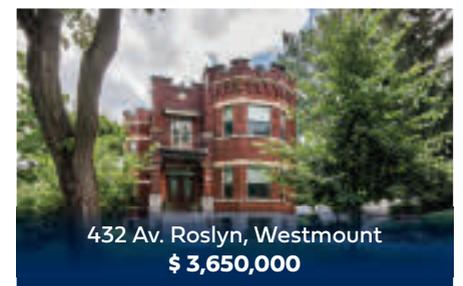
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Peak spring – late spring



Above, tulips May 14 in front of Victoria Hall; right, a heat-damaged magnolia on Arlington Ave. the same day.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FARIBA ABOLKHANI.



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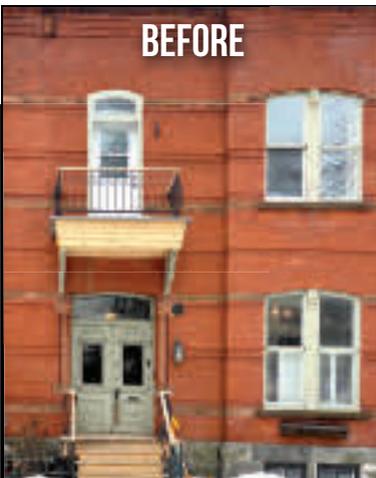
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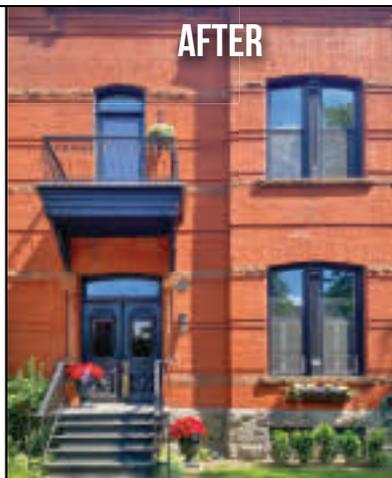
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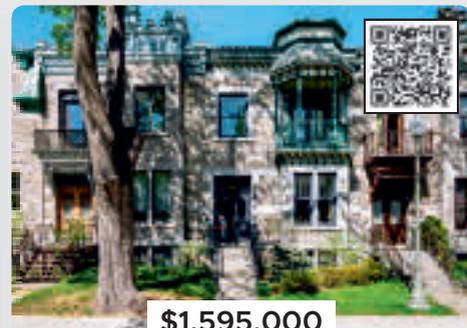
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DARK DAY IN QUEBEC

This press release was received May 24 from the Canadian Party of Quebec

This is a dark day in Quebec's history. This blatantly unconstitutional legislation [Bill 96] has unfortunately been passed by the Quebec National Assembly.

The bill will allow the denial of rights to health care and social services to English-speaking Quebecers and immigrants, encourage Quebecers to snitch on each other without recourse, permit OQLF [Office québécois de la langue française] inspectors to search and seize personal property for the crime of serving someone in English, and force organizations to deal with the government in French.

It will deny all Quebecers the basic recognition they deserve as full citizens, and wraps the entire bill in the provincial and Canadian notwithstanding clauses.

"Bill 96 will warp, distort and hinder all Quebecers in their daily lives. The constitutional amendment changes the framework for the entire country. We need to continue to advocate against this illegitimate bill, while taking the fights to our courts of law and the ballot box in October," said Colin Standish, spokesperson for the Canadian Party of Quebec.

We who oppose this abominable piece of legislation must find allies in the rest of Canada and the world, as our own government has abandoned us. Now we will fight

this law in the courts, in the media and in the streets in peaceful protest. We cannot let this insult to human rights and decency be allowed to take root in our society.

PROTECT GOODE HOUSE, PLEASE

The board of directors of the Westmount Historical Association would like to bring a major concern to your attention. On May 17, the owners of the Goode House at 178 Côte St. Antoine Rd. applied for a demolition permit that would seriously affect important elements of this historic home – the second oldest in Westmount.

The link to the demolition application is: westmount.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/178-Cote-Saint-Antoine.pdf

The link to the architects' presentation is: westmount.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/20220510_presentation_178CSA_Siteweb_final.pdf

The WHA newsletter of February 2021 featuring the Goode House can be found at: westmounthistorical.org/newsletters.

In 2020, the city of Westmount granted the Goode House a special heritage designation in By-Law 1552, which protected both the architecture and the landscape.

By-Law 1580 in 2021 made amendments to the original by-law, including the naming of six interior elements that are not to be altered. The residence is also classified as Category 1*, a designation that protects its exterior.



Image of the proposed addition at the back of the house at 178 Côte St. Antoine from the demolition application on city of Westmount's website, p. 13.

The proposed demolition work would adversely affect several areas that have full protection under these provisions, including:

- Creation of a new opening [door] on the west stone façade,
- Enlargement of the protected dining room windows on the rear façade into a door leading to a proposed addition,
- The construction of a large two-storey addition behind the house that would be linked to the original house through a proposed dining room door. The addition (as you can see from the architects' drawings in the presentation) is inappropriate in style and scale to this modest Greek Regency house. It would destroy the integrity of the heritage residence.

Speaking on behalf of the board, I urge Westmount residents to attend the public meeting of the Demolition Committee at 4 pm on Tuesday, June 14 at Westmount city hall. If you wish to oppose the proposed demolition, please send your comments to the city (email: legal@westmount.org). We hope to see many of you on June 14. The meeting will also be carried live on the city's website.

ANNE BARKMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE WESTMOUNT HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

WHEN WILL WESTMOUNT JOIN INDOOR-POOL COMMUNITY?

We've been patiently waiting for a meaningful response from the mayor and councillors regarding the urgent and long-standing need for an indoor swimming facility.

When will Westmount join enlightened communities like Pointe Claire, Dollard des Ormeaux, St. Henri, Dorval, NDG, Côte St. Luc, and many others?

BARBARA HOUGHTON GLASSMAN,
CÔTE ST. ANTOINE RD.

STOP STOPPING CARS

The level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere rose to a record level in April. The reduction of our carbon footprint must be society's top priority.

This is definitely not the case in the city of Westmount. I have lived here for 35 years and I'm appalled at the continuing lack of regard for smooth traffic circulation in our city.

Take a look back 30 years:

- Traffic lights were synchronized along Sherbrooke St. Today, there is very little synchronization. Take as an example when travelling east from Vendôme to Roslyn where you're stopped three times for lights at Claremont, Victoria

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount

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Police Report

Don't tempt burglars with open doors and windows, say police

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

While the rising temperatures of late spring can make leaving the windows or a side door open seem irresistible, a recent local home robbery should serve as a warning that burglars are always looking for opportunities.

Late during the evening of May 22, a suspect entered a home near Rosemount Crescent and Anwoth Rd. through a back entrance that had been left open and vulnerable to an intrusion.

One of the owners recalled later that the rear door may have been left unlocked after the garbage was taken out.

Taking advantage of the fact that an inner door was open and that only the outer screen door was locked, the perpetrator removed or cut the insect screen from the door frame, entered the kitchen and proceeded to steal a wallet and a laptop computer.

All the while, the occupants were at home, either sleeping or otherwise pre-occupied, said Station 12 constable Michel Yigit.

“Especially during the hot times, when people are opening up their windows, if

it's at ground-level, they should think twice,” he said.

Yigit said the home's owners only realized the next morning they'd been robbed, when an official from their bank phoned to report suspicious transactions, probably resulting from fraudulent use of credit cards that were in the stolen wallet.

He had another piece of advice to safeguard against being robbed at home: Don't leave valuables like wallets or laptops lying about in plain sight to anyone outside.

Similarly, car keys shouldn't be stowed in a spot near the front door, since they're likely to be the first thing burglars see after entering.

Borrowed, stolen

The *modus operandi* used by a vehicle thief on the evening of May 22 seemed straightforward enough.

“Mind if I take it for a ride?” the suspect asked after complimenting the owner of an electric scooter who was making his way along de Maisonneuve near Alexis Nihon Plaza.

After the owner agreed, that was the last he saw of the thief and his electric bike.

Guide to restaurants, many services also posted

Accessibility plan for 2022 lists goals to improve services

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's 2022 Action Plan Concerning Persons with Disabilities outlines a number of goals for improving the well-being and participation in daily activities of an estimated 4,500 people in Westmount who would benefit from the report's recommendations.

This excludes parents pushing a stroller, or those whose mobility is temporarily limited, according to this year's report tabled by city council May 16.

Required by the Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, this annual report has reverted to its original name from last year's reference to “universal accessibility.”

Mayor Christina Smith, in an introduction to this year's report, describes it as “a planning tool for reducing barriers that prevent the full participation of persons with disabilities in social, professional and educational life.”

The 2022 report integrates some of the recommendations from the city's 2021 Accessibility Advisory Committee, which wound up its mandate last fall. Other suggestions from the committee are described as “to be considered in the context of future

programs and policies.”

Among this year's goals are to better educate the public and city employees about universal accessibility and make them more aware of Public Security's Vulnerable Persons Registry or the Good Morning Westmount service for assistance to persons, especially those living alone.

Also seen as required is making the city's website more accessible to persons with visual incapacities.

In the same vein is finding a means to make call buttons easier to find at pedestrian street crossings and to test apps compatible with smartphones for use by those needing to find their way in Westmount's parks.

The full 2022 report includes an appendix listing many city and community resources of interest to the general population as well a separate Access Westmount Guide to numerous buildings such as banks, schools, pharmacies, restaurants, grocers and places of worship.

All can be found on the city's website at Community Life/environment and sustainability/accessibility.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

and Lansdowne.

- Pedestrian crosswalks were activated manually. Today, all major intersections have crosswalks that run on every cycle for 15 to 27 seconds regardless of the presence of pedestrian traffic and most frustratingly 24 hours a day. More automatic crosswalks are added every year.
- Traffic lights in school zones were active only during school hours; today they're on 24/7.

Our elected representatives must make it a top priority to reduce the number of vehicles waiting at traffic lights. The following policies should be adopted this year to move towards this goal:

- Install traffic sensors that will activate a red light only when there's cross traffic at intersections with minimal traffic. An example where this works very efficiently is Granville St. in Vancouver.
- Convert most pedestrian crosswalks to manual activation other than those with large volumes.
- Synchronize the lights on major thoroughfares. The Town of Mount Royal has successfully done this on Rockland Ave. Council has frequently committed

to this goal but I've seen no results,

- Do not add any more traffic lights or automatic pedestrian crosswalks in our city.

Each and every one of us has an obligation to make this planet a safer place to live. Hindering traffic circulation runs counter to this all-important goal.

JONATHAN SIGLER, LEXINGTON AVE.

WHERE'S THE LOW-COST HOUSING AT ST. STEPHEN'S?

Open letter to Mayor Christina Smith & city councillors Conrad Peart and Anitra Bostock

I was disappointed to read the story by Laureen Sweeney in the May 24 *Westmount Independent* about the former St. Stephen's Church project (May 24, p. 1).

Unless the reporting was deficient, there is apparently no provision for any low-cost housing in this project. If so, it is an instance of abject failure on the part of our municipal government to insist that this much-needed aspect of city planning be included in this rather public project.

As the wealthiest city per capita in

Canada, we especially need to act to ensure housing affordability in Westmount.

Failure to do so only guarantees better incomes for our flashy real estate agents and exclusion of families that cannot afford a million-dollar home.

Westmount needs to show leadership. I am disappointed and ashamed of my city's Planning Advisory Committee and of council's support for the present plan.

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June 19
- June 26
2022

SEGALCENTRE.ORG



The clay courts in Westmount Park are located south of the city of Westmount's greenhouses and the library, as seen May 24.

Westmount Park's clay courts, cont'd from p. 1

the people I play with now can't play on the hard courts either because it's much harder on your joints."

Another Westmount tennis player who has played on the clay courts for decades and lives a short distance from the park said "there was a snow-plow operation on the clay courts this past winter. They dumped snow there and left it.

"The courts need to be taken care of properly and especially rolled," said the tennis player.

David Lapointe, director of Sports and Recreation at the city of Westmount, was very surprised to hear that snow dumping had occurred. "But regardless, even if it did happen, that would have nothing to do with the delay in the opening," he said.

Towards the end of the tennis season last year, Lapointe said that they had re-

done the irrigation lines for the courts. "When we turned the water system on, there was a leak, so we had to find the leak first of all, repair that leak, turn the water back on and then there was another leak..."

Lapointe said that they are now waiting on the contractor who does the surfacing and the maintenance of the tennis courts, which is Jopat Inc.

Lapointe could not provide a re-opening date as they had expected it to be the Victoria Day long weekend.

Clay tennis courts require special maintenance, including cleaning and watering the court regularly and proper drainage, something that McNaughton believes is not being done effectively. "The maintenance has deteriorated," McNaughton said. "They need to drench the courts after everyone's gone and they don't do that."

If McNaughton had the ear of Jopat Inc.'s maintenance crew, which also services Tennis Canada and a West Island tennis club, she would tell them that "watering, cleaning the courts regularly, fixing the lights over the courts, getting screens to cut the wind and also getting new nets" would be the way to go, but "each year, there seems to be a problem with when they are actually going to open."

In 2021, clay court tennis players experienced dust clouds due to the dryness of the courts after the ball was struck and when it landed. "It was disgraceful to be breathing in the grout and the grit into your lungs," McNaughton said.

Coiffure Jean John

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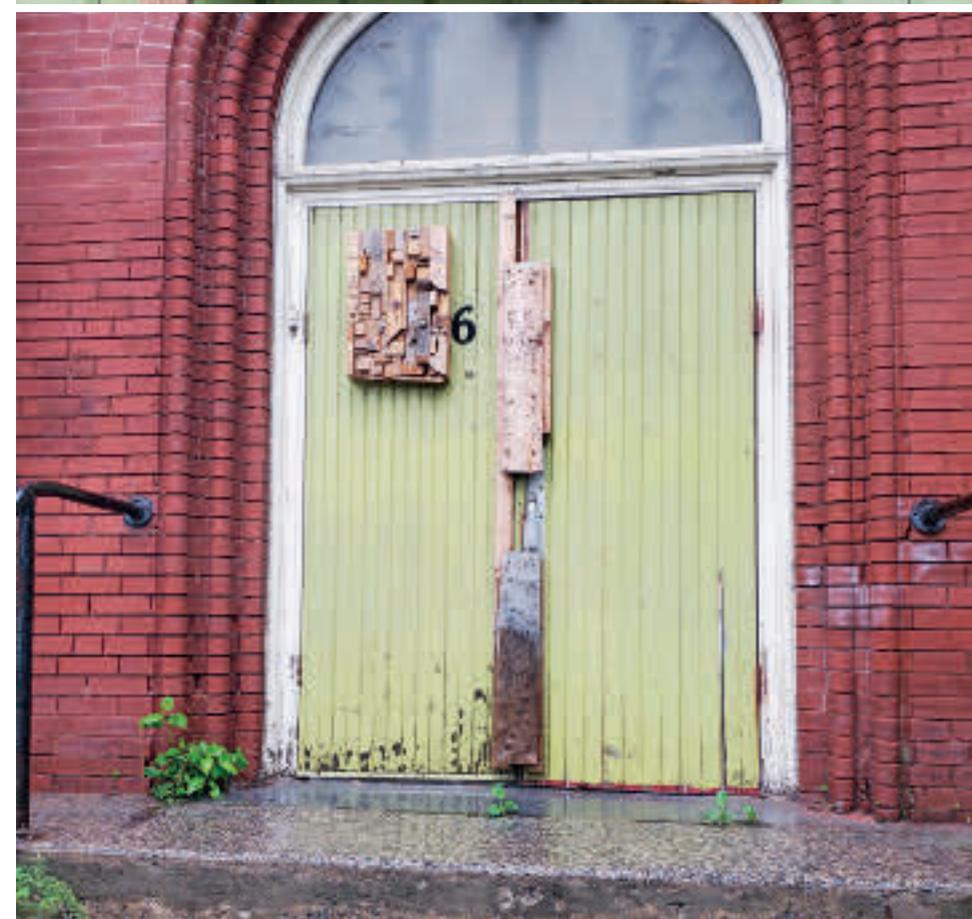
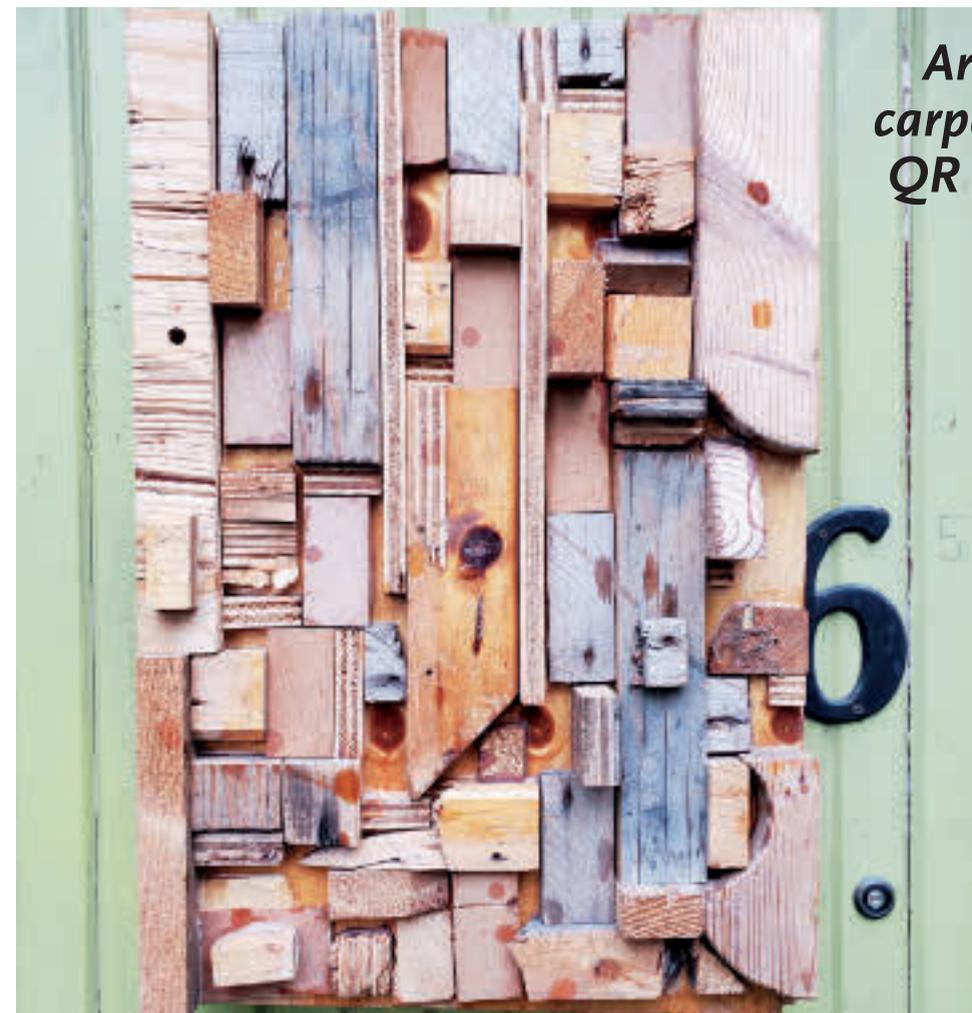
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*Art, or
carpenter's
QR code?*



These two wooden installations seem one part art; one part ID. The one at left is attached to the front door of the former St. Stephen' Church at Dorchester and Atwater, as seen May 19; the one at right on the south side of St. Catherine near Abbott, as seen May 20.



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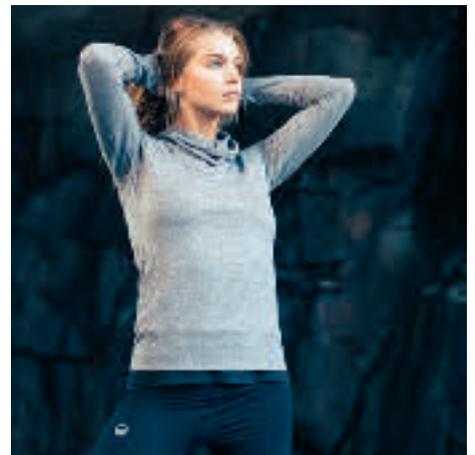
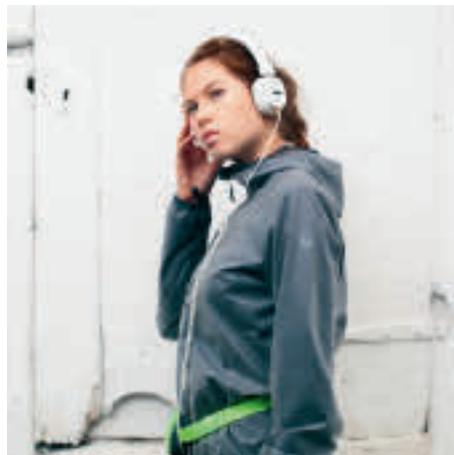
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'Movie music' in Westmount Park



Westmount's Community Events department and The Study presented "a wonderful concert" to over 135 people in Westmount Park May 25, assistant Westmount Public Library director Donna Lach told the *Independent* by email the next day. Entitled "Movie Music in the Park," The Study's senior concert band played music from movies like *Shrek*, *The Incredibles*, *Toy Story* and *Up*.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MÉLISSA DENIS-DAIGNEAULT/CITY OF WESTMOUNT.

Fire on Olivier Ave. May 24



Two firetrucks and five firefighters attended to a fire at 358 Olivier Ave. on May 24. The fire started in the kitchen at approximately 6.15 pm and the smoke alarm went off to alert residents. A firefighter on the scene told the *Independent* that "the fire was not a big concern. It just created lots and lots of smoke, and no one was hurt."

PHOTO: JENNIFER BALL

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About last month: was that May or July?



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Guido Molinari, *Série noir/blanc (1967)*

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June 15th, 2022

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The Westmount Lawn Bowling & Croquet Club wishes to encourage seniors to pursue a more active lifestyle, through our **free**

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Rappel :

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When:
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Remember:

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A SELECTION OF OUR FINE RESIDENCES

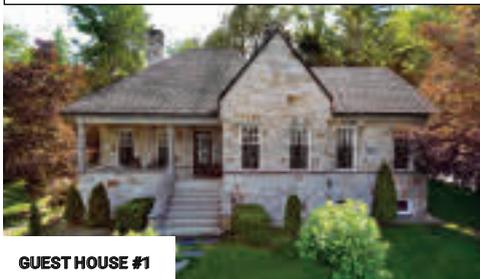
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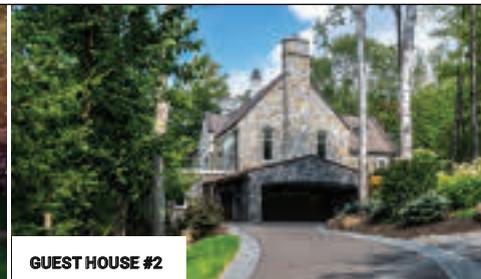
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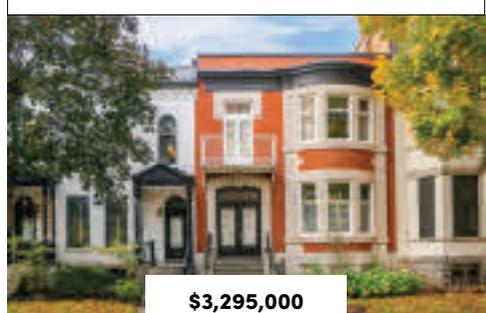


GUEST HOUSE #2



GUEST HOUSE #3 | CARETAKER'S HOUSE

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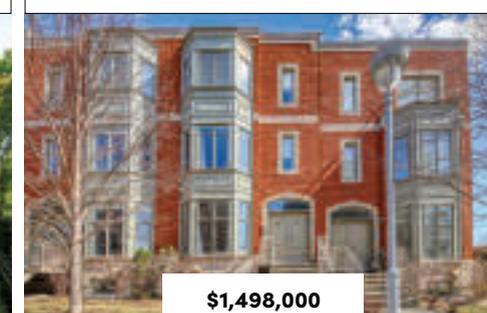
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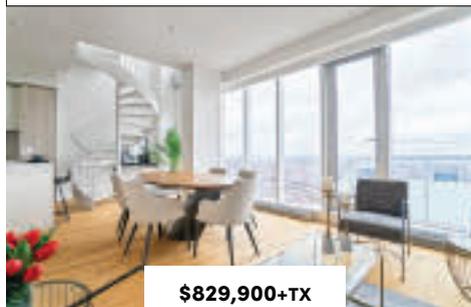
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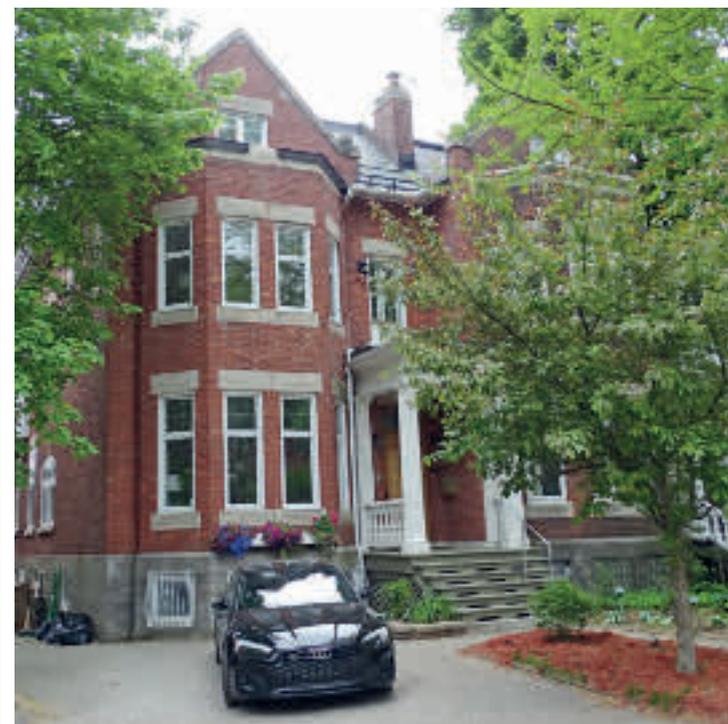
Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

January transfers: About average for houses – Near-record condo sale



3207 The Boulevard on May 26.



198 Côte St. Antoine Rd. on May 26.

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Note: The following article relates to the registration of deeds of sale for Westmount property in January 2022, gleaned from city and non-city sources. A list of sales can be found on p. 19.

Westmount real estate sales registered in January this year indicated a relative lack of movement in term of prices and mark-ups, as 10 one- and two-family dwellings sold for an average \$2,268,750 and an average mark-up over valuation of 29.7 percent, compared to an average \$2,577,152 for all of last year and an average mark-up of 31.2 percent.

The 10 sales in January compares to an average 9.7 sales for the previous 10 Janu-

aries.

Only one of the 10 sales was higher than \$3 million, as 3207 The Boulevard changed hands for \$5,800,000, and five of the sales involved prices less than \$2 million, pulling down the median January price to \$1,900,000, but if the average mark-up is applied to the city's average valuation, the "typical" Westmount home would have sold in January for just over \$2.5 million, roughly the same as the average for all of last year.

The lowest price for a house in January turned out to offer the highest mark-up over municipal valuation; 421 Claremont Ave. – just *continued on p. 27*



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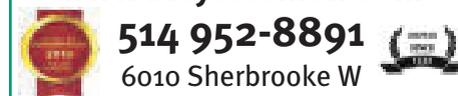


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Bought & Sold – real estate transfers in January 2022

ADDRESS	VENDOR	PRICE	2020 VAL	RATIO (%)
492 Argyle	Aaron Ostrega	\$2,100,000	\$1,616,100	29.9%
3207 The Boulevard	Eden Polansky	\$5,800,000	\$4,555,000	27.3%
381 Claremont	Gestion Joanna Lussier Inc.	\$1,565,000	\$1,195,100	31.0%
421 Claremont	Katayoun Khatami & Danistan Saverimuthu	\$1,295,000	\$744,200	74.0%
198 Côte St. Antoine	Erik Showbridge & Yoanna Skrobik	\$2,400,000	\$2,231,500	7.6%
513 Grosvenor	Jaspal Ranghi & Gulvinder Dhillon	\$1,700,000	\$1,425,900	19.2%
693 Grosvenor	Tanya di Genova & Amin Andalib	\$2,762,500	\$2,041,800	35.3%
252 Prince Albert	David Graham & Katrina Montgomery	\$1,475,000	\$964,100	53.0%
4291 Sherbrooke	David Joanisse & Nadine Fournier	\$2,120,000	\$1,603,100	32.2%
DUPLEXES				
4633-33A Sherbrooke	Ling Ling Zhong & Licun Xue	\$1,470,000	\$1,110,500	32.4%
APARTMENT-TYPE CONDOMINIUMS				
343 Clarke #7	Nahad Karim	\$380,000	\$286,400	32.7%
1250 Greene #501	Robert Elvidge & Louise Browning	\$4,850,000	\$3,609,500	34.4%
200 Lansdowne #401	estate Carol Asner Schreiber	\$900,000	\$853,000	5.5%
295 Victoria #202	Denis Bernard	\$752,000	\$590,700	27.3%
DUPLEX-TYPE CONDOMINIUMS				
556 Grosvenor	Anik Paquet	\$1,140,000	\$863,500	32.0%

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Major work, cont'd from p. 1

the lane during “necessary work” by Hydro Westmount. For the latter lane, “we will rebuild the concrete slab.”

Sunnyside, Lexington

Started May 23 for two weeks was a final phase of last year’s road work on Sunnyside between Upper Bellevue and Belvedere Rd. This is to involve a final layer of asphalt and “correcting some deficiencies.”

One of the most expensive and longest road projects, the re-construction of Lexington, including water, sewer and electrical networks over some three years, is slated to wrap up this summer with a \$6-million road replacement. This third phase began last week.

“We are listening to the various concerns of residents in the area and I can assure you that the city will do everything in its power to limit these inconveniences and maintain constant and transparent communication with residents,” Mayor Smith said.

Restoring, updating buildings, landmarks

There will be continued work to update the mechanical rooms in the basement of the Westmount Public Library and Victoria Hall as well as a major project to restore the wood frame and leaded glass windows at city hall and “rehabilitate the clock.” The

roof of the lawn bowling clubhouse is also to be replaced.

The “work is almost done” to restore the heritage greenhouse – the conservatory – which has been closed since 2015 for safety concerns. It is expected to possibly open to the public in the coming month. Meanwhile, work to repair the summit lookout will enable it to be open to the public after a year’s closure for safety reasons.

Terrasses

Benches and other features will return again to Greene Ave. as well as the west-end commercial district on Sherbooke and Victoria while a new area is being created on de Maisonneuve in front of Dawson College.

Parks and greenspaces

Among park work is the start “today” (May 16) of a five-year plan to restore the “urban forest” of King George Park, Mayor Smith said. “Many trees have outlived their natural lifespan, have been irreversibly damaged by invasive insects, are dead and impose a real problem for users of the park. The work includes pruning, felling in some cases and replanting.

“Repairs will be made to various ponds and water features,” she added without detailing which ones.

Work on the black locust trees of King George (Murray) Park is under way, as seen May 25 near Murray Ave.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.



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Mardi 7 juin

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL
MEETING

Tuesday, June 7

**Horaire d'été en vigueur**

Du 24 mai au 26 août 2022, l'horaire des bureaux municipaux de Westmount est modifié comme suit :

du lundi au jeudi : 8 h à 16 h 30
vendredi : 8 h à 13 h

Hôtel de ville ouvert

Pendant les travaux de rénovation, les deux entrées demeurent accessibles et tous les services sont disponibles.

Plan d'action du parc King George

La Ville a entamé la première phase de son plan d'action de 5 ans pour l'intervention ou le remplacement de certains arbres du parc King George. engage.westmount.org.

Piscine extérieure ouverte

Les réservations ne sont plus nécessaires, sauf pour la baignade en longueur en matinée.

Bois Summit : chiens en laisse

Du 16 avril au 15 juin, les chiens au bois Summit doivent être tenus en laisse EN TOUT TEMPS.

Abreuvoirs fermés au parc Westmount

En raison de travaux sur le réseau d'eau de l'avenue Arlington, certains des abreuvoirs du parc Westmount seront temporairement fermés à partir du 26 mai. westmount.org

Fermeture temporaire des courts de tennis en terre battue au parc Westmount

Les courts de tennis en terre battue pour adultes au parc Westmount sont fermés pour des travaux d'entretien. Ils rouvriront dès que possible. westmount.org

Inscriptions pour les activités d'été

Inscrivez-vous maintenant pour les activités de sports et loisirs, le camp d'été, le tennis et les activités aquatiques. westmount.org

**Summer schedule in effect**

From May 24 to August 26, 2022, the schedule for Westmount's municipal offices is modified as follows:

Monday to Thursday: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday : 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

City Hall open

During the renovation work, both entrances will remain accessible and all services will be available.

King George Park action plan

The City has begun the first phase of its 5-year plan for the intervention in or replacement of certain trees in King George Park. Find out more: engage.westmount.org.

Outdoor pool open

Reservations are no longer required, except for the morning lap swim.

Dogs on leash at Summit Woods.

From April 16 to June 15, dogs in Summit Woods must be kept on leash AT ALL TIMES.

Temporary closure of water fountains at Westmount Park

Due to water work on Arlington Avenue, some of the water fountains in Westmount Park will be temporarily closed as of May 26. westmount.org

Temporary closure of Tennis Clay Courts at Westmount Park

The adult clay tennis courts at Westmount Park are temporarily closed for repairs and maintenance. The courts will reopen as soon as possible. westmount.org

Registration for summer activities

Sign up now for sports and recreation activities, as well as summer camp, tennis, and swimming. westmount.org

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Reprise de l'horaire régulier d'été

À partir du 6 juin, la Bibliothèque sera ouverte du lundi au vendredi, 10 h-21 h et le samedi, 10 h-17 h. Visitez westlib.org pour l'horaire en cours. La Bibliothèque sera fermée les 22 et 23 mai.

StoryWalk® : Sentier de Munsch

Parc Westmount. Découvrez le livre *Tout plein de câlins*, écrit par Robert Munsch et illustré par Michael Martchenko. westlib.org

Exposition jeunesse

Du 27 mai au 15 juin, Galerie du Victoria Hall. Des oeuvres d'étudiants de Westmount, en collaboration avec le concours d'écriture McEntyre.

Concert : On jase-tu?

Samedi 4 juin, 11 h, parc Westmount, près de la Bibliothèque. La Ville invite les aînés à prendre un thé ou un café au parc Westmount et pour assister à un concert en plein air mettant en vedette Gary White. Il interprétera des grands succès des années 50, 60 et 70. westmount.org.

Conférence : Des hommes, des rois et des palais

Mercredi 8 juin, 14 h, Bibliothèque. Avec Sylvie Coutu, historienne de l'art. Une incursion au cœur des projets architecturaux de quelques grands rois du siècle romantique (19e). Inscription requise. westlib.org

**Duo Cello DeRosa : un concert pour l'âme**

Mercredi 8 juin, 19 h, Victoria Hall. À travers musique et extraits littéraires, le pianiste Enzo De Rosa interprétera ses compositions originales inspirées par les grands auteurs de la littérature, accompagné de Dimitri Babich au violoncelle. Inscription requise. westlib.org.

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Return to regular summer hours

From June 6, the Library will be open Monday to Friday 10 a.m.-9 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Consult westlib.org for the current schedule. The Library will be closed May 22 and 23.

Munsch StoryWalk®

Westmount Park. Discover the book *Hugs*, written by Robert Munsch and illustrated by Michael Martchenko. westlib.org

Youth exhibition

May 27 to June 15, Gallery at Victoria Hall. Works by Westmount students, in collaboration with the McEntyre Writing Competition.

Concert: On jase-tu?

Saturday, June 4, 11 a.m., Westmount Park, near the Library. The City invites seniors to Westmount Park for tea, coffee, and an outdoor concert of classic songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s featuring Gary White. westlib.org

Lecture: Des hommes, des rois et des palais

Wednesday, June 8, 2 p.m., Library. With Sylvie Coutu, art historian. An exploration of the architectural projects of some of the great kings of the 19th-century Romantic era (in French). Registration required. westlib.org

Duo Cello DeRosa: A Concert for the Soul

Wednesday, June 8, 7 p.m., Victoria Hall. Through music and literary excerpts, pianist Enzo De Rosa will perform his original compositions inspired by the literary greats, accompanied by Dimitri Babich on cello. Registration required. westlib.org

Skateboards for Hope arrive, leave from The Study

BY JENNIFER BALL

Betty Esperanza is the founder and president of the Westmount-based non-profit Skateboards for Hope, which seeks to break the cycle of poverty by recycling and donating skateboards to youth in global, low-income communities.

Jacqueline Hayes-Babczak is a grade 11 student at The Study girls' school. She was impressed by Esperanza's achievements and led a school project where 21 hand-painted boards were produced to inspire future boarders.

Skateboards for Hope initiates actionable projects such as developing workshops about inclusion and anti-bullying, which in turn aim to generate philanthropic community engagement.

"I think it is a wonderful organization," Hayes-Babczak said. It is amazing that she has "been able to send so many skateboards around the world and change so many kids' lives. I was really inspired by it so I reached out to her and I found out that we could do this at school. I asked my art teacher Ms. Cynthia van Frank if we could bring it to school and it was a success.

"I really hope that they get into the

hands of children and they change their life and bring communities together."

Hayes-Babczak's muse was graffiti art so her board is in black and white that features road signs and strikes one as being in a Keith Haring style.

Two grade 10 students, Gloria Yang and Vivian Chui, were happy to discuss the genesis of their artworks.

Street art for street vehicle

Yang was very excited by the project because she always wanted to make street art. "At the time, I was having a really hard time doing all the homework. It was really stressful, so I created a design of a man who is trying to create something but he is having a really hard time," Yang said.

"The message here is that sometimes you have to really push yourself a little bit in order to create something great. I am making a change in my community and I hope I can really inspire somebody, so they can see the message of the skateboard."

Chui felt honoured to be in a project that allows her to make something with her "own hands that could end up in the hands of someone who could actually make a change in their life." Her art rep-

resents "an open mouth, metaphorically: to speak up about social injustices," she said.

Esperanza was touched by the efforts of the students but not surprised since the driving motto of the school is "the world needs great women."

Students 'took it to heart'

"They took it to heart," Esperanza said. "They are being empathetic about another child's needs and I think that act is what humanity is about. These are amazing girls and they will grow up to be amazing women, who will probably impact society in their own way. They are already doing it now."

Esperanza is currently evaluating who will receive the boards. The non-profit has 2,000 skateboards to distribute this summer and the cost to transport them was on her mind. "It has nearly tripled," she said.

She has ambassadors in Uganda, Scotland, Brazil, India and Cuba, to name just a few countries. "We do not want to just give [them] out locally. We want to continue despite the cost of fuel these days," she said.



Betty Esperanza.



◀ Vivian Chui. Jacqueline Hayes-Babczak. ▶
All photos taken at The Study on May 25.

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Greene Ave. language dispute: A question of politeness or language?

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

While some are calling it a “tempest in a coffee cup,” exacerbated perhaps by the passing of Quebec’s Bill 96, an angry exchange between a Greene Ave. bakery owner and an English-speaking patron was enough to draw the attention last week of Montreal’s leading French-language talk-radio host and the *Journal de Montréal*.

Elaine Harris tells the *Independent* she had gone to meet a friend at the Brioche Dorée, where they ordered two coffees and a sandwich while speaking in English to the waiter serving their table.

Several moments later, according to her account, two more friends came in, ordered food, came over to talk, and maintained that the proprietor had refused to address them in English.

“I left my seat, approached the owner and said, ‘Je parle le français assez couramment. Mais ma langue maternelle est anglais. C’est vrai que tu parles seulement en français ici?’” Harris said in an e-mail she shared widely with friends.

“In French, he said, ‘Yes. That we live here in this country, pointing his finger at me and said, ‘Here we speak French only.’”

Harris said that before leaving the shop, she again approached the owner and told him she was a third-generation Québécoise and Canadian “and that I spoke English at home. I told him the beauty of our city was the fact that the two languages were interchangeable.

“He told me he didn’t care! I said: ‘Many of your clients here on Greene Ave. speak English and you will lose them.’ And he said, ‘Good. I don’t need them!!!’” In the e-



Greene Ave. Brioche Dorée franchise owner Jérôme Moutonnet, is seen here outside the shop on May 25.

mail she sent out, Harris said she was asking friends “to join her in boycotting the shop,” while suggesting some alternative cafés and restaurants on Greene.

After her message went viral on several social media platforms, Jérôme Moutonnet, owner of the Greene Ave. franchise, felt he wanted to set the record straight. His was one of several letters sent by e-mail to the *Independent* by individuals on both sides of the dispute.

“The idea of discriminating along lines of language, ethnicity, gender, country of origin or anything else is not only wrong,

but also abhorrent to us,” he wrote. “While the majority of our customers are respectful and pleasant, every once in a while, someone is not,” he added.

In his recounting of the incident, Moutonnet maintained that “a client came in and bought something to eat. She was asked, in French, if she would like it warmed. She snapped asking why I wasn’t answering her in English. I was taken aback by her tone and was genuinely insulted as she was being disrespectful. I responded by saying that we could speak either language. And then she walked out. That’s it.”

In an interview, Harris stuck to her version of events. “We all heard him say, ‘C’est mon pays et ici nous parlons le français,’” she said. Rhoda Pinsky, one of the women who was with her in the shop, confirmed what Harris said. “I heard him say, ‘C’est mon pays et il faut parler français,’” she said.

For his part, Moutonnet said in an interview that he didn’t deny everything the women claimed was said during the exchange, but that it was misconstrued to turn it into a language dispute when it’s actually about courtesy and respect.

But he acknowledged that after being questioned by Harris as to why he wasn’t addressing her in her own language, he responded in French, “Because basically I don’t have to.” He said the issue wasn’t the language being used, but rather how Harris chose to deal with it.

While insisting the issue had little to do with language or politics, Moutonnet pointed out that under the newly-amended Charter of the French Language, French is the language of work, commerce and business in Quebec, and retailers have the right to carry out their activities in French.

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In bike retail, issue is 'When?'

Martin Swiss Cycles confronts inflation, shipping issues

BY JENNIFER BALL

Martin Swiss Cycles has been in operation since 1937 and even two years into the venture – at the start of World War II – manager Steve Dennis doubts there were as many factors impeding growth as there have been since the start of this year.

"To order a bike now it could take a year," said Dennis, and this is despite the fact that they order a year and a half in advance for their finished stock and parts.

"The consumer on the other side of our counter just wants to buy a bike and they want to buy it now – not at the end of the year or in two years – but that is the way it is going," Dennis said.

He says the problem is shipping containers, manufacturing, raw materials and delivery issues, all thrown together in a mixing bowl.

"We have never experienced this before and I hope we will never experience it again. Especially in Westmount, where you pay so much per square foot, then you have

the salaries for your staff and you are lucky if you are breaking even."

According to Dennis, the shop is "a six-month business" and the rest of the year they "are starving." He is not even putting price tags on bikes in the store now because "they are changing daily. So, if you come in and buy a bike today, tomorrow the price has gone up. It is not the store raising the price. It is the company raising the price on us."

Great 2020, then less good

The sales metrics he shared with the *Independent* indicate that in the first year of COVID (2020), they doubled their sales. The second year (2021) was a good year but "nothing special" and Dennis is predicting 2022 will be worse.

They can't adjust for local inflation or a weak Canadian dollar because the bike manufacturers dictate to them what price-point they need to sell the bikes for, Dennis explained. These include makers of 3T, Cannondale, Electra, Trek and Kona bikes.

Out of all the brands, Trek has been the most reliable partnership, Dennis said. "They were the best deliverer of bikes throughout this whole pandemic. Many of the other brands have not been able to tell you when they're coming or what is happening, so it's been difficult for the stores to sell them."

With Trek, he said, he has been able to put a name beside the bike, get an accurate date of delivery and inform the customer. "That has been a positive."

A sign on the outside of the store indicates that Martin Swiss is recruiting for qualified bike mechanics and while Dennis did not have to shorten store hours during the pandemic, he had to lengthen the time that he told customers that the tune-up on their bike would be ready.

"We are seeing about a two-week wait right now," he said.



Steve Dennis, manager of Martin Swiss Cycles, located on Victoria Ave. near de Maisonneuve on May 17.

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Family Day, from the air

Westmount Park on May 28. See p. 1 for more information and another photo. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

Handsome Harrison



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER



Harrison is showing you his little kitty living space at the Montreal SPCA cattery, looking and hoping you will come for him and take him home with you. He is a most elegant grey longhair with golden eyes, very caring and affectionate.

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If you would like more information on stunning Harrison, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, scroll to his information page from his

identification number 50186012 and click on the square red “Book a visit” button that links you to the adoption counsellor information questionnaire to book a visit at the shelter at your convenience.

Please remember to bring a cat carrier and, if you do not have one, not to worry, as you can drop by the animal care boutique at the shelter and find the best one for his size.

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LYSANNE FOWLER

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He is quite young still, so he will be in the process of socialization, enjoying calm dog buddies, learning about cats who rule the world, training and exercise activities. Yes, there is plenty to adapt to in the safety of a bonded family.

If you would like more info on cutest Bosco, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, then scroll to Bosco’s information page under his identification number 49959912, click on the



square red “Book a visit” button, fill out the online information application form presented by the adoption coordinator group, then schedule a visit with them when the family can come by as a group, people and pets, to ensure all members are part of the adoption process.

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Ascension of Our Lord raises \$1.9 million



From left, Martha Bélanger, Kevin Reynolds and Paul Dingle leaf through an illustrated donation book following a mass on May 22.

PHOTO: MARTIN C. BARRY

The final tally of a multi-year capital campaign by the Ascension of Our Lord Church on Sherbrooke was revealed May 22 – \$1.9 million (including \$176,000 from the Conseil du Patrimoine Religieux du Québec).

The campaign started with a goal of \$1 million (see May 10, p. 9).

Church officials launched the campaign

in May 2019 in order to repair a leaking belltower, replace linoleum flooring below church pews and other renovations.

Parishioners attended an inaugural concert last May 29 to mark the official unveiling of the church's refurbished Casavant Opus 1344 organ, which was paid for with part of the money raised in the fundraising campaign.

Dodge: January transfers, cont'd from p. 18

above Sherbrooke St. – sold for \$1,295,000, which was actually 74 percent above the 2020 valuation. The next-highest mark-up, at 53 percent, came in the \$1,475,000 sale of 252 Prince Albert Ave., but those were the only two January mark-ups over 35 percent.

The lowest mark-up involved a semi-detached house at 198 Côte St. Antoine Rd., near the corner of Mount Stephen Ave., which sold for \$2,400,000, less than 8 percent above its municipal evaluation. That was the only mark-up of a one- or two-family dwelling any lower than 19 percent.

Condos

Five condominiums – four apartments and one floor of a former duplex – sold for prices ranging from \$380,000 for a unit at 343 Clarke Ave. to \$4,850,000 for a fifth-floor apartment at 1250 Greene Ave, corner de Maisonneuve Blvd.

In fact, these extreme prices are just that: we have only one record of a Westmount condominium price higher than \$4 million, while the \$380,000 was the lowest price paid for a condo since May 2018. The Greene condo sale is only topped by one at 1 Wood for \$4,895,000 (see January 13, 2015, p. 16).

No commercial properties or apartment buildings were included in the January list of sales



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Children’s ball ‘first out of gate’ with \$1.1-million fundraiser



Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE



Roberto Di Giorgio, Marie Di Maso, Chantal Carrier and Louis Vachon.

Many event venues have remained unshaken and unstirred for a tediously long time. But finally fundraising evenings are being held again.

First out of the starting gate on May 12 was the Bal des Tannants (loosely translated: “Brats’ Ball”) for The Children’s, because “a bratty kid is a healthy kid.” How amusing is this approach!

It celebrated “the mischievous nature of children, while raising funds to help get young patients back on their feet and bursting with energy.”

Over 500 guests attended this 21st edition of The Montreal Children’s Foundation ball. The fun invitation to the black-tie eve suggested that guests add a little something to “display their bratty side.”

In keeping with the theme, **Armando Arruda** and **Baptiste Peupion** of RE Le Traiteur and Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth created a playfully delicious menu.

Attending from the foundation were **Renée Vézina**, president, and **Katrin Nakashima**, board chair, as well as **Dr. Pierre Gfeller**, executive director of the MUHC.

Ball co-presidents were **Louis Vachon**, former CEO of the National Bank, and operating partner of J.C. Flowers & Co., with his wife **Chantal Carrier**, and **Roberto Di Giorgio**, president ALRE Properties Inc. and his wife **Dr. Marie Di Maso**, president DGDM Family Foundation.

Noted guests included the honorable **Yves Fortier**, honorary president, The Children’s Foundation campaign cabinet, and his wife **Carole Fortier**; former prime minister **Brian Mulroney** and **Mila Mulroney**; and doctors **Martin Gignac**, director of psychiatry; **Jean-Pierre Farmer**, director of surgery, **Indra Gupta**, deputy director of the Child Health Research Program, RI-MUHC; **Beth Foster**, pediatrician-in-chief; as well as **Martine Alfonso**, associate president/executive director, *continued on p. 30*

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Social notes, cont'd from p. 29

MUHC; Audrey Bourassa, McCall MacBain Foundation; Senator Tony Loffreda and his wife Angelina Loffreda, Jean-François Prince, RBC Banque Royale; Marie-Chantal Côté, Sun Life Canada; Luc Maurice, Le Groupe Maurice; Lucie Blanchet, National Bank; Pierre Fitzgibbon, Quebec minister of the economy and innovation and minister responsible for regional economic development; and Lionel Carmant, delegated minister for health and social services for Quebec.

Also noted were Vincent Damphousse, Guy Charbonneau and Natasha Subban, vp P.K.S.S. Management Inc. and treasurer, P.K. Subban Foundation.

P.K. Subban made a virtual appearance via a FaceTime call. In 2015, he committed to raising \$10 million for The Montreal Children's, where the atrium now bears his name.

The gala was hosted by Ben Mulroney. He and his brother Mark (attending with wife Vanessa) came in from Toronto for the soirée.

Westmounters in the crowd included Herbert Black and his wife Véronique St-Pierre-Black and Sharon and Aaron Stern, as well as the Children's mascot Caramel (who "lives" in the Alexis Nihon Plaza).

Committee members were Anna Antonopoulos, Arlene Bratz-Abramowicz, Clare Annabelle Chiu, Ari Crudo, Marjolaine Lachance, Alexandra MacBain, Monica Raffo, Peggy Schachter, Isabelle Sicard, Jamie Silver, Helen Stavaris, Diana Stefanutti, Sharon Stern, Véronique St-Pierre-Black and doctors Ilana Galperin and Alisha Chacko.

André-Philippe Gagnon, The Children's Foundation's new ambassador, awed guests with his hilarious impressions of iconic figures. The night's highlight was when grateful parent Stephen Thériault shared the story of his daughter's fight against a very rare form of cancer.



Committee members Clare Annabelle Chiu, Alisha Chacko, Marie-Claude Baribeau, Marjolaine Lachance, Diana Stefanutti, Helen Stavaris, Arlene Bratz-Abramowicz, Ari Crudo, Ilana Galperin, Sharon Stern and Véronique St-Pierre-Black, with Caramel in front.

Séanne Thériault was just five years old when she was diagnosed with stage 4 liver cancer that had spread to her lungs. Hospitalized for months during the pandemic, she bravely endured surgery to remove over two thirds of her liver and then weeks of chemotherapy. With tears in their eyes, guests cheered when the two appeared on-stage.

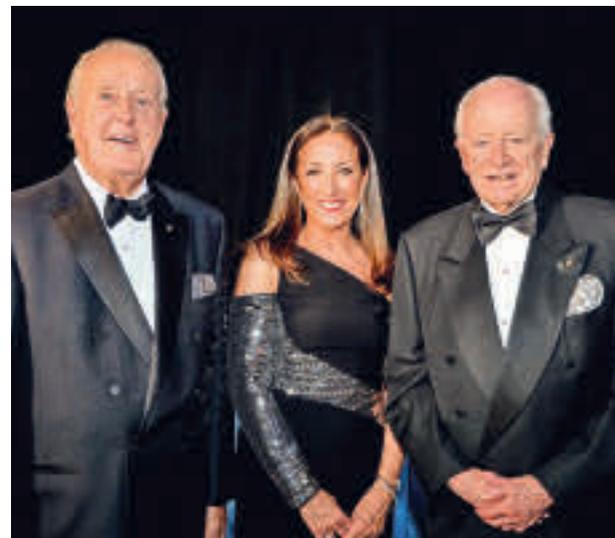
The Children's Foundation thanked ALRE Properties Inc., DGDM Family Foundation, Le Groupe Maurice, McCall MacBain Foundation, National Bank and Pfizer for supporting the awards of excellence, an annual tradition that recognizes the exceptional contributions made by hospital staff and volunteers to help sick children

and their families.

Innovation tables were purchased by Bell, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, RBC Banque Royale, Gestion de Patrimoine RBC, Sun Life and TD Bank Group. Held at the Hangar of Starlink Aviation in Dorval, the sold-out event raised \$1,100,625.



André-Philippe Gagnon.



Left, Brian Mulroney, Renée Vézina, Yves Fortier. Centre, Aaron Stern, Sharon Stern, Herbert Black, Véronique St-Pierre-Black. Right, Vincent Damphousse, Natasha Subban, Guy Charbonneau.



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