

Union, city head back to the negotiating table

Blue-collar group airs grievances at council meeting

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

After a two-day strike action February 7 and 8, the city's blue-collar union and the city were headed back to the negotiating table February 10. This was after a group of the blue-collar workers attended the city council meeting February 6.

The workers belong to CUPE local 301, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (Syndicat des cols bleus regroupés de Montréal SCFP). They work predominately in Public Works and at Hydro Westmount but also in almost all other departments.

With their representatives taking to the mic during the first question period, they spoke of being without a collective agreement since 2019. They also spoke of expected raises not happening, of a "toxic" work environment and the city's hiring of

two firms.

"We've been waiting four years for raises," one said. The current agreement had not been respected, he contended. Workers felt harassed and intimidated.

"I know it's been a long time – three years, from before COVID," Mayor Christina Smith replied. She thanked them for their work, saying she hoped "we can come to an agreement. You guys keep the city running, safe and clean. The work culture needs to be addressed. I hope we can resolve this soon."

Major investment needed in workplace

She later told the *Independent* about the plan to be back at the negotiating table February 10. She said that "some of the tensions had resulted from pandemic difficulties *continued on p. 8*



It's heated! Lachance & Co. confirmed this rare approach to snow removal February 10, the day after this photo was taken on a snowy night. The St. Catherine St. (near Metcalfe) business sells hearing aids and offers hearing care services. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

New city structure: Larue won't be replaced

Council approves 'termination agreement' for assistant DG

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council February 6 ratified an employment termination agreement of February 3 concerning the city's assistant director general Michel Larue, hired in 2020 as Urban Planning director. He was appointed to a newly created position of assistant director general the next year.

No details were divulged concerning terms of the agreement, though Mayor

Christina Smith thanked him for his service. She also announced the city would be changing its organizational structure to revert to its previous practice that had all department directors reporting directly to the director general rather than an assistant director general.

"For a city this size," she said, the new structure was more appropriate and this is why the city and Larue had severed their employment *continued on p. 3*

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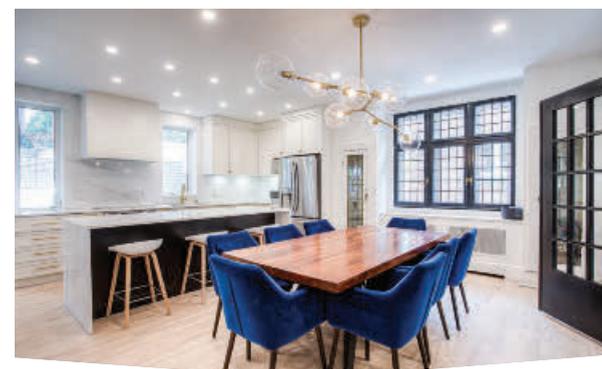
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Patrolling in dead of night**Public Security follows inebriated man, then foils escape by car**

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

A man discovered stumbling along the south sidewalk on Sherbrooke February 5 at 3:50 am was followed by a Public Security patroller fearing he might veer into traffic. As the officer drove behind him, department officials said, he toppled briefly into a snow bank near Clarke but then continued on his way.

At Greene, he turned into the municipal parking lot where he opened the door to a silver Volvo and entered. The officer drove her patrol vehicle behind the car to block its departure and called police.

Going up to the car, she knocked on the window and ordered him to turn off the engine in case he might back into the patrol vehicle. Described as having blurry eyes, he said he was coming from St. Henri and was cold.

Police arrived in two patrol cars at 4:10 am, and took custody of him. It was not immediately known whether he was detained for driving, or being in control of a vehicle, while under the influence.

Resident given 14 days to get dog licence

A Westmount resident was given 14 days to obtain a licence for his dog after it

was found alone and running loose in Westmount Park near the soccer field February 8 at 10:45 am, according to Public Security officials.

It was being taken to a veterinarian to be scanned for an identifying microchip when the owner called to say that a second dog, which it had been with, had already been brought back. He stated he did not know how the two had been running loose.

Damaged car towed, driver taken to work

A car had to be towed from the scene of a two-car collision February 8 at St. Catherine and Kensington, Public Security officials said. The westbound Hyundai Elantra was described as having been heavily damaged at the front end in the incident at 9:09 am.

The other car, a southbound Jeep Wrangler, did not require towing. Public safety officers directed traffic and the driver of the Elantra was taken to her place of work.

Parking on bike path brings ticket for \$1,317

A patrolling public safety officer stopped work outside 4898 de Maisonneuve

when a large truck with a trailer was found parked on the bike path at 7:27 am on February 7, Public Security officials said. An excavator was taking dirt back and forth across the sidewalk to the trailer with no safety measures in place.

Another patroller at 10 am discovered the same work had resumed under the same conditions and no permit had been obtained to occupy the public domain. A ticket for \$1,317 was issued for blocking the bike path, Public Security director Greg McBain said.

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**Numbers don't lie****When I got my real estate permit 39 years ago, my mother tried to discourage me and told me to get a "real" job!**

She knew first-hand how much grit it takes to sell houses, she was the first female broker in Montreal (back in the 60s). She was right, of course!

But I persevered and along the way, I worked out a formula: it's a mix of determination, empathy, creativity, a thirst for knowledge, humour, some luck and lots of patience!

I love getting listings and helping sellers go from "what I am going to do with all my stuff?" to "the terms of the offer on my house are acceptable, where do I sign?"

I enjoy educating buyers and tracking down the house that will "talk to them."

I make sure my buyers and sellers always walk away from the negotiating table with a smile.

I would like to thank all my clients, colleagues, family and friends for helping me make my 39 years the success it has been! I am truly grateful.

PS Don't listen to anyone bad-talking the current market. If you are thinking of buying or selling, just do it. There is never a "right" time, but there is always a "I should have" time. Reach out, and I'll show you how.



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**Termination, cont'd from p. 1**

relationship as of February 6.

While the city's newly appointed director general, Julie Mandeville, will assume this role February 20, Sports and Recreation director Dave Lapointe is heading the administration as substitute director general (see January 31, p. 1; February 7, p. 6).

Value to the city

Mayor Smith told the *Independent* last week that Larue had been "hardworking and brought a lot of value to the city." As

assistant director general since 2021, he had been overseeing Public Works, Engineering, Hydro Westmount Urban Planning and Public Security.

The Larue agreement was approved as a "new business" item made known only at the end of the council session and after a group of the city's striking blue collar workers had already departed. They had spoken in question period about a collective agreement having expired in 2019 and alleging a "toxic" work environment (see separate story, p. 1).

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infoWESTMOUNT

2023.02.14 • Vol. 4/03

Publié par la Ville de Westmount
Published by the City of Westmount**NOUVELLES**PROCHAINE SÉANCE
DU CONSEIL**Lundi 6 mars****NEWS**NEXT COUNCIL
MEETING**Monday, March 6****Sports et loisirs : inscrivez-vous aux activités du printemps**

La période d'inscription a débuté le 14 février. Consultez le répertoire des activités à westmount.org et inscrivez-vous en ligne ou en personne au Centre des loisirs de Westmount.

**Sports & Recreation: sign up for spring activities**

The spring registration period began February 14. Consult the activity guide at westmount.org and sign up online or in person at the Westmount Recreation Centre.

Séance du conseil : modification

La séance ordinaire du conseil prévue le mercredi 8 mars 17 h 30 aura lieu le lundi 6 mars à 17 h 30. westmount.org

Ressources pour locataires

La Ville tient à informer les résidents qui sont locataires des ressources qui sont disponibles pour la protection de leurs droits. westmount.org

Taxes foncières 2023

La date limite pour le premier versement est le **vendredi 24 février**. Un nouveau rôle d'évaluation foncière est entré en vigueur cette année. westmount.org/taxesenligne

Piste de ski de fond : mise à jour

En raison de la température clémente, la piste de ski de fond au terrain d'athlétisme de Westmount (WAG) ne sera entretenue que lorsque les conditions météorologiques le permettront.

État des patinoires extérieures

Mises à jour : westmount.org/patinoires.

Abonnez-vous à E-Westmount

Votre bulletin municipal. westmount.org

Council meeting: modification

The regular Council sitting scheduled for Wednesday, March 8 at 5:30 p.m. will be held on Monday, March 6 at 5:30 p.m. westmount.org

2023 municipal property taxes

The first installment for 2023 is **Friday, February 24**. A new valuation roll came into effect this year. westmount.org/onlinetaxes

Outdoor skating rink conditions

Updates are posted at westmount.org/rinks.

Resources for tenants

The City of Westmount wishes to inform residents who are tenants about the resources available to protect their rights. westmount.org

Cross-country ski trail update

Due to the mild weather, the cross-country ski trail at the Westmount Athletic Grounds (WAG) will not be maintained until weather conditions area favourable.

Sign up for E-Westmount

Your municipal newsletter. westmount.org

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES**Art Westmount de retour en 2023**

Le festival Art Westmount aura lieu les 6 et 7 mai au Victoria Hall. Les artistes de Westmount peuvent réserver une place en s'inscrivant en ligne à westmount.org. Date limite : le 24 mars.

Concours littéraire McEntyre

Participez au Concours littéraire McEntyre 2023 en écrivant une histoire, un poème ou un essai sur le thème de *l'exploration*. westlib.org

Mois de l'histoire des noirs

Apprenez-en davantage sur la riche histoire des Canadiens noirs. Découvrez la liste de lectures proposées par la Bibliothèque à westlib.org.

Jeux d'arcade créés avec Makecode

Les jeudis, du 7 au 28 février, 16 h, sur Zoom (9 à 12 ans). Apprenez à coder votre propre jeu de plateforme. Inscrivez-vous à westlib.org.

Exposition : Roxanne Dyer et Tracy Steer

Vendredi 17 février, 18 h, Galerie du Victoria Hall. Vous êtes invités au lancement de cette nouvelle exposition. Bienvenue à tous.

Soirée Pub Quiz

Mercredi 22 février, 19 h, Victoria Hall. Venez en équipe pour une soirée amusante de jeux-questionnaires. Inscrivez-vous sur Eventbrite.

Conférence :**Purim Foods Around the World**

Samedi 25 février, 14 h, Bibliothèque. Découvrez les traditions culinaires de la fête de Pourim dans la diaspora juive. Inscrivez-vous sur Eventbrite.

Ciné-club :**Everything Everywhere All At Once (2022)**

Mardi 28 février, 14 h, Victoria Hall. Réalisé par Daniels. Inscrivez-vous sur Eventbrite.

Conférence :**Opera During the Reign of the Sun King**

Vendredi 3 mars, 14 h, Bibliothèque. Avec Karina Cahill, bibliothécaire et spécialiste du XVII^e siècle. Inscrivez-vous sur Eventbrite.

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS**Art Westmount returns in 2023**

The Art Westmount festival is back and will take place May 6 & 7 at Victoria Hall. Westmount artists can reserve a spot by registering online at westmount.org. The deadline is March 24.

McEntyre Writing Competition

Take part in the 2023 McEntyre Writing Competition: write a story, a poem or an essay on the theme of *Exploration*. westlib.org

Black History Month

Learn more about the rich history of Black Canadians. Check out the Library's selection of recommended reading at westlib.org.

Makecode Arcade Games

Thursdays from February 7 to 28, 4 p.m., on Zoom (9 to 12-yr-olds). Learn how to code your own Platformer Game. Register at westlib.org.

Exhibition: Roxanne Dyer and Tracy Steer

Friday, February 17, 6 p.m., Gallery at Victoria Hall. You are invited to attend the opening of this new exhibition. Everyone is welcome.

Pub Quiz Night

Wednesday, February 22, 7 p.m., Victoria Hall. Bring a team and join others for a fun night testing your trivia skills. Register on Eventbrite.

Lecture:**Purim Foods Around the World**

Saturday, February 25, 2 p.m., Library. Learn about Purim food traditions around the Jewish diaspora. Register on Eventbrite.

Film Club: Everything Everywhere**All At Once (2022)**

Tuesday, February 28, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. Directed by Daniels. Register on Eventbrite.

Lecture:**Opera During the Reign of the Sun King**

Friday, March 3, 2 p.m., Library. With Karina Cahill, Librarian and 17th century specialist. Register on Eventbrite.

Spring registration opens Feb. 14

Volleyball, pickleball, self defence among programs highlighted

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

For those who love sports and recreational programs, what better time for Westmount residents to register for the city's spring offerings than Valentine's Day? This is the launch date, online and at the Westmount recreation centre (WRC)'s office.

While a long array of the tennis lesson times, youth soccer and Zoom options for seniors continue, several highlights are being featured. These include evening instruction in pickleball, the creation of a volleyball court and a basic first aid course for seniors along with a renewed push on youth baseball, according to Andrew Mais-

lin, operations manager for the Westmount recreation Centre (WRC).

"We're always looking for new activities based on feedback and new requests," he explained.

The volleyball court for adult play Monday evenings being set up in Westmount Park is responding to new demand and while pickleball has been available for a few years on a designated court, what's new is the instructional evening program, also arising from demand.

Youth baseball at the Westmount Athletic Grounds (WAG) is not new, but it's getting renewed interest in the department, he said. Inter-city league tryouts take place next month.

Among some of the new offerings is a basic first aid course for seniors as well as courses in self-defense for teens, adults and seniors.

Soccer volunteers sought

Youth soccer for boys and for girls from April through May usually attracts some 800 to 1,000 participants. New this year is the recruitment of volunteer coaches and referees for this program via an online system.

This soccer program is the city's non-competitive (in-house) spring one, and is followed in the summer months by the inter-city Westmount Soccer Club, an independent volunteer organization for boys and girls, with registration starting in May.

Details on registration and schedules and locations of programs can be found in the Sports and Recreation department's 2023 activities booklet on the city's website. Residents can register online or at the office in the WRC.

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'Hooked on School Days' Feb. 13-17

City features library's 'Homework Help' program, card for all

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council February 6 adopted a resolution supporting a "Hooked on School Days" campaign February 13 to 17 under the theme of "With the right support, all young people can persevere."

Moving the resolution, Councillor Élisabeth Roux, whose commissionership includes the Westmount Public Library, explained that "the city unanimously and publicly" expresses and supports all participants (students and adults) in the education system. This is in collaboration with the Montreal community."

In Westmount, this focus is being featured through the library's Teen Zone and children's department, which provides support from older students for homework as well as running the annual McEntyre Writing Competition, she later told the *Independent*.

To emphasize the library's support of the Hooked on School campaign, children's librarian Wendy Wayling said last week that "We have decided to take this opportunity to reach out to the local schools to remind them that all students can get a free library card. This will give them full access to our wonderful resources and programs."

The library's Homework Help program "has always supported the school curriculum," she pointed out.

"This program is designed to encourage local teens to get involved in their community by helping younger children with their homework at the library while

gaining valuable experience for themselves."

In general, older teens including those at CEGEP can sign up to act as tutors. This had to be cancelled during COVID restrictions but "we are starting it up again this month," she said.

Wearing symbolic green

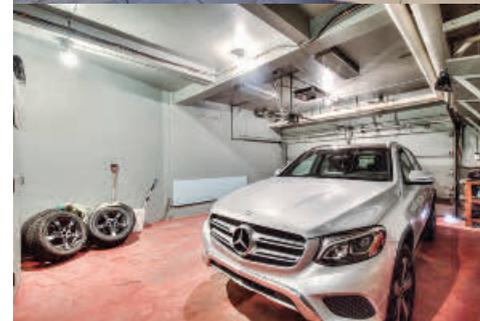
On Thursday, February 16, library staff is being asked to wear something green to let the community know about the campaign and the library's resources for students.

Green is the symbol of youth and hope, she noted.

As the Hooked on the School campaign website states "Students develop a sense of perseverance at school through the kindness of those around them. Behind every young person who works hard at school

are adults who play a vital role."

The website can be accessed at www.journeesperseverancescolaire.com/en.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Answer, FYI: Westmount.

Well, here's another FYI: It ain't reasonable.

Yeah yeah: Inflation's high. Valuations are up over 30 percent across the island so the mill (*mille*) rate was adjusted – thanks, but the previous mill rate was too high anyway – that's why Westmount has accumulated budget surpluses. Which, unfortunately, it looks like our fair city's about to wipe out with massive budget increases, lots of hiring, and new and exciting capital works. And all this during high inflation, tanked markets and a looming – yikes – recession.

When you see celery is \$6 a head, you don't buy it. When you see things are expensive, you don't spend like they're not. And when you see some citizens are being asked to pay 15 percent or more in property taxes in one shot, you don't send out

that bill.

What do you do? You cut budgets to keep things reasonable and affordable – for everyone. You put off any big new builds till things normalize. You maintain and repair and wait (which will keep those engineering expenses way below the reported 243-percent increase). Westmount Park renos go on hold; no new greenhouses, ever – please; scrap indoor pool forever; no more funky new road configurations for the next few years.

Oh ... how I fondly remember the property tax freezes we had in 2016 and 2017. See? The city can do it.

Between 2018 and 2022 (that's five years, and in 2020 valuations were up around 23 percent), my property taxes went up \$1,112 in total. This year they're up \$1,766.

Hmmm ... sorry council: that ain't reasonable, and I'm pretty certain you know that.

THOMAS LAPIERRE, CHESTERFIELD AVE.

**HILLSIDE PROJECT GOOD
FOR AREA, WESTMOUNT**

In the January 31 edition of the *Independent* (p. 6), there is a letter from Fariba Abolkhani opposing the proposed construction at 1-3 Hillside.

Opposing this project would be a terrible idea. In my 50+ years of living in Westmount, I have never seen such an outstanding project, where the developer has

made every effort to be respectful of the neighbours.

The suggestion was made that the neighbourhood would be better served by building three or four townhouses that would each inevitably sell for \$2.5 million, attracting a few wealthy families.

Not only would such townhouses be totally out of scale and out of character for that location, but they would prevent the area from welcoming young families. There is an enormous shortage of affordable housing available currently. The location, next to the playing fields and schools, is ideal.

Many project opponents live in a condo building that itself was built not long ago, and which replaced what had formerly been a curling club and then a school. It would be a shame to not allow other young families to benefit from the same good fortune.

PATRICK MARTIN, THE BOULEVARD

Editor's note: Patrick Martin was a city councillor from 2006 to 2017, and a mayoral candidate in the 2017 election. – DP.

**SECURE THE WESTMOUNT
RAILWAY STATION AT THE
FOOT OF VICTORIA AVE.**

I recently signed up for membership to the Westmount Historical Association and was delighted to receive its first invitation of 2023: a lecture in April at Victoria Hall on the history of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the future of the Westmount railway station, that forlorn citadel at the southern edge of the Victoria village.

While I do not wish to distract interest from the lecture event, which will be cover-

ing an important chapter of our national history – the railway that helped build and connect Canada in the 19th century – I would like to share my opinion on a key issue facing the future of the railway station.

Whatever re-purposing projects this building might inspire in the hearts of Westmounters, and however creative or noble their cause, I feel that its future depends on one issue: safety from the active railway.

The railway station has openings along its south façade, now all boarded up, that were once windows and doors giving onto platforms in its previous life. Today, a chain-link fence – the existing barrier between the railway station, its flanks, and the tracks of the CPR – seems an adequate though not ideal solution for the prevention of trespassing (or the safety of would-be visitors).

Would the issue of the station's proximity to an active railway have to be resolved before this building can be considered for re-purposing? Could a high, sound-insulating wall, such as the one at the bottom of Abbott Ave., be integrated into its architecture as a new safety barrier?

The Westmount railway station is a beautiful heritage building, and the prospect of its re-purposing is a captivating topic.

To paraphrase the American statesman Daniel Webster: "It is, Sir, a small train station, and yet there are those who love it!"

All the more reason for this beloved Westmount building to be restored safely.

M. CHEFFINS, PRINCE ALBERT AVE.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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**Register on 1-3 Hillside
set for signing Feb. 22**

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Enough qualified voters opposed to the 1-3 Hillside project applied for a register to take place on the proposed re-development of the vacant armoury across from the Westmount Athletic Grounds (WAG).

The register for those opposed to the zoning change takes place February 22 at city hall from 9 am to 7 pm.

Councillor Matt Aronson, who represents District 7 where the site is located, announced February 6 that enough applications had been received by the city clerk's office that a registry must proceed.

The only eligible applications had come

from voters in the concerned zone, R6-34-14. A total of 12 had been required to open a register.

It is 14 registrants at the registry that are required to force a referendum.

If the results of the registry equal or exceed this number, then, in accordance with Quebec municipal law, the next step is to proceed to a referendum on the residential plan (see story January 31, p. 10).

Historically, the city has pulled proposals rather than face a referendum, including for the recent proposed zoning change for 400 Mount Pleasant (see "City withdraws office-use re-zoning for 400 Mt. Pleasant," November 15, 2022, p. 1).

Hillside project good for neighbours, neighbourhood

Mayor's Column

CHRISTINA SMITH

through a public consultation process.

The status quo is not an option. Vacant since 2014, the building has been deteriorating and no longer meets building safety standards.

Before accepting this project, the council was particularly demanding with the developers to ensure that it met the community's expectations. The current project is therefore the result of a long process that began in November 2019. Modifications were made to the initial project to address comments raised by the community. For instance, the façade of the new building will be moved back a few meters to insert a green area and increase the pedestrian space. The distance from the neighbouring building has also been increased compared to the initial plan.

Evidently, the project includes a construction phase that may inconvenience the neighbourhood. But this phase is temporary, and noise mitigation measures are planned. The building will meet green design criteria (LEED) and the project will positively impact the neighbourhood once completed. It will include
vegetation (fruit plants, *continued on p. 12*

On January 13, city council voted unanimously in favour of a project to construct a residential building at 1-3 Hillside to replace the old armoury. The project also received a favourable recommendation from the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC).

Although supported by a large part of the community, the project still faces some opposition from a few residents. This opposition could lead to a referendum that could result in the project being abandoned. That perspective may not be to the benefit of the community as it could open the way for a process authorizing another project less in tune with residents' expectations. Indeed, since the site zoning is residential, if the project is abandoned, another project could take advantage of the zoning by right to build without going

Mizrahi: January's hockey player of the month

Team captain cited as 'go-to guy to get stuff done'

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

"The Westmount Minor Hockey Association is proud to announce Aiden Mizrahi, 17, as the player of the month for January 2023," Andrew Maislin said last week. According to Maislin, operations manager for the Westmount recreation centre (WRC), Aiden is being recognized for his leadership and dedication.

He is also an assistant coach for the M15-A Wings team and is cited for his "maturity, drive and dedication to Westmount every time he is in the dressing room, on the ice or assisting with practices at other levels," Maislin explained.

"Aiden most certainly goes above and beyond as team captain, he takes care of the team Snapchat group to keep in touch and the team's schedule website," Maislin



Aiden Mizrahi.

said. "Daniel Fox, head coach for many years of the M18-A team, has time and time again mentioned to me that Aiden is a leader and his number one go-to guy to get stuff done."

Aiden began his hockey career in Westmount's M9 program (formerly Novice) back in 2013 and did two years in the house program before graduating to the competitive (inter-city) program in 2015. He presented himself well prepared, ready to go with drills. "He has not looked back since."

Having stepped in for a few games this year as coach when the other volunteer coaches could not make it, Maislin said he knows first hand that he can "always rely on Aiden to help with clinics, evaluations or other teams." He is now "excited" to see Aiden's next adventure as he graduates from the youth league this season.

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Campbell engaged to help Mandeville transition into DG role

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

Duncan Campbell, who served as Westmount's director general (DG) from 2008 to 2014, has been brought on board by the city to help advise the incoming DG, Julie Mandeville, Mayor Christina Smith confirmed last week.

"Duncan is going to help Julie transition into the role as an advisor," Mayor Smith explained. "He was with me for the hiring process. It is not a set length of time, so he is not really coming back but he is mentoring."

As DG, Campbell steered the city through the \$40-million planning and building of the Westmount recreation

centre (WRC) and worked with many of the current staff on issues that included Transport Quebec's expropriation of land from the corporation yard used by Public Works and Hydro Westmount at the foot of Bethune.

In 2021, the city temporarily hired him back from retirement to serve as interim DG while the city was searching for a new top manager to fill the vacancy left after the departure of Benoit Hurtubise (see story February 16, 2021, p. 1). Mandeville, who was treasurer and director of finance at that time, was appointed DG at the council meeting January 27. Her new role is effective February 20 (see story February 7, p. 13).

Blue collars, cont'd from p. 1

regarding shifts and hours, and the state of the Public Works buildings, which "need a major investment in the workplace."

Some work at the Public Works yard has been budgeted for this year.

The group had departed after the first of two question periods and were not present when the mayor announced a change in the city's organizational structure (see story p. 1).



The February 6 city "council chamber was packed, with standing room only back to the stairs with *les cols bleus*, the city's blue collar workers," said council attendee Jon Breslaw. There were also attendees unconnected to the labour dispute.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JON BRESLAW.

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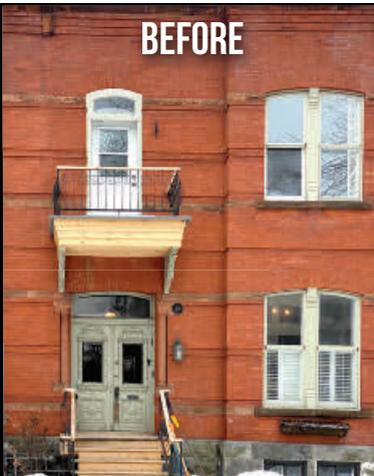


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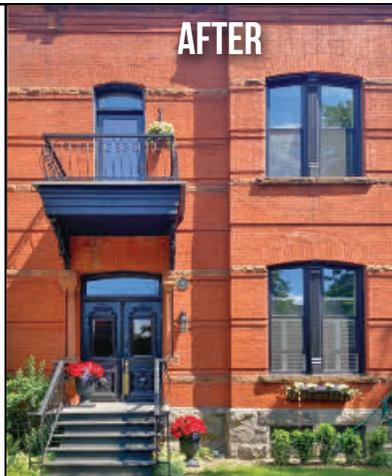
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What the workers say...

City's blue-collar workers go on two-day strike



Blue-collar workers on strike photographed on Stanton St. north of Côte St. Antoine on February 7. They work for the city of Westmount.

By JENNIFER BALL

“The blues do it better and deserve better,” is a slogan of the strikers who pooled around the city’s Human Resources offices on Stanton St. north of Côte St. Antoine.

The site was abuzz with the cacophony of kazoo and striking blue-collar workers in orange vests brandishing picket signs. Some were singing; others shouting. The same scene could be found at the Bethune tunnel to the Public Works yard, at city hall and at Victoria Hall.

The message that they were broadcasting during the February 7 and 8 strike was about salary and working conditions.

“Despite a deteriorating workplace climate, every morning Westmount’s blue-

collar workers are on the streets giving the best of themselves,” their literature reads, “...today we are sorry that we cannot provide you with the services that you deserve. The pandemic, the soaring cost of living, and the lack of respect for our working conditions have forced us to exercise pressure tactics. We are considered essential workers but our employer shows us no respect. We hope we can count on your support. Thank you for understanding.”

All activities were cancelled at the Westmount recreation centre (WRC) for both days (see February 7, p. 7).

The blue-collar workers include all the city’s drivers, all the general labourers who work in the parks, the mechanics, the welders and the electricians. “We have members in almost every municipal build-

ing, so we have them as our representatives. We have a member working at city hall. We have some in Victoria Hall, at the library, the greenhouse,” Jason Wyncarczuk said.

Wyncarczuk is the blue-collar delegate for Westmount, which is known as district 301.

He was joined in the interview by Alexis Lamy-Labrecque, who is a lawyer and an advisor for the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE).

“Basically, we’re going on four years now without a contract. Everyone’s aware of what the inflation rates are, everyone’s aware what the cost of living is, the [central] bank increasing its interest rates... We’re starting to have employees that are really starting to have difficulty making pay-

ments because we have not received a salary increase in four years and, on top of not receiving an increase, what they’ve offered us is borderline insulting,” Wyncarczuk said.

Wyncarczuk did not want to comment more specifically on the package that had been offered, as negotiations were ongoing but lamented “it’s not even close to cost of living. When you take into consideration what our inflation is at.”

“Now we have like more than 10 employees that need to get a second job to pay the bills,” Lamy-Labrecque said. “The main point is the salary, but the second point is the work schedule.”

“We want negotiation,” he said. “They were supposed to be an essential service for the pandemic, but now it has ended...”

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Saturday, February 18

Valentine Sing-A-Long/"Songs for Love & Marriage: Come to a Wedding," featuring St. Matthias' musicians and music director Scott Bradford. St. Matthias' Anglican Church, 131 Côte St. Antoine. Entrance is free but attendees are asked to bring a treat to share. 4 pm.

Sunday, February 19

Mutual Care for Climate Anxiety interactive activity. Snacks provided. Westmount Park United Church, 4695 de Maisonneuve Blvd. 2 pm.

Tuesday, February 21

"Fraud: How to recognize it and how to avoid it," by police officers Adalbert Pimentel and Stephan Laperrière, presented by the Women's Canadian Club of Montreal. Free.

Victoria Hall. 12 noon.

We welcome your letters

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week.

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The city's 51st McEntyre Writing Competition is asking local students to write in either French or English about "exploration."

"This year's theme allows the writers to imagine what they could explore by walking through a neighbourhood, talking to friends, reading new information, travelling through air or sea, or learning about a new culture," said volunteer chief judge Rosalind Davis and Westmount Public Library children's librarian Wendy Wayling in an email to the *Independent*. "We want them to think about discovering themselves, their community, their culture or even their emotions."

Westmounters, grades 1 to 11, and those who go to school in Westmount, are eligible to participate.

More information is available on the Westmount Public Library website: westlib.org. Entries will be accepted in person or through the online form. The deadline is March 26. "We want to hear from you!" they concluded.

► From left, Wendy Wayling and Ros Davis with this year's McEntyre Writing Competition poster.

PHOTO COURTESY OF W. WAYLING.



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IMPORTANT NOTICE

To qualified voters entitled to have their name entered on the referendum list of the concerned sectors

1. On January 16, 2023, the Municipal Council adopted the second draft resolution No. 2023-01-13 concerning an immovable bearing the civic address 1-3 Hillside Avenue, the whole in virtue of *By-law 1489 concerning specific construction, alteration or occupancy proposals for an immovable (S.C.A.O.P.I.) of the City of Westmount.*
2. The concerned sector is comprised of Zone R6-34-14 (concerned zone).
3. All qualified voters may request that the second draft resolution No. 2023-01-13 be submitted to a referendum poll by signing the register open for that purpose. The register will be open for registration on **Wednesday, February 22, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.** in the Council Chamber at City Hall located at 4333 Sherbrooke Street West in Westmount.
4. The number of valid applications needed to require that second draft resolution No. 2023-01-13 be submitted to a referendum poll is 14. If the required number of applications is not reached, the second draft resolution No. 2023-01-13 will be deemed approved by qualified voters.
5. The legal notices relating to the foregoing are available at: <https://westmount.org/en/resident-zone/legal-services-city-clerks-office/public-notice/>.

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9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Curious Miko



Miko is six years old, very healthy, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped.

If you would like more information on him, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com and scroll to his information page by his identification number, 51568227.

By clicking on the "Fill out the form" box on the upper right-hand side of the page, you will be able to provide your contact information to the adoption coordinators. They will then reach out to you to answer your questions and discuss becoming Miko's adoptive family.

Your neighbour, Lysanne



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LYSANNE FOWLER

Adorable Roxy

that time, you will be able to meet and discuss adopting Roxy to bring her home.

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For more information on Roxy, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, then make your way to her information page by her identification number, 48342565, where you will then click on the "Book a visit" box at the right side of the page.

By providing your contact information and choosing available agenda bookings, you will then be scheduled for a visit with an adoption coordinator at the shelter. At

.....
Mayor, cont'd from p. 7

trees, shrubs and grasses) that will attract pollinators and birds. This vegetation will be an urban oasis in the neighbourhood.

The new structure will be built to avoid obstructing the neighbours' sunlight. The building will be in harmony with the environment and retain some elements of heritage interest. Studies conducted by the developer have also shown that the building will have a low impact on traffic.

Like the neighbouring building at 11 Hillside, the new building will contribute to the social mix and animation of the area.

To learn more about the project, I invite you to visit westmount.org/scaopi.

*Christina M. Smith
is the mayor of Westmount.*

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Social Notes

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St. Mary's Ball marks 85 years

with spectacular floral displays and towering centrepieces.

Glamorously clad arrivals were greeted by St. Mary's Ball president **Laurent Ferreira**, CEO National Bank. Emcees were St. Mary's Foundation board chair **Arthur Wechsler** and board of governors executive member **Rachel Renaud**.

Guests included **Eric Girard**, provincial Finance minister and minister responsible

for English relations and **Desirée McGraw**, Liberal member of the provincial legislature for NDG.

Ristorante Beatrice chef **Adele Forgione** prepared the amazing four-course gourmet dinner menu. Dessert was a deliciously decadent olive cake with lemon curd and fresh berries. Specialty wines provided by the SAQ were paired with each course.

Café Gentile finished off the evening

with coffee martinis and Pastel de Nata custard tarts. Paul Chacra with 1945 The Band and DJ Psychology took turns keeping the dance floor jumping. The Maracujá band added to the festive ambiance with Bossa Nova tunes.

Volunteers dressed by Suzy Shier offered specialty items for raffle.

The evening's success was due to a hard-working *continued on p. 14*



Laurent Ferreira, Arthur Wechsler, Peter Picciola, Cynda Heward and Sylvie Chagnon.



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Luciani leaves Infiniti, joins Cadillac network of dealerships

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

When Camillo Luciani was thinking of switching his auto dealership to Cadillac following a long association with Infiniti, among his reasons was Cadillac's 120 years of North American manufacturing know-how and craftsmanship.

The long-time Westmounter said his team had the opportunity to explore Cadillac's most recent line-up of vehicles, including the XT4, XT5, XT6 and Escalade SUVs, as well as the CT4, CT4-V series, CT5, and CT5-V series of sedans.

Luciani said they were impressed by the superior quality and design elements being offered.

"We could not be more excited to showcase the Cadillac line-up, boasting refined materials and artistry married with the latest driver technology as well as the 100-percent electric Lyric, winner of the 2023 Green Car Journal Best Luxury Green Car of the Year," he continued.

He pointed out that Cadillac has committed to producing vehicle battery components here in Quebec in the coming years, reinforcing their vision of an all-electric line-up with Canadian components.

He said the Luciani Cadillac facility, located at 4000 Jean Talon St. West, will



Seen here at the Luciani Cadillac dealership on January 27 are Camillo Luciani, right, and his daughter, Sabrina, Luciani Cadillac's director of marketing.

continue servicing existing clientele, as well as new customers, while undergoing extensive renovations over the coming year.

Luciani Auto has been a family-operated business since 1967. In spite of the

recent changes, Luciani noted that over the years the dealership's focus has consistently been to offer luxurious vehicles, while providing a unique fusion of hospitality within a serene environment.

"We remain keenly aware that the lux-

ury customer values their time above all else," added Luciani. "As we move forward into a new and exciting era of electrification, we remain committed to our high standards of the finest details from start to finish."

Social notes, cont'd from p. 13

committee: fundraising chair Peter Picciola; foundation CEO Cynda Heward; Bridget Fetterly (décor); Dorine Perron (silent auction); and committee members Sylvie Chagnon, Terry Didus, Westmount city councillor Mary Gallery, Stephen Kelly, Guy Laframboise, Arielle Meloul-Wechsler, Curtis Millen, Geoff Molson, Richard Renaud, Mario Rigante, Paul Scardera, Peter Thompson and Arthur Wechsler.

Distinguished guests included Molly and Donald Clarke, CEO Gunite Investments Inc. (Stanark) and foundation and governing board member; Lise and Don Bastien, president governing board; foun-

dation board members Marion Lefebvre and Doug Buchanan, president/investment counselor Rempart Asset Management; Katherine Didus and Luigi Morelli, corporate controller DNE Resources and Link Energy; Frederique and Larry Cannon, CFO Nova Steel.

Also seen were Joseph Adamo, president of Transat Distribution Canada and governing board member; CIUSS ODIM's Nadia Hashimi-Idrissi, interim CEO, and Richard Legault, board president; Kevin Coffey and Maureen Doyle, physician-in-charge, St. Mary's FMG-U; Patil and Ari Meguerditchian, scientific director, St. Mary's Research Centre; Anne-Marie

Gravel and Michel Élie, co-chief Psychiatry; Tami and Ron Dimentberg, chief of Surgery; Michael Tinmouth and Julie St. Cyr, chief of Biomedical; Suny Joshi and Dr. Hélène Weibel, chief of Gynecology and Obstetrics; Nathalie Ng Cheong, St. Mary's associate chief of Medicine and governing board member and Dr. Mathieu Walker, chief of Cardiology and board member CIUSSS ODIM; Josephine Campbell-Lashuk and her father Bruce Campbell, chief of Specialized Medicine; Virginia Lee and Shek Fung, director Geriatric Medicine; Marjolaine Lachance, Bell Canada senior manager community investment – Quebec; Sarah Ivory and

Guthrie Stewart, senior vice president PSP Investments; Colleen and Mirko Wicha, founder HaiVision; Catherine and Adam Turner, president DIVCO; and Patricia and Rhodri Harries, executive vice president, chief financial and administrative officer at Gildan.

The ball raised \$1,408,250 (net) to support St. Mary's in celebration of Family Medicine. (Mark November 3 in your calendar for next year's gala.)

PS Please send your event information to veronica@redgravepr.com

Oops. Camp Lumi goes until August 18, not the day that I reported last week. Apologies.

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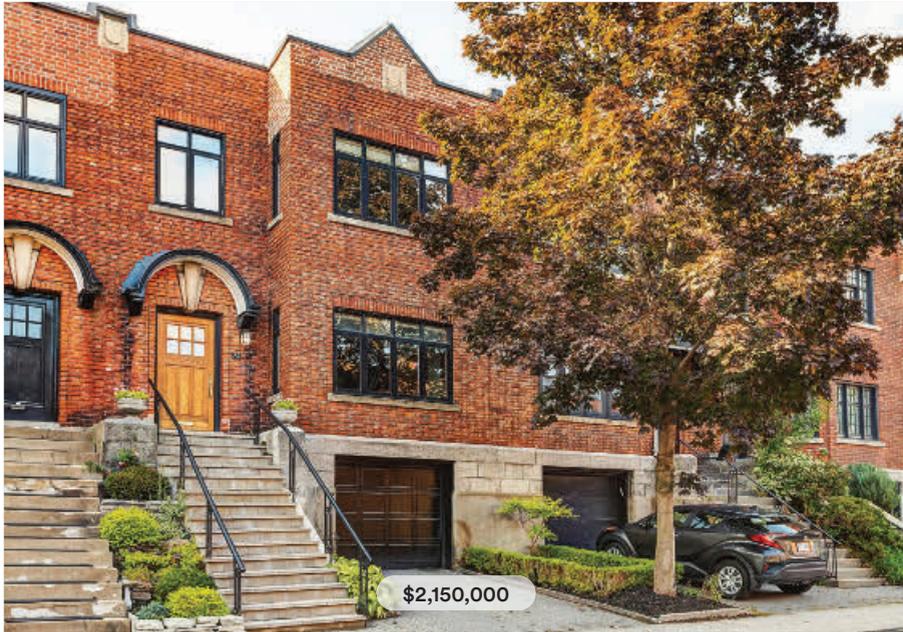
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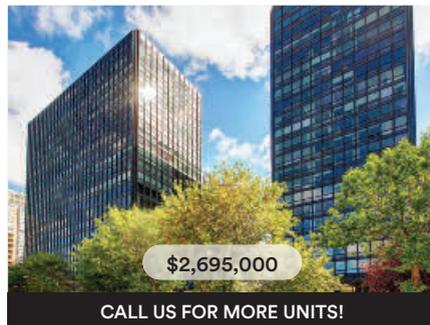


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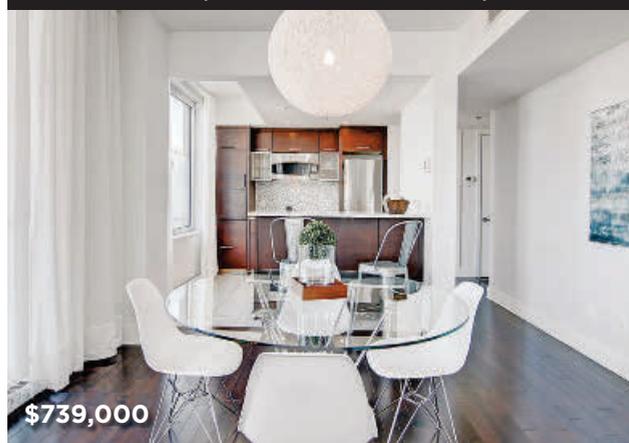
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