

## City kicks off Christmas season with tree lighting



At the official December 2 lighting of the Christmas tree on city hall's lawn, left photo, Ira Sokolova with her children's choir sang traditional Christmas carols and, right photo, the city was represented by, among others, councillors Matt Aronson (rear left), Kathleen Kez, Elisabeth Roux, Antonio D'Amico and Mayor Christina Smith, and councillors Anitra Bostock (front left), Mary Gallery, Conrad Peart and Jeff Shamie. See story on p. 20.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.

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### Holiday schedule

This issue of the *Independent* is the last one before our usual Christmas break

No issues: December 17, 24 & 31 and January 7

First issue of 2025: January 14

### Don't Miss It

City of Westmount's Hanukkah celebration

In conjunction with Congregation Shaar Hashomayim and Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom

Monday, December 16 at 5 pm at city hall

Taxes paid, city cancels auction of properties with unpaid balances, see p. 19



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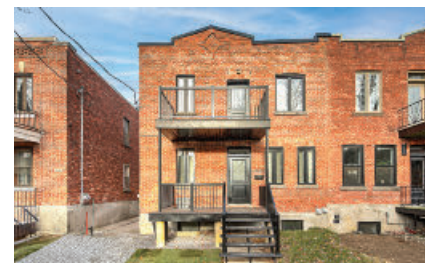


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# Public Security warns drivers about winter parking

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

With the onset of snow, drivers were reminded last week by Public Security of special care to be taken when parking vehicles. The warnings were underlined by one experience encountered December 5 when officers were called concerning a car parked across a driveway entrance on Prince Albert just south of Somerville. This blocked the departure of a car parked in

the garage.

This meant the offending car had to be towed and its owner was ticketed \$210 for blocking the driveway.

“Always check before parking in the winter that snow is not obscuring a driveway and that a vehicle is not too close to the curb to prevent passage of a sidewalk plow,” said Public Security director Greg McBain.

In commercial zones, keep an eye out

for flashing yellow lights indicating snow removal.

## Contractor ticketed \$1,326 for lack of permit

Despite the city’s warnings and repeated information recently and over the years about the need to obtain permits to use the public domain such as the sidewalk and road for construction material and parking work-related vehicles, Public Security continues to find these offences.

One example came December 3 when a large pile of dirt and debris was discovered on the sidewalk and road in front of a house on Church Hill, department officials said. A warning had been issued the day before but a large pile of dirt and debris was again seen at 8:34 am.

This time, a ticket for \$1,326 was issued to the contractor when still no permit was found. As a result, passers-by were forced to go into the street without safety precautions.

## Car hits city light post then a parked car during parking issue

The owner of a car called 911 December

4 reporting that while he was maneuvering it to park on the hill on Prince Albert, he had hit a city light pole and then backed into a car parked across the street, Public Security officials said.

The man stated that a new type of transmission on the car had confused him into thinking he was in forward when he ended up reversing. Police and Public Security arrived, but damage was described as minor. Stability of the light pole was also checked out by Hydro Westmount. The driver was a resident of St. Patrick St. in the city of Montreal.

## Correction: final Bill 96 vote not unanimous

Contrary to what guest columnist David Tait wrote in his piece “French not threatened – Language laws harm Quebec – Promote culture, not exodus” (December 3, p. 18), Bill 96 did not pass unanimously. The provincial Liberals and PQ voted against its final adoption by the provincial legislature on May 24, 2022. The “Adoption du principe” vote on November 4, 2021 was unanimous. – DP.



As seen on Church Hill December 3.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT PUBLIC SECURITY.

Letters to the Editor, p. 4

Mayor’s column, p. 8

Provincial representative’s column, p. 9

Police Report, p. 23

Pet page, p. 26

Social Notes: Toy Tea, p. 29

REAL ESTATE BROKERS



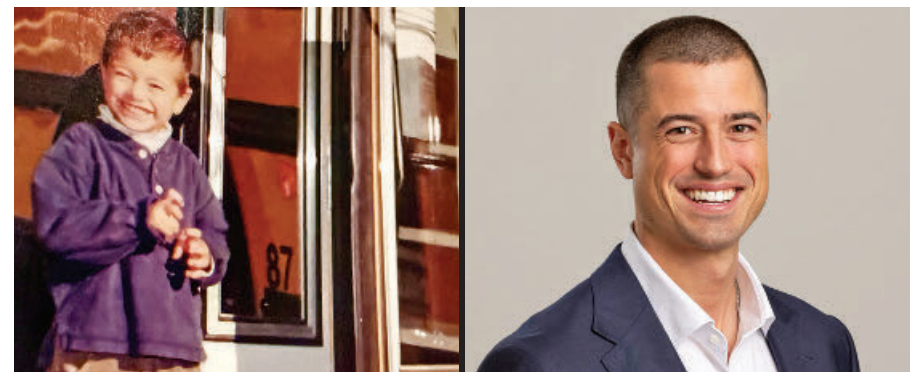

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## Exciting News!



Congratulations to my son, Thomas Saliou, on obtaining his broker’s permit! Chief and I are thrilled to welcome him to the crazy, wonderful world of selling real estate. The journey ahead will be filled with challenges, but also with countless rewarding moments. Here’s to success, growth, and making dreams come true for our clients!



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**REJECT HATE SPEECH,  
NOT LOCATION OF  
ISRAELI CONSULATE**

You recently published a resident's heartfelt plea for Israel's consulate to relocate due to disturbances caused by protests (November 26, p. 12). I was encouraged by the large number of people who contacted me expressing opposition to this idea.

The use of megaphones for extended periods of time, occasionally beyond 11 pm, is astounding, not to mention the hate speech that one struggles to differentiate from incitement.

Yet to conclude the consulate should relocate is misplaced, akin to telling a rape victim she shouldn't have been in that location. Montreal has experienced real anti-Semitic hatred the past year. The appropriate response is for elected officials to speak out against hate speech. Freedom of speech should be encouraged, but manifest within the reasonable expectation that people also have lives to live.

Quebec's government has been superb, rejecting anti-Semitism, rejecting support for Hamas, calling on police to "do their job" (even as the Montreal police don't take instruction from the provincial government). Westmount's mayor has been a real friend. Others less so. It is they who should be called out, on the municipal and federal levels.

We at the consulate love being in West-

mount, in the best office building on the island of Montreal. I absolutely understand Ms. Hernandez's distress. While demonstrations shrunk over the months, as they lost support and generated antagonism, authorities' acceptance of unrestricted, loud hate speech is inexplicable. I urge Ms. Hernandez to hang an Israeli flag from her window.

A heartfelt thank-you to the editor who I gather agrees with me and the many people who reached out to me to express their support.

Wishing those who celebrate it a Merry Xmas, and a Happy New Year to all.

PAUL HIRSCHSON,  
CONSUL GENERAL OF ISRAEL

**DON'T APPEASE ON  
HATE-FILLED PROTESTS**

I was shocked to read Diana Hernandez' letter (November 26, p. 12). Rather than advocate for the re-location of the Israeli consulate in her wish for a return to a more tranquil and unmolested life in lower Westmount, it would be preferable to ask why the authorities do not enforce the necessary conditions and laws to enable residents to live their lives normally and restrict the hate-filled anti-Semitic weekly protests that are the cause of so much misery to our cohabitants?

Diana Hernandez seems to prefer a policy of appeasement, inverting responsibility on the blameless Israeli consulate instead of the protestors. It is shameful

and should be called out for what it is – cowardly, shameful and a rebuttal of Canadian values.

SHARON MASHAAL, SURREY GARDENS

**NOTRE DAME, MONK  
FILLED WITH BUSINESSES,  
INFRASTRUCTURE, WELL-  
MAINTAINED LANDSCAPING**

Thank you for your response to my comments on your editorial (December 3, p. 6). However, I must point out that it leans heavily on performative dramatism. While I appreciate your effort to engage in dialogue, the reply strays from meaningful substance and devolves into unnecessary semantics.

The assertion that implying is "almost the opposite of putting words in someone's mouth" is a feat of linguistic gymnastics that avoids addressing the central issue: misrepresentation. Unfounded implications lead to misunderstandings, as we've seen here. You inferred opposition where none was explicitly stated, overlooking the true intent of my letter – to offer a practical, community-focused solution.

The use of the term "industrial Siberia" is not only hyperbolic but also carries an undertone of elitism. Furthermore, implying that Verdun and LaSalle are unworthy of fair consideration is deeply ironic. The area [Notre Dame St. West near Monk and Pullman] that I proposed [for the Israeli consulate to move to] is far from desolate or a barren wasteland; it is home to businesses, infrastructure, and well-maintained landscaping. It seems you overlooked these positive aspects during your visit – a curious omission for someone who claims to be thorough. This selective framing diminishes the value of meaningful discourse and undermines credibility.

On the subject of shifting burdens to residents of Verdun or LaSalle, let me clarify: I never suggested uprooting or burdening anyone. My proposal seeks to create a balance that minimizes the impact on all parties – residents and the consulate alike.

Your attempt at self-congratulation for publishing letters is misplaced. Publishing letters is the bare minimum required to foster democratic dialogue, not a noteworthy achievement.

Regarding the rhetorical question to readers about the fairness of the term "industrial Siberia," it seems neither fair nor accurate – it appears exaggerated and detracts from meaningful discussion. I encourage focusing on actionable solutions instead of resorting to dramatic language and mischaracterizations. A serious conversation about solutions should be grounded in facts and mutual respect, not

exaggerated claims.

By the way, as Yoda wisely said: "Do or do not. There is no try." Yet, you often preface your editorials with, "But I will try," which seems more like testing reactions rather than offering solid, truthful arguments with genuine intent.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the value of engaging with thoughtful and intelligent individuals. Thank you for your efforts.

With all due respect and wishing you all the best in the New Year.

DIANA HERNANDEZ, ST. CATHERINE ST.

**TIME FOR WESTMOUNT TO LEAD  
ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS**

I am writing to encourage the city council to take greater initiative and make more meaningful progress in environmental sustainability.

A recent example of the potential for action is the proposed project at 4216 Dorchester, which seeks major zoning variances, including a substantial increase in height and in the number of storeys from three to five. While these changes may be justified architecturally and contribute to increased density, council should insist the developer commit to more environmentally friendly concessions in exchange. This is standard practice where such zoning exceptions are granted in return for sustainability benefits to the community, especially when the variances result in such generous allowances to the owner-builder.

At the recent public consultation meeting for this Dorchester project, I submitted the following suggestions for consideration:

- A minimum LEED certification for the building;
- A green roof, which aligns with the city's own by-law addressing urban heat islands;
- Bicycle parking (the developer proposes 16 car parking spaces, but seemingly no specific mention of bicycles);
- Electric vehicle charging stations;
- A comprehensive construction waste management plan; and
- A reduction in the use of unnecessary masonry (Westmount has an outdated and wasteful requirement of an eight-inch thickness for non-structural cladding, while the industry norm is just four inches).

Frédéric Nault, the director of Urban Planning, responded to my suggestions, noting that these recommendations could be considered for future projects, but only at the time of the next regulatory review – a process the city plans to begin in two years. However, council could take

**WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT**

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LETTERS: We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit them to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week. Please check your letter carefully as we may be unable to make subsequently submitted changes. Letter writers should not expect to be published in every issue, or in back-to-back issues, or repeatedly in the same season or on the same topic.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

immediate steps toward adopting more sustainable practices now, particularly since the proposed measures are straightforward and easy to implement in the short term.

My involvement with Westmount's Environment and Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) has also highlighted the need for greater support and commitment from council. At our October meeting, the committee – made up of city-appointed citizens and two councillors – *unanimously* proposed three specific building-by-law changes it had wished to bring to council. The goal was to gauge council's openness to such recommendations before we dedicated further time and resources to our overall objectives.

Surprisingly, at our subsequent November meeting, we were informed that none of these recommendations would be considered, as they were deemed premature, requiring further research and outside the committee's mandate. As a result, I have since resigned from this committee because I no longer feel that our work was sufficiently valued or supported. However, I have not given up on the cause; I am optimistic that writing letters to the editor and participating in city council meetings will provide incentive for action and hopefully increase public awareness.

The ESAC is composed of knowledgeable and experienced volunteers who are passionate about improving our community. For their work to be more effective, it needs stronger logistical support with clearer communication and commitment from the city. Obstacles such as last-minute agendas, delayed meeting minutes, unannounced absenteeism from council representatives and a lack of access to relevant city data have all hampered the committee's ability to function effectively.

I encourage fellow citizens to join me in urging the city to take a more proactive and comprehensive approach to environmental issues – one that positions our community as a leader in sustainability and resilience.

RICHARD DUFOUR, ANWOTH RD.

### **CORRECTION: QUEBEC LIBERALS, MACCARONE VOTED AGAINST BILL 96**

I am an avid reader of the *Westmount Independent* and vice-president of the Westmount-St. Louis Association of the Québec Liberal Party.

In the December 3 edition of your newspaper (p. 18), you published a column by Mr. David Tait, who wrote that Bill 96, which is now LQ 2022 c. 14, "... was passed unanimously in the *Assemblée Nationale*."

Please be kind to inform Mr. Tait and

our fellow readers of the newspaper that this is false. The Québec Liberal Party, and particularly our member for Westmount-St. Louis, Ms. Jennifer MacCarone, voted against the bill. As a member of the party, I can let you know that I, along with others, am in favour of including the repeal of this law as party policy, or at the very least, against the renewal of its exemption from court scrutiny by the Notwithstanding Clause of the constitution.

This opposition to the act has cost the Québec Liberal Party a considerable amount of acrimony and accusations by many in the French-language media of being the party of the English and of Montréal.

While all members of the Quebec Liberal party support and favour the sustenance and flourishing of the French language in Québec and throughout Canada, we must contend with the reality described by Mr. Tait. However, in doing so, it does not help to equivocate on the facts and undermine those of us who work within the democratic and constitutional political process to make the changes to our laws.

Thus, I humbly and kindly would request you publish a correction or reply to Mr. Tait's affirmation in the next issue of your newspaper, which I always eagerly await to read.

Your friend,

FELIPE MORALES, VICE-PRESIDENT –  
WESTMOUNT-ST. LOUIS QUEBEC LIBERAL  
RIDING ASSOCIATION

### **APOLOGIES FOR BILL 96 ERROR**

I have been informed by the provincial Liberal Party that its elected representatives voted against Bill 96. I incorrectly wrote otherwise and I wish to apologize to the Liberal Party and *Westmount Independent* community.

DAVID TAIT, ST. MARGUERITE

### **MEMORIES OF PAST POSTAL STRIKES**

The editor's commentary on his efforts at door-to-door delivery ("Confessions of an amateur distributor," November 26, p. 7) brought back my own not-so-fond memories (which I'm sure can be corroborated by my brother [Ted Sancton, who does the *Independent's* graphic design]) of doing similar work during quite a few Canada Post strikes several decades ago for Westmount's former best local newspaper [*The Examiner*], which our family published.

I can certainly agree that one gets a new appreciation for the work of mail carriers when one is forced to fill their shoes. One big difference for us was that we were delivering papers that had been paid for by subscribers so we didn't have to go to every

house, but we did have to make sure the paper with the name and address on the label was delivered to the right location.

We had one big advantage over the current editor – age. We were both still in our spry 20s and early 30s in this bygone era [not early 50s like Price].

Sorry, Mr. Editor, but despite my valuable experience, or perhaps because of it, I'm not willing to volunteer to help you out this time.

DON SANCTON, BEACONSFIELD

**Editor's note:** Don Sancton was in turn news editor, editor and publisher of *The Westmount Examiner* from 1975 to 1992. It was founded in 1935 by Hugh E. McCormick (see February 2-3, 2010), purchased by Don's father, J. W. Sancton, in 1968, then Cogeco in 1989 and Transcontinental in 1996. It folded in 2015. – DP.

### **THANKS FOR DELIVERED INDEPENDENT**

How exciting to find the *Indie* delivered through my door! Now we are up to date on the goings on, in and around Westmount. Well done! Please stay in print. We need you!\*

BEVERLEY HUTCHISON, KITCHENER AVE.

### **THANKS FOR INDEPENDENT DELIVERY**

Just a quick note to thank you for the home delivery of this week's *Independent* yesterday, November 26. We've become so used to receiving it two or three days after the issue date it was a real treat to receive it on the day of issue. I know of course that we can read it online every week on the day it's published, but some of us oldies prefer the ink-and-paper version that we can hold and read like we did in the old days!

Kind regards, and thanks again for the weekly newspaper.\*

WILFRID DE FREITAS, KITCHENER AVE.

\***Editor's note:** Your copies were delivered by our graphics department. See p. 7. – DP.

### **THE NEW NORMAL?**

A few days ago, I was crossing St. Catherine St. at Park Place. When I stepped onto the sidewalk, I unfortunately slipped on some ice and fell on all fours. What bothered me was not the fall, but rather the individuals who walked by me in absolute silence as though I wasn't there!

Is this the new normal?

SAM BEITEL, ABBOTT AVE.

### **REMEMBER ATWATER LIBRARY LANDMARK DURING SOUTHEAST PLANNING**

*Open letter to Frédéric Neault, director of Urban Planning at the city of Westmount,*

*Westmount city council and Julie Bergeron, Lemay*

Dear Mr. Neault,

The Atwater Library and Computer Centre – founded in 1828 as the Montreal Mechanics' Institution – has served for almost two centuries as a vibrant community hub devoted to providing educational resources. Our 1920 landmark building, located in the heart of Westmount's southeast, bustles with activities: digital literacy workshops and courses, information sessions on personal finances and estate planning, job skills training, lunchtime lectures and concerts, writing workshops, book discussions, arts and crafts and exhibitions. In our already densely populated sector, we are a "third place" – a location outside of home or work where people can connect or relax.

Our beautiful heritage building is designated Category 1 by the city of Westmount, and a National Historic Site by the government of Canada. Over the past decade, we have invested \$5 million – two thirds of it from private donors – to conserve and upgrade the building. Improvements include an elevator and accessible entrance, a restored auditorium equipped with an AV system for livestreaming, and a transformed bookshop and art display area. In sum, we are a shining success story of heritage conservation for community benefit. Our efforts are aligned with the city of Westmount's goal of being "a leader in heritage conservation," to quote the city's website.

The Atwater Library and Computer Centre is eager to contribute to the planning of Westmount's southeast sector and has been pleased to participate in consultation meetings organized by Lemay. We actively support the Special Planning Program's stated goals of greening, improving mobility and connectivity, encouraging animation and strengthening community life.

However, we are concerned that development pressures resulting from a loosening of height restrictions in the immediate vicinity could threaten our magnificent heritage building. A residential tower of 25 storeys on the south side of St. Catherine St., just a few feet away from our building, was on a large-scale Lemay drawing at the November 14 consultation at Victoria Hall [**Editor's note:** This proposed building or allowance is on the Resilience/Miso/McDonald's lot, on the southwest corner of Atwater and St. Catherine St. – DP.].

Such a high-rise would not only overshadow our building but also jeopardize its structural integrity.

While we fully support the need to revital- .....

*continued on p. 14*



# What did Westmounters have to say about city's treatment of *Independent's* newspaper boxes?

Thank you to all our supporters, textual and not, known and not, in the past, present and future. For the background of this affair, see December 3, p. 10. – DP.

## FREE DEMOCRATIC PRESS LAST BULWARK

As a citizen of Westmount since 1985, I find the benefits of having our own newspaper at a time when most newspapers are going belly up to be multitudinous and should not to be surrendered to the present administration's obstructionist policies.

Before I respond to the questionnaire published in November 26 (p. 4) edition, I must express my alarm at the chilling note sounded by editor Price to be on guard when "dealing with the city: keep your correspondence and notes!" The last bulwark that citizenry has against the unreasonable behaviour of an administration fearful of any light being spilled on errant activities by its municipal civil servants is a free democratic press!

1. I believe that the city acted IMPROPERLY and detrimentally to Westmount citizens in its email of November 15 demanding all *Westmount Independent* boxes be removed from city lands during the postal strike.
2. Consequently, when a federal postal strike prevents delivery of the *Independent*, their boxes should be allowed on city land for easy access by its readers for the duration of that strike.
3. I support that the three "in limbo" locations be immediately allowed and that the test case *Independent* box at Roslyn//Upper Roslyn steps be continued after the postal strike.
4. The *Independent* is distinct from other free newspapers distributed due to its unique Westmount focus and doesn't deserve to be lumped with others under this designation.
5. I am appalled at the evident hostility shown by the Smith administration to the distribution of the *Independent*. I request an attitude that favours the existence of a free press rather than its Taliban approach in the future

As a taxpayer I want the present city administration TO HONOUR THE PERMISSION ALREADY GRANTED BY THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT DURING THE DURATION OF THE POSTAL STRIKE!

BRONWEN MANTEL, BRUCE AVE.

## WHY HAMPER FREE NEWSPAPER?

Why would the city of Westmount try to prevent the *Westmount Independent* from distributing its FREE newspaper to Westmount citizens? Yes, it's available on the

internet, but it's still valuable to have a local paper in print. What Westmount is doing scarcely feels in a democratic spirit.

We are glad that you are there, that you have values that we respect and that for us, you always try to do what is right.

CARLA LAUFER & ALFRED EDEL,  
VICTORIA AVE.

## CENSORSHIP, PLAIN AND SIMPLE

The city's sudden efforts to ban *Westmount Independent* distribution boxes during the postal strike is censorship. However, while the city might think that they were targeting the editor of the *Independent*, the real victims of censorship are the residents of Westmount and the opinions that they express through Letters to the Editor section.

The city's frustration with the *Independent* has become apparent. David Price provided examples in his editorial of November 26 (see September 21, 2021, p. 1, July 5, 2022, p. 1, October 1, 2024, p. 8). The *Independent* is here to report on all things Westmount, including decisions and actions (or inactions) by council and the administration. There is no other publication in Westmount that serves that purpose.

Over the past seven years, the frustration by some residents in council and the administration has resulted in an ever-increasing number of letters to the editor criticizing those same decisions, actions and inactions. Attempting to suppress the distribution of the *Independent* is effectively also attempting to suppress the views being expressed by residents. If the council and the administration have lost control of messaging, let's not blame the messenger.

Much has been made in the global media recently regarding how a characteristic of autocrats is their efforts to control the press. As editor Price asked in his editorial of November 26, "Is this [now] the Westmount Way?"

As much as the council and the administration do not like being challenged, residents have the right to express their views and letters to the editor in the *Westmount Independent* are one of the most effective ways to engage with our fellow citizens.

JIM RICHARDS, DORCHESTER BLVD.

## WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE WIDE-RANGING INDIE

Mayor Smith:

Why is it sometimes such a struggle to live (and work) in Westmount?

Look at what happened recently to *Independent* editor and publisher David Price:

like any astute business owner with a product to get to market, he had a contingency plan in case of a strike-related disruption to the Canada Post service he relies upon.

Mr. Price had reached an agreement with city hall to place fewer than a dozen old-fashioned metal newspaper boxes on city land at various locations (notably above Sherbrooke St.) to keep the paper in the hands of readers during a postal walkout – in other words, a temporary fix.

In his editorial describing what happened very soon after the strike started, it seems Westmount did a 180 and attempted to rescind permission for the boxes.

A flurry of emails ensued, as Mr. Price argued his case. Ultimately, your intervention, Mayor Smith, helped avoid what could well have been a financial disaster for a longstanding local business and resident, whose value to the community is measured other than in dollars and cents.

Explain, please: why does Westmount behave this way? Meetings, emails, phone calls ... a matter is settled, only to have a deal potentially blow up in one's face at the last minute?

In the case of the boxes and Mr. Price, why do this to a longstanding local enterprise *and* to the numerous retailers who spent precious dollars on holiday advertising in the *Indie*?

For all the city's talk about patronizing local merchants, for all the money, time and PR spent trying to revitalize Westmount's two key commercial sectors, how does reducing access to the *Independent* improve the situation? Especially now, when the city's holiday festivities join its 150th anniversary events to add to the communal momentum?

When the *Indie* first landed on doorsteps 17 years ago, newspaper boxes were long gone as a fixture of the urban landscape, including Westmount's. So it's not as if Mr. Price wanted to introduce something unknown on city streets. Indeed, oversized commercial waste bins and residential garbage cans line Westmount's sidewalks well in advance of pick-up day, or aren't removed until the day after collection. So if the city is indifferent to this, what's the objection to a lean, clean newspaper box tucked into a corner?

As for Westmount insisting that it cannot show favouritism to the *Indie* (in other words, if the *Indie* is allowed the boxes, other publications will want them, too), that's not the point. The *Indie* is not some fly-by-night circular or a glossy imprint published infrequently.

The *Indie* deserves the use of those boxes, because it has established deep

roots here and a strong connection with readers and advertisers. For the latter, the paper is likely the most efficient way to reach a niche clientele and grow their businesses. For residents, the *Indie* is our first, best and only source for local news, because Westmount is what the *Indie* has been all about from Day 1. And the *Indie's* wide-ranging coverage is a wonder on a shoestring staff.

In an age of partisan media, when legacy media are short on reporters, and headlines are seemingly dominated by health scares and celebrity fluff, the news out of Westmount city hall or down the street or around the corner (which can potentially affect one's home, neighbourhood and well-being) is something we cannot afford to lose.

Hard fact: Westmount cannot afford to lose a single local business. It's difficult enough running a small enterprise in Canada right now; don't make it harder for these engines of our economy by creating obstacles through petty excuses or outdated by-laws that can thwart their best efforts to succeed. Whether the current administration or a new one takes the reins of power in next year's municipal election, city hall should smooth the way as much as possible for locals to stay in business and thrive on clean, safe streets. That takes more than feel-good murals and semi-annual sidewalk sales.

DOROTHY LIPOVENKO & HENRY  
MIETKIEWICZ, YORK ST.

## APPALLING FIASCO

"Appalling" best describes Westmount's now-rescinded decision to not allow the *Independent* to provide 11 temporary newspaper boxes to ease pick-up of its paper during the postal strike. It violated the city's own longstanding commitment to do so. Is this the appropriate response of an "exceptional" city?

Also disturbing is the city administration making this consequential decision without even notifying the mayor. What on earth were they thinking?

Westmount newspapers have always been a key part of the city's urban heritage, vital in creating a strong identity and unique community. Residents have been blessed with quality news and information since 1935 – and by the *Independent* for the last 17 years. The postal strike could put its existence at risk. It's the city's duty, on behalf of all the residents, to protect this essential information source.

If Mayor Smith wants to talk about "precedent," it certainly exists here. It is called helping citizens in need. In times of



# Confessions of an amateur distributor (2)

BY DAVID PRICE, EDITOR

Advertisers: We are working to get your message out despite the postal strike.

\*

Most importantly, a heartfelt thank-you to my four volunteers, who have offered – out of the blue – to distribute the paper during Canada Post's strike. They are team member Ted Sancton, reader Marilyn Cooperman and two friends of mine (and readers), to be joined for this issue by team member Jennifer Ball. I think that my own assessment of distributing 1,000 a few weeks ago was high. It is currently more like 800, but as a group we are distributing about 2,400 to houses and duplexes, versus about 5,000 to houses and duplexes when Canada Post is operating.

\*

I would also like to thank the *Independent's* landlord, Barry Friedberg, and superintendent, Nick Vriniotis, for all the little accommodations they have made as we struggle to get more copies than normal into and out of the building.

For those who have seen our copies out for recycling, please know we are working to figure out better how many we actually need. In the early days of strike, it was necessary to order a lot in case we needed them because it makes no economic sense to reprint an issue. Bear with us.

\*

My own efforts to add some door-to-door distribution of the *Independent* continue and have grown a bit. Thoughts:

- What a variety of houses Westmount has! Some are grand. Some are work sites. Some look like they should be work sites. And all of this in all sorts of neighbourhoods. There are traditional “Westmount-style” 1900-1930 houses, Arts-and-Crafty-style houses that look like they belong in Chicago or out West, and ultra-modern ones. There is one house that I keep mistaking for an electric substation. There are tiny houses surrounded by monsters, and monsters surrounded by tiny houses.

And a surprise around every corner.

- Distribution technique. In areas with irregular blocks, adopting a “right-hand rule” (or left) makes sense. I do the right-hand portion of short cross streets along with the longer street in question. This works well between Victoria and Lexington, where I have improved my percentage of houses covered. In areas with constant-sized blocks, circumnavigating the block makes sense. This works well between Claremont and Murray Park.
- I am getting better at spotting hidden mail boxes and slots. Last week, I found at least five that I had been unable to find

before. Some are downright camouflaged.

- I have started to wonder about mail slot design. Why are they usually at the bottom of doors? For distributor and recipient, wouldn't mid-door be better? The deliverer would not have to bend and the recipient could easily attach a box to catch the mail and keep it off the floor.
- I have yet to optimize my number of papers carried. When you get to the end of an area and have to walk back to the car, you want them, but you don't want to carry them when you don't have to. The entire process is like some sort of puzzle for linear programming (a mathematical approach to optimizing certain variables that come of age in World War II). An advance problem for students would factor in the hills...
- God bless:
  - The designer and architects of Surrey Gardens and Oakland Ave. – flat streets with very few staircases up to front doors. I could distribute there all day.
  - People who put their mailboxes at their garage doors and not at the top of flights of stairs.
  - One house that has a post box right at the sidewalk. You are my friend.

Some funny and interesting things not visible to non-distributors:

- A plaque saying “Hippies use side door.” Who were the targeted hippies? Children of the owners? Grandchildren? And when was it put up? Yesterday, or 1970?
- A plaque saying: “On this day in 1897 in this spot, absolutely nothing happened.”
- A house with a delightful Welsh name meaning “beautiful mountain view” – just what the world needs more of!

(These quotations are from memory since taking pictures seemed inappropriate.)

- There is a house that can only be described as Mordor-chic. Lots of solid materials, black chains and black fences. After losing the War of the Ring (as chronicled in *The Lord the Rings*), did Sauron retire to Westmount? If so, please call us. We'd love to do a profile.
- My legs hurt, all the time.
- There is one very low porch fence between two semi-detached neighbours that tempts me for a vault each time I go by – until I notice that it is not one porch but two. If ever I disappear, look for me down the gap. Bring beer.

crises, of which there have been many, the city has always proactively stepped in. Today's national news demonstrates how various government departments are working to mitigate the negative personal and financial impact of the postal strike on Canadians.

Why was Westmount unwilling to do the same for its citizens?

This fiasco highlights two areas of concern.

1. Sometimes the city seems to act as if it is tone deaf to the needs of its residents, especially with respect to their quality of life. Getting this right has to be a priority.
2. There must also be far better coordination between the mayor and council, and the city's management. This latest issue adds to the many serious lapses of the past.

Both require immediate attention.

DENIS BIRO, 5000 DE MAISONNEUVE, NDG

## BOXES PERFECTLY REASONABLE REQUEST

The *Independent*, despite being small, is professional, and is necessary to serve as the watchdog on our local government, among other important tasks, such as informing us of criminal activity.

Allowing a handful of metal distribution boxes on city property during the mail strike is a perfectly reasonable request. And I would be in favour of allowing a few to remain even after the strike.

I'm also disturbed to hear of Public Works director Talarico reneging on his agreement to allow the boxes. Perhaps the *Independent* can get an interview with him to explain? Or an enterprising city councillor can query him at the next city council meeting? Hope so.

Keep up the good work.

ALEX SIMONELIS, SHERBROOKE ST.

## THE PRICE IS RIGHT

In the Summit Park/*Independent* newspaper box brouhaha and the Hernandez/correspondence kerfuffle, we should take our guidance from that well known tv epithet about the editorship of the *Westmount Independent*: The Price is Right.

ANTHONY WALTER, LANSDOWNE AVE.

## PROTECT INDEPENDENT, LOCAL BUSINESSES

Please let's have it that the *Westmount Independent* weekly newspaper can continue to be allocated the newspaper box space that was promised to it in February 2023.

This was a reasonable request to a possible situation, and his request was granted.

The disruption has now happened, and Mr. Price is being frustrated in his delivery of his *continued on p. 14*



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## PÉRIODE DES FÊTES 2024-2025

Les bureaux de la Ville seront fermés **du 24 décembre au 2 janvier** inclusivement. La Bibliothèque publique de Westmount et le Conservatoire seront fermés les **24, 25, 26 et 31 décembre** et les **1<sup>er</sup> et 2 janvier**.

Pour connaître les heures d'ouverture du Centre des loisirs de Westmount pendant la période des fêtes et rester à l'affût de tout changement, consultez [westmount.org](http://westmount.org).

Les collectes de recyclage du 25 décembre et du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier seront reportées au **27 décembre** et **3 janvier** respectivement.

## 2024-2025 HOLIDAY PERIOD

The City's offices will be closed **from December 24 to January 2** inclusively. The Westmount Public Library and the Conservatory will be closed **December 24, 25, 26 & 31, and January 1 & 2.**

For the Westmount Recreation Centre's holiday season hours and any updates, please visit [westmount.org](http://westmount.org).

The recycling collections that usually take place on December 25 and January 1 will be postponed to **December 27** and **January 3**, respectively.



# In its final year, council looks to necessary capital works, southeast

## Mayor's Column

CHRISTINA SMITH

As we come to the end of 2024, I want to wish you and your families a happy holiday season and all the best for 2025. Throughout this year, we have looked back with admiration and pride at the events, people and projects that have shaped our city into what it is today. We finished a year of celebrations for both the city's 150th anniversary and the Westmount Public Library's 125th anniversary.

This year, we accomplished a significant amount of infrastructure work, but there is so much more to do. Recently, we voted on our three-year capital works program, and on December 16, we will vote on the operating budget for 2025. The three-year capital works program is a detailed, quantified plan of the projects we hope to undertake, projects that are necessary and that will benefit the community. Our commitment must meet the community's needs, but must also prepare us for the challenges

ahead. We live in a community where the consequences of global warming are increasingly impacting our roads, water mains and infrastructure in general. A world where the growing electrification of transportation will require us to invest massively to meet the demand for electricity in our cities. We are also in a time when much of our infrastructure is due for rebuilding or significant maintenance. In the coming years, we will have to meet the challenge in upgrading our infrastructure.

### Three-year capital works program

The three-year capital works program we adopted does not address all problems at once, but it is part of our commitment to meeting these challenges. We must maintain and preserve the green spaces that are the joy and pride of Westmounters. Invest so that our parks are more accessible and adapted to our community. Some of our roads are still in deplorable condition, we are very aware of the challenging state of some of our roads, and next year's work will continue to invest heavily in the upgrading of the roads and sidewalks.

We also know that we must continue to invest in the maintenance, rehabilitation, or replacement of certain sections of our

water main network, some of which are a century old. For 2025, we plan to invest more than \$20 million in road and water main projects. So much of the work we will undertake will be driven by the state of the underground infrastructure. We know that below the road is in some cases much more important than the state of its surface. These projects are essential to continue providing service that meets our expectations. All of this must be done strategically in order to minimize the impact of these works on resident's quality of life. Simply put, we cannot do all the work that needs to be done in one year alone, nor can we pay for it. Please visit our website to look at the projects planned for the coming years.

In 2025, we will also continue to do the important planning work for the redevelopment of the southeast sector, an area that deserves investment and a zoning renewal to help it reach its full potential. This will be one of the most important projects that the city will undertake. Many residents have participated in the public consultations, and I hope you continue to share your vision for this area.

Municipalities face significant challenges. The aging infrastructure and

increased demand for services will continue to rise. The increased cost of public security, the impact of climate change, and housing demands will continue to be beyond what municipalities can afford. Westmount is not alone in facing the challenge of how we can afford to address these issues, both the federal and provincial governments must work with municipalities to invest back into the communities they serve.

As we head into the final year of this council's mandate, I am grateful to be a part of this incredible community. It is an honour to be able to serve this city and its residents. I am also thankful for the work of Westmount's employees who deliver the services to our city.

Again, this year, our Public Security team is leading the efforts to collect non-perishable food items for our holiday baskets for families in need. You can still donate until December 13 at the library, Victoria Hall, city hall, Public Security or the recreation centre. If you can't drop it off, we are happy to pick it up; please call 514.989.5367.

Wishing you health and happiness for the holiday season and all the best for 2025.

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# Westmount youth shine in annual holiday card initiative

## Guest column

JENNIFER MACCARONE,  
MNA FOR WESTMOUNT-ST. LOUIS



school participated, and four exceptional drawings by grade 4 students were chosen to represent Westmount-St. Louis on our 2024 holiday card. These young artists poured their creativity and hearts into their work, crafting images that beautifully capture the magic of the season.

Selecting the artwork is never an easy task, as every submission reflects the unique vision and talent of its creator, and we have many, many talented artists to choose from! I'm always inspired by the originality and thoughtfulness our young citizens bring to this project. The selected

drawings not only celebrate the holiday spirit but also showcase the tremendous potential and imagination of our students.

This initiative is about more than art though – my hope is that it's a way to bring our community closer together. It reminds us of the value of nurturing creativity in our children, celebrating their accomplishments, and fostering a sense of belonging. These cards, sent far and wide, carry with them a piece of our riding's vibrant community spirit.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the leadership team at St. Léon de Westmount for their enthusiastic participation, and to the parents who encourage and support their children's creative pursuits. Most importantly, I want to thank all the students who took the time to create and share their beautiful art with us. Your talent is a gift to our community, and your work will spread joy to everyone who receives these cards this holiday season.

As we prepare to celebrate the holidays, I encourage everyone to take a moment to appreciate the creativity and energy of our youth. They remind us of the importance of imagination, community, and the power of coming together to create something beautiful. Happy holidays to all!



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## Council asked about cannon, winter garbage pick-up

# Year's last regular session hears new, ongoing concerns

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The last regular city council meeting of the year December 2 attracted a dozen attendees whose questions from the floor took up almost an hour while another half-hour of questions generated from those submitted online were read and answered.

New concerns involved the city's restored 1810 cannon, protection of green spaces, street repairs and resurrection of the proposed SCAOPI construction project at 4216 Dorchester whose permit had expired but underwent a new recent public consultation meeting (see story December 4).

With the day's light snow falling, one question pertaining to the city's reduced winter garbage collection to every two weeks was raised by Rony Cukier, of Rosemount. He renewed a request for an update on the additional cost per household to reinstate weekly pick-up. He stated that the city's heavy roller bins could prove challenging for some residents to push to curbside. And what would happen in a snowstorm that might occur on that one pick-up day?

Mayor Christina Smith said that signifi-

cant changes could not be made under the current garbage contract while District 1 Councillor Antonio D'Amico reiterated a solution he had previously proposed for residents needing help: to contract it from a landscaper they might already use.

### New concerns

Another one of the new questions came



Rony Cukier.

from Patrick Barnard, of Melville, concerning city plans for the use of the its small green space at the corner of Dorchester and Clarke just east of Westmount High School. When told by Councillor Conrad Peart that this was still in discussion (as part of plans for the southeast development), Barnard said "It's important that it be preserved."



George Bowser.

Another new topic came from former city councillor George Bowser, of Columbia, now vice-president of the Westmount Battery, which cares for the city's 1810 cannon now rarely seen in public since restoration except on Remembrance Day.

Bowser asked for a list of potential dates when the cannon could be fired so that residents could come out and see them. Acknowledging they were a great part of the city's history, Mayor Christina Smith answered that "We are very supportive of the idea... Yes, we will get it into the calendar."

### Strange odour on de Maisonneuve near Alexis Nihon

Another resident asked for information he said he made to Public Works concerning "a strange odour" coming from a spot on de Maisonneuve in front of Alexis Nihon Plaza. "It stinks so much." This appeared to take many by surprise.

While the council plans to hold a special council meeting December 16 to present the 2025 operating budget, the only questions that will be allowed at that time will be those pertaining to the budget.



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# Season's Greetings from The Study

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# Holweger wins Rotary Club of Westmount's 'Service Above Self' award

BY JENNIFER BALL

The Rotary Club of Westmount's Service Above Self award honours individuals



Seth Holweger holding the Rotary Club of Westmount's Service Above Self award in Cabot Square at Atwater Ave. and St. Catherine St. on November 15.

who help others by volunteering their time and talents. This year's recipient is Westmount High School graduate and St. Andrew's Venturer Seth Holweger.

The award was given at the graduation ceremony for the class of 2024 on October 27 at Westmount High, found at 4350 St. Catherine St.

Holweger won the award for service to his community during his senior year and he has now started CEGEP at Vanier College.

Kim Sipos, English language arts department head at Westmount High, told the *Independent* on November 15, "We chose [Holweger] for this award due to [his] decision to continue [his] studies at a post-secondary school, [his] involvement in school activities like Battle of the Books and [his] involvement in the greater community through Scouts."

The goal of the Battle of the Book program is to encourage and to recognize students who enjoy reading and to broaden their reading interests.

## Back story

Holweger said, "I was really honoured to receive the award and wasn't expecting it."

Holweger learnt the concept of helping others early.

He told the *Independent* he was in the 2nd Westmount Scouts and has advanced to become a St. Andrew's Venturer. They meet at Roslyn public school on alternate Wednesday evenings, at 4699 Westmount Ave., so food drives and providing for the less fortunate are familiar to him.

When asked why benevolence and service were important to him, he said "I feel that it's just important to help other people

as much as is reasonably possible...

"It is something that I've always held in high regard..."

"If you can help, then why not at least do something?"

Holweger is currently in the Pathways program at Vanier College, "which is a way for me to gain more knowledge in chemistry and maths, and I am going to be going into the environmental management and wildlife program, which is a forestry course..."

"It is the most interesting course that I have found after going to four open houses..."

"I have always been interested in the outdoors and animals."

*Jennifer Ball, the reporter who authored this story, is a member of the Rotary Club of Westmount.*

## At Greene & de Maisonneuve

# City's first winter Bixi station follows a year's request

By Lauren Sweeney

News came from the city last month that the Bixi station at the corner of Greene and de Maisonneuve will become Westmount's first winter one on the east-west corridor linking NDG with downtown.

It was at last year's December 18 council meeting that Dan Lambert, as president of the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount, had requested that all three of the city's stations on the bike path be kept open. "I never heard back," he told the *Independent* last week.

"We were surprised [now] that Westmount decided to try just one station at de Maisonneuve and Greene with a small number of slots," Lambert said last week.

Asked for information on the winter station, city director general Julie Mandeville told the *Independent* that "the winter Bixi

service includes gradual adaptation of the bikes for winter use (studded tires), de-icing and snow removal of the station and address radius, maintenance and replacement of defective components."

As a result, the cost of the winter station and services included totals \$12,013.74, taxes included, Mandeville said. "While Bixi provides data to municipalities on use of service during the season, the winter project will enable us to obtain data on winter use of the resource and destination." This will enable the city to "assess whether or not we wish to integrate this service for future years."

## Judging success

Having a sole station "will not be convenient for many Westmount Bixi users," Lambert said last week. As a result, "it will be too difficult for the city to judge the success of the winter Bixi network."

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# Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season!

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## Public Security food drive events add \$1,720, more expected



Left photo, shoppers were donating non-perishable food items and cash to Public Security's collection December 3 outside the Metro grocery store on Victoria December 2 when parking inspectors Stéphanie Rodrigues and William Harris were on duty; right photo: parking inspectors David Brossard, left, and William Harris were enjoying the chilly conditions outside 5 Saisons on Greene Ave. December 4 to collect non perishables foods for families in need in Westmount. The challenge was to fill the Public Safety vehicle.

LEFT PHOTO: LAUREEN SWEENEY; RIGHT: RALPH THOMPSON.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Public Security's holiday food drive continued last week with kiosks set up outside the Metro store on Victoria for "Giving Tuesday," December 3, followed by one outside Les 5 Saisons on Greene the next day.

A patrol car was filled with the donations from shoppers on Victoria where \$850 was received in cash, according to assistant Public Security director Kim Colquhoun. "Although it is tougher to receive food donations on Greene, we did manage to fill half the car and collect \$870 in cash."

Anyone unable to contribute last week can drop off donations at the Westmount recreation centre, Victoria Hall, the Westmount Public Library, city hall and the Pub-

lic Safety office or call Colquhoun at 514.989.5367 x3 to arrange for a pick-up at home.

"We have new families that have been added to our list from the CLSC this year," she said. "And there are many children on the list this year. We start putting together baskets December 13 to 16. We also have some local clubs and associations collecting on our behalf."

These include the Westmount Lawn Bowling and Croquet Club, Justin McManus Hockey, and 215 Redfern, to name a few. She also added that "some wonderful residents come by to help sort through the food and make baskets with us." Along with non-perishable foods, other items such as diapers and toiletries are accepted.

### Support letters, cont'd from p. 7

fine newspaper, paid for by his advertisers who want to reach readers to tell them of their goods and services.

There is no reason to penalize Westmount businesses by not giving them the distribution that they are paying for, nor deny Westmounters the weekly service of reading the newspaper, including the advertisements.

Westmount is very fortunate to have a great local newspaper that tells us many things, and to have businesses that support it.

Please let's do all that we can to protect both.

WILLEM WESTENBERG, STAYNER ST.

### Letters to the editor, cont'd from p. 5

ize the neighbourhood, we urge Westmount not to repeat the mistakes of Griffintown. We believe it is essential that any new construction in southeast Westmount respect the heritage value and importance of this gem that is the Atwater Library and Computer Centre. We respectfully request that the planning process embrace our institution as an anchor for enhancing our sector and involve our representatives in re-calibrating the project.

BRUCE D. BOLTON, PRESIDENT – ATWATER LIBRARY AND COMPUTER CENTRE  
LYNN VERGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – ATWATER LIBRARY AND COMPUTER CENTRE



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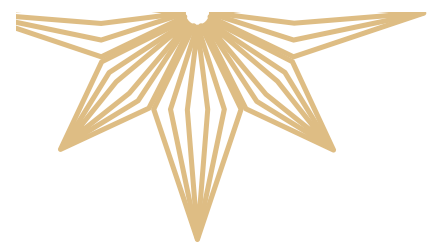


FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ANTOINE DUFORT-PLANTE, PETER HIGGINS, CHARLOTTE MATTE, PASCAL COUILLARD, STEPHANIE MURRAY, CHRISTINA MILLER, JONATHAN MARTINET, TYLER LE WARNE, MARIE-Alice COURET, JULIE LACROIX, MARIE-NOËLLE NADEAU, FRANCESCA SGAMBETTERRA & JUDY LITVACK.

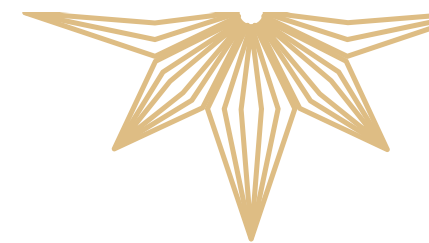
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# THANK YOU



CLASS OF 2024

FOR MAKING THIS YET ANOTHER EXCEPTIONAL YEAR!

**SOLD** amazing thomas & alice advance out of aberdeen vibrantly venturing into the ventricles of vic village **SOLD** amir accelerates away from henri-jarry, assembling an astute acquisition with an attractive, authentic apartment on st-alexandre **SOLD** fehmda, fond of her family home, finally sells after fifty fulfilling years **SOLD** stephanie says 'salut' to spectacular st-alexandre, stepping steadfastly toward stunning new starts **SOLD** a captivating new condo captures carol's attention convincing her it's time to make a move **SOLD** james, rachel, & baby rory rejoice in relocating near reassuring relatives **SOLD** bradley, blissfully living by the boardwalk, boldly buys a big, beautiful abode on argyle **SOLD** jackie journeys from boston to montreal managing, with michael, the massive move from mitchell **SOLD** bernard, bravant brillamment bien ses années à westmount, bouscule & choisit mcdougall pour bénéficier d'une vie bien balancée **SOLD** with lifetime best buddy by his side, brilliant bachelor bids a beloved bye-bye to his burton abode **SOLD** nicolas & isabelle conclut sur cote-st-antoine, célébrant le commencement d'un chapitre captivant de leur vie commune **SOLD** the tanners close the chapter on the clan's cavendish casa **SOLD** cédrick, courageusement concentré, conclut l'achat de son condo sur centre, célébrant ce conquérant succès après des mois de conseils **SOLD** stéphane savoure son sublime condo central avec des vues des plus spectaculaires du centre-ville **SOLD** after many meticulous visits & much meditation, john & marjolaine make magic moving to marvelous mountain **SOLD** benjamin & julia ann cheerfully close their current chapter, courageously chasing new chances & creating a charming new space **SOLD** mike closes a meaningful chapter in mercier, moving to make memories with his minions **SOLD** nimble nicholas swiftly **SOLD** his stylish chester street plex settling into a serene single-family sanctuary **SOLD** caro a quitté son coin de quartier pour un captivant condo en compagnie de son chien, le charmant wilson **SOLD** jonathan & christopher confidently conclude the chapter of their cherished childhood casa **SOLD** pierre & michèle, courageux & créatifs, composent avec charme la cession de leur condo dans les cantons **SOLD** thomas & kim, confiants & de coeur, quittent leur cocon pour conclure un coin de paradis à pointe-st-charles **SOLD** claudia change de cap en choisissant un chic condo sur coleraine **SOLD** john & karma kick out of carleton with command manoeuvring a momentary move to a flat on the flats **SOLD** karen & sergio concretaron su congreso de compras, al conseguir su casa en Canadá **SOLD** france, fidèle à sa quête du contentement, quitte son quartier & acquiert un condo tout en couleur **SOLD** robert & elizabeth commence a charming chapter, purchasing a cute condo on côte-sainte-catherine **SOLD** samuel & dana decide to depart redfern, disposing of their dear dwelling to dive into a daring new direction **SOLD** correy & jillian divest from their david-lewis digs heading their homestead to heavenly hampstead **SOLD** jennifer & dimitrios discover marlowe, moving their munchkins to a marvelous maison **SOLD** dobromir déménage d'un doux domicile pour dresser des défis divers **SOLD** rozlyn & daphne dutifully depart from drummond, drawing a determined decision to their delightful digs **SOLD** james & aiden deliver a dynamic deal on a duplex in a desirable district **SOLD** simon & sarah s'assurent un superbe avenir en s'achetant un duplex distingué downtown **SOLD** didier diligently divested from his divided dwelling discovering delightful new digs in a dynamic district **SOLD** elizabeth eagerly embraces her east-bound exit, exploring her cute coloniale condo **SOLD** juliana & eduardo adeptly exit their amazing abode on alluring anwoth **SOLD** robert & emily manage a minimal move from marlowe to marlowe, while merrily maintaining their momentum awaiting their first munchkin **SOLD** jay & puja part with their st-paul pad purchasing a princely pied-à-terre in a prestigious place **SOLD** elisa & étienne, emplis d'enthousiasme, offrent enfin une élégante maison à leur entourage, un énorme élan après des années en espace exigu **SOLD** bruno & félix finalisent le transfert de leur fabuleux plex perché sur le chemin-de-l'air-pur **SOLD** neil & evelyn navigate new neighbourhoods near their nurturing network of family **SOLD** nima secures simpson, a stunning century home set for a significant renaissance **SOLD** alison & mathieu make their move from westmount wandering their way into wonderful west island **SOLD** elsa elegantly eased out of exceptional ecu **SOLD** country girl lyne lets go of her mother's lair longing to lodge her in a lovely dwelling **SOLD** les giards gagnent en se négociant un grand logement **SOLD** laid-back larry leaves his legendary lodging landing in a lovely loft with lookouts **SOLD** carlos & erika cambiaron a una casa coqueta en campo, que les concede calma y confort **SOLD** paolo & rafael réalisent un rêve ravissant, résolument réservant un futur riche & rempli de réussites **SOLD** zoe heads from hillside, happily hopping into her harmonious new home on the plateau **SOLD** gab & caro, comblés, ont choisi une charmante chaumière dans leur cher outremont, près de leurs compagnons **SOLD** glamorous adam & lauren gleefully go to gorgeous st-georges **SOLD** brad & phil pick a precious pied-à-terre in glorious golden square mile **SOLD** adryanne & mike purchase a perfect place to personalize in greenfield park **SOLD** richard & nathalie gleefully give a groovy new gang their delightful digs **SOLD** jazzy joan is jubilant jetting out of her jewel on grosvenor & marching on to merry maisonneuve **SOLD** larry & sema focus on finishing the full fleecing of the family flat before flying down the four-0-one **SOLD** the chamandy-cook crew, with capable hands, command a coup d'éclat closing on their parents' charming condo **SOLD** erika & jaimie establecieron en un espléndido entorno, encontrando el hogar ideal en la encantadora colonia de st-hubert **SOLD** jacob jumps into his first joint, journeying into a jubilant life as a joyful homeowner **SOLD** isabelle & alain disent 'au-revoir' à leur ancienne adresse, admirablement aménagée et avancement audacieusement vers une nouvelle aventure pour y aménager un abri des plus accueillants **SOLD** jacqueline & david depart their domain, diving into dynamic new digs on nuns' island **SOLD** phyllis jumps for joy on jasmin selling the perfect pad in lovely laval **SOLD** ngui, formidable hôtesse & fidèle amie, s'offre avec ferveur un nid fleuri **SOLD** making their memorable move from marlowe, jeremie & jacqueline joyfully journey to crafting cherished connections in their charming casa **SOLD** jill & phil playfully padded past picturesque peaks, proceeding from the marvelous mountain to the trendy townships **SOLD** sophie vend sur andré-prévost & vibrante de joie, s'installe à ville-mont-royal **SOLD** sarrah & jean-philippe jump for joy juggling their way to jean bouillet **SOLD** joanne & john jugent le moment juste pour se joindre sur prospect en se défaisant de demaisonneuve **SOLD** lynn lovingly leaves her light-filled lair, looking forward to new leaps & lovely adventures ahead **SOLD** the steins skedaddle from their saint-lambert split-level sailing steadfastly to their sanctuary in the sky **SOLD** laura & daniel depart from



HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS!



# LOOKING TO BE PART OF CLASS OF 2025? CALL US FOR AN APPRAISAL!

their delightful family domicile, diving into dynamic new directions **SOLD** marvelous mina makes the move from lovely laval to merry montreal **SOLD** catherine & pascal bid 'bye-bye' to beautiful brock & lightheartedly leave to st-lazare **SOLD** justin & hart happily head for home, the perfect place for the promising pitter-patter of little feet **SOLD** louis & sandrine s'offrent une superbe suite surplombant la ville avec un îlot idéal pour leurs invités **SOLD** doctor optimistically offers up his old abode opting for a new outlook in ottawa **SOLD** coquette claudine laisse lansdowne se logeant localement dans un lumineux logis **SOLD** allan & laurie leave their lovely abode in upper-belmont to tiptoe over to terrific tmr **SOLD** lise & mark plan a major move from their de maisonneuve manor to take up residence on redfern **SOLD** mareva, marquée d'un merveilleux ménage, mène d'une main de maître un déménagement sur bélanger **SOLD** andy & lynn leave their linton lair, launching into new life lessons & lasting chapters **SOLD** michelle manages mum's matters, moving to market the memorable family mansion & maintaining many meaningful memories **SOLD** the beautiful brood of tmr's marvellous matriarch gets going from graham **SOLD** josé & mark, make a move & manage his mom's duplex, marking a meaningful moment **SOLD** marc a merveilleusement matérialisé son rêve en mettant la main sur un magnifique ménage dans la vieille ville avec des vues enivrantes **SOLD** peter & myrna merrily move from their marvelous mountainside maison **SOLD** matthew manages a mighty move from the canal, manoeuvring down the mighty four-O-one **SOLD** nakin moves on from marvelous memories made on montevideo, mindful of the magical moments that shaped her family **SOLD** camille & mikhail, motivated & merging, march on from montreal making memories as they secure a sweet spot on the south-shore **SOLD** heartwarming hasmik handles her mother's home with humility handing it over to happy new homeowners **SOLD** annelise & mark make a memorable mountainside move, marking a magnificent new chapter full of magical moments **SOLD** charlotte & mustafa opt out of ottawa, finding a fabulous future to forge fun-filled days & fantastic new feats **SOLD** grace gracefully decides to downsize discovering her dream digs nestled nearby necessities **SOLD** narrant leur nouvelle réussite, marc-olivier & nickolas naviguent nimbement vers de nouvelles aventures **SOLD** nathaniel navigates to éclusiers, nixing drummond for a nifty new nest near the nostalgic canal **SOLD** stephanie & kevin leave their cool northview court crib choosing the cozy comfort of a country compound **SOLD** the ocampos observe an overwhelmingly nostalgic 'au-revoir' to their mcm oasis on sunny st-georges **SOLD** carissa & alan navigate away from their notable northcliffe nest, nudging toward new, novel niches & nourishing new opportunities **SOLD** leslie & rob trade their top-notch townhouse for a historic heritage home **SOLD** sasa sells her splendid spot & opts for opulent oxford **SOLD** les rollands disent adieu à de maisonneuve optant pour une occasion en or à outremont **SOLD** marjorie moves from her much-loved, memory-filled maison to make more meaningful moments in magnificent ottawa **SOLD** catherine & her pet peanut pounce from one hip pad to an even hipper & happier place **SOLD** christian & genevieve pick the perfect peaceful penthouse in pretty old port **SOLD** rachel réalise un renouveau en répliquant 'au revoir' à son remarquable penthouse **SOLD** masa & raya proudly purchase their perfect premier pied-à-terre on peel **SOLD** jasmien rejoices in her remarkable first residence, a radiant & refined resting place across the park **SOLD** adam & jasmine jump joyfully from the pretty plateau to a beautiful abode on brock **SOLD** passionate plateau pair, james & paul, pondering a practical property, sell their spacious square-st-louis stunner & settle into a sleek city space **SOLD** daniel discovers his dream on des prairies, diving into a dynamic new direction **SOLD** anthony & sari punch out of prince for the promise of a project-packed property **SOLD** pragmatic lawrence passes his potential property on to a promising prospect poised to polish it into perfection **SOLD** annie & peter pick a pretty pied-à-terre, providing a perfect place for peaceful moments **SOLD** ashanti & pablo purchased the perfect property, preparing for their propagating "pod" **SOLD** aïcha, leïla & cie célèbrent la cession de leur premier capital sur st-georges **SOLD** quittant son condo sur coloniale, paul part paisiblement du plateau prêt pour sa prochaine péripétie **SOLD** catherine quitte le calme de pointe-claire pour l'élégance enivrante d'elm **SOLD** julie-anne & dominic, réunis & remplis de rêves, sont ravis de retrouver leur route vers rosemere **SOLD** nima navigates to redpath, restoring a remarkable residence as a rewarding investment **SOLD** eklas & amir readily rent out a really nice residence **SOLD** hélène & étienne abdiquent la beauté de beaconsfield se réjouissant de leur retraite en région **SOLD** saying "so-long" ste-julie, willy & violeta venture into a valuable & versatile revenue property **SOLD** robert & sylvie savourent leur superbe chalet, situé sur des rives splendides à l'estérel **SOLD** ron relaxes as his roomy residence is readily reserved **SOLD** sébastien skillfully sails out of his st-ambroise studio satisfied in staying settled outside the city **SOLD** the hendersons succeed in a super sentimental sale after their sweet mom sets sail **SOLD** bidding 'bye-bye' to burton, andrea & sarantos secure a sophisticated sale in a storied sanctuary **SOLD** susan & her siblings say 'sayonara' to their sumptuous spot in the super sought-after westmount sq **SOLD** jasmine & drew daringly downsize from a delightful semi-detached to a darling new abode **SOLD** mel, bonnie, & stella stay on their sought-after, serene street, soaring to a splendid sky house **SOLD** amazing aïcha savoure sa retraite avec sérénité, se séparant avec succès de son bien citoyen **SOLD** jose & monica shimmy out of sherbrooke scoring a classy condo on claremont & creating a chic new chapter **SOLD** a sister assisting her sister, is what siblings are for & proves to be simply sensational **SOLD** shirley's standout sale signals success, sparking sensational new steps toward a stellar future **SOLD** endearing emma, eager & excited, expresses gratitude to mom as she enters the educational epicenter **SOLD** sweet sophia's sails out of ste-famille signalling her start in a serene & stylish studio space **SOLD** jen & peter pick a pretty piece of property on hip st-hubert **SOLD** mouk, mû par la motivation, signe sur st-jacques dans le sud-ouest & marque un merveilleux moment en immobilier **SOLD** mario & sylvie s'offrent splendeur & sérénité sur le bord de l'eau du sud-ouest **SOLD** keyvan & sophie sweetly say 'so-long' to their stunning sun-filled semi **SOLD** joseph & solange se lancent solidement dans l'achat d'un immeuble sur l'île, symbole d'un sage investissement **SOLD** gabriel & alexia amorcent une nouvelle aventure aliénant leur bungalow de blainville pour un triplex terriblement tendance **SOLD** yu & zhang turn toward a terrific future, taking time to treasure a stunning townhouse for their thriving tribe **SOLD** elizabeth & thomas tiptoe triumphantly from the nifty netherlands to picturesque prince albert **SOLD** félix & bruno concluent avec classe la vente de leur domicile divin sur de l'église **SOLD** alexis checks out of his quaint & quiet casa acquiring a condo in a captivating quartier **SOLD** virginie & steven wander wistfully from wonderful westmount to start something swell in the states **SOLD** eric ends his extensive exploration, effortlessly exiting to an exceptional condo on wood.

**SPECIAL THANKS** to our buyers whose perfect places have yet to be picked, to our sellers whose homes are still to be **SOLD**, to our classy colleagues who offer consistent capable collaboration **AND** finally to our precious & growing group for being every year, the team that tames every tangle | **CONGRATULATIONS** to all our **KIND CLIENTS** for your continued confidence in our crew! Wishing you **HEALTH, LOVE & LAUGHTER** this holiday season.





## WESTMOUNT | JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup> TO NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> 2024 VS 2023

### CURRENT LISTINGS

| DETACHED           | SEMI / ROW HOUSES   | CONDOS              |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 84<br><b>+ 25%</b> | 162<br><b>+ 24%</b> | 161<br><b>+ 20%</b> |

### # OF DAYS ON THE MARKET

| DETACHED          | SEMI / ROW HOUSES   | CONDOS             |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 90<br><b>- 8%</b> | 69<br><b>+ 4.5%</b> | 92<br><b>+ 67%</b> |

### NUMBER OF SALES

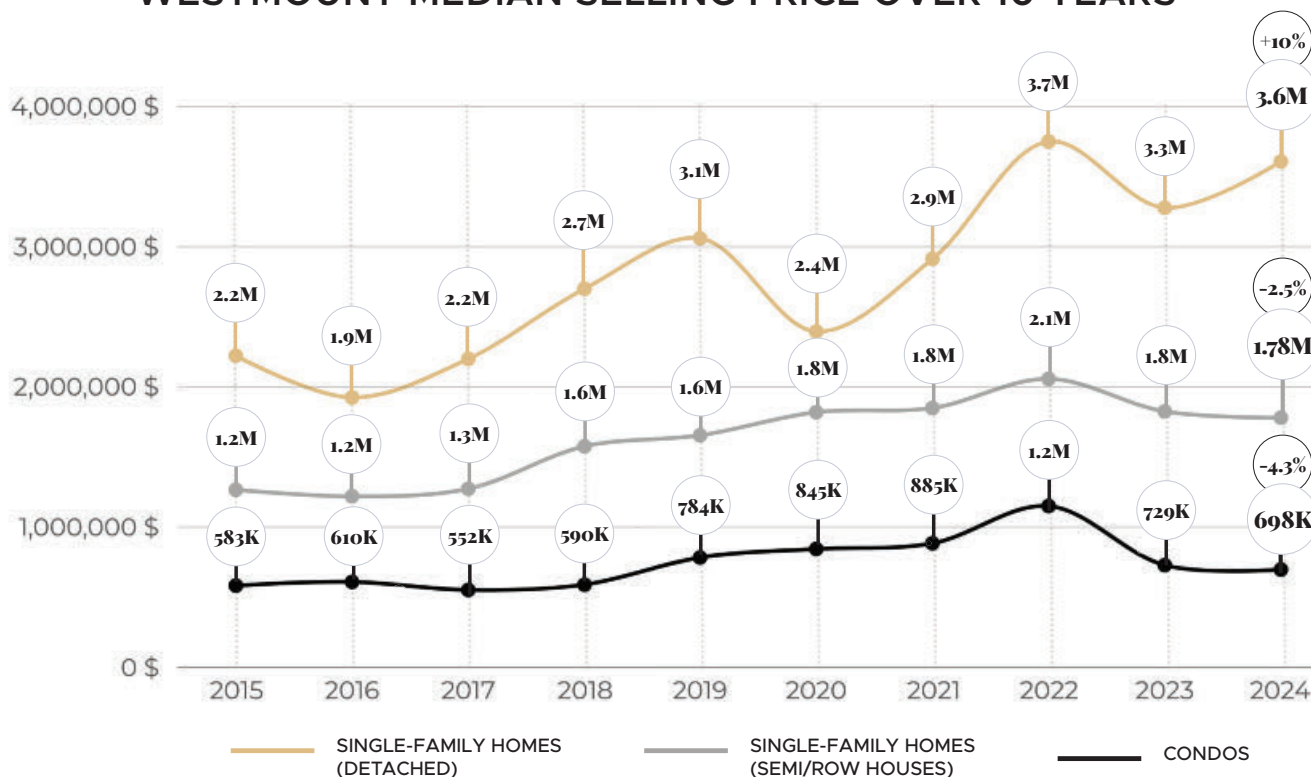
| DETACHED           | SEMI / ROW HOUSES  | CONDOS             |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 39<br><b>+ 18%</b> | 88<br><b>+ 14%</b> | 62<br><b>+ 19%</b> |

### MONTHS OF INVENTORY

| SINGLE FAMILY HOMES  | CONDOS               |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 11.4<br><b>+ 21%</b> | 14.7<br><b>- 11%</b> |

Source: Centris.ca and Christina Miller Group data @ November 30th, 2024

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**Rues Principales gets contract to help merchants**

# Council votes \$60,960 for commercial development

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The non-profit organization called Rues Principales was awarded a total of \$60,960 plus taxes by city council December 2 to develop a strategy to help revitalize the city's commercial areas with their merchants' associations in Victoria village and Quartier Greene.

In a resolution moved by Councillor Conrad Peart, whose commissionership includes Urban Planning, it was explained that it is "the council's intention to award a contract for professional services to con-

duct a study of commercial development."

"This is to have expert consultants provide a strategic plan for development of our commercial areas," according to Councillor Matt Aronson, who seconded the motion as commissioner for economic development.

It was in 2019 that branding for Westmount's eastern and western commercial districts was unveiled to identify commercial areas.

This had been discussed at an "Entrepreneurial night" (see story May 7, 2019, p. 7).

## Tax sales? Paying up before heading to auction

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Of the 43 properties listed by the city for sale by auction on December 9, only one remained Friday, December 6, city officials said.

"We strongly believe it will be paid early on Monday morning," city director general Julie Mandeville said while awaiting final

word. "Every year, the last ones come to city hall to pay the morning of the sale."

This year's list was the longest in recent memory compared to 25 initially on the list a year ago.

In the end, the city was indeed announcing on its website by 10:30 am December 9 that all tax balances had been paid and there would no auction.

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# Christmas tree lighting on city hall lawn

BY RALPH THOMPSON

The holiday season was officially welcomed in by the mayor and city council members, choirs and jazz December 2 with the lighting of the giant Christmas tree in front of city hall.

At around 5:15 pm, Mayor Christina Smith and her deputized young helper pulled the light switch, and the magnificent tree burst into life to loud applause and clapping.

### Food, kids, music

An excited crowd of around a hundred parents, children, a few dogs and others rocked to the sounds of Westmount's children's choir led by Ira Sokolova singing traditional carols, laid-back jazz performed by Maia Prasad (voice), João Menegale Barbi (bass) and Julian Shirely (keyboard), and the Victoria Hall adult choir led by Laura Albrecht.

Staff and volunteers served up freshly baked cookies, hot chocolate and spiced-apple herbal tea. As has become the norm, there wasn't a sign of snow, but the lack of rain and pleasant wintery temperatures made the evening a lot of fun and valuable community event.

See photos on p. 1.

# Scouts distribute trees at St. Andrew's



For the last two decades Westmount Scouting groups have been selling Christmas trees and wreaths to the community as an annual fundraiser. "Losing Mountainside United Church as a sponsor has dealt challenges to the 2nd Westmount group including a site for people to pick up their trees," Scouter Virginia Elliott told the Independent by email. "This year, St. Andrew's Daycare [on Hillside Ave.] helped out by offering their premises for the main pick-up site. Pictured here are several scouting volunteers who spent November 30 helping people trim and load up their trees. For more info contact westmountscouts@yahoo.ca."

PHOTO COURTESY OF V. ELLIOTT.

*Happy Holidays!*

*May this season be filled with joy, love, and precious moments with your loves ones.*

*Merci pour votre confiance et votre engagement dans notre communauté.*

*I wish you a Happy New Year et une bonne année 2025, filled with health and happiness.*

*Votre députée,  
Jennifer*



**Jennifer Maccarone, MNA for Westmount-Saint-Louis**



514 395-2929



Jennifer.Maccarone.WSL@assnat.qc.ca



MaccaroneWSL



JMaccarone



JMaccarone



'Mother and Child' statue reported stolen

## Tree lighting at Prince Albert square works to add winter spirit to area

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As the first measurable but light snow fell late in the afternoon December 4, the tree at Prince Albert square was lighted by Mayor Christina Smith. The Montreal Welsh Male Choir sang and hot chocolate was served by Cynthia Lulham, general manager of the Victoria Village Merchants' Association.

The tall brightly lit tree was strategically positioned to be seen from afar in the shopping area just in front of where the bronze life-sized statue of "La mère et l'enfant" (Mother and Child) statue by Lea Vivot had been bolted in place since presented to the city April 11, 2022 (see story April 19, 2022, p. 12).

The statue was discovered missing by merchants and its disappearance reported to the city November 28 by Lulham in case it had been removed by Public Works. It was checked out by Public Security and then referred to police, city director general Julie Mandeville confirmed.

The lighting of a tree at Square Greene took place December 5 as part of the Quartier Greene holiday season.



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Orthodox patriarch visited in October for anniversary

# Melville Ave.'s Serbian church turns 70, welcomes a new parish priest

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Since August, Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church on Melville Ave. in Westmount has a new pastor.

Born and raised in Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Reverend Vladimir Vranić is the son of the late Very Reverend Fr. Periša Vranić.

Following his father's example, he decided that he also wanted to become a Serbian Orthodox priest.

Since his ordination as a deacon in 2006, followed by his elevation to the rank of parish priest later that year, he has served Serbian Orthodox parishes in Serbia, in the US, as well as in Halifax, Toronto and Windsor, with Westmount being his latest appointment.

After the founding of Holy Trinity Church community in 1954, it was first located in a building on de Bullion St. downtown.

Consecration of the church's new Westmount home was in 1976 after the congregation purchased a former Presbyterian church, built in 1900, that had been designed by renowned Canadian architect Edward Maxwell.



Reverend Vladimir Vranić, parish priest at Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church on Melville Ave., is seen here on November 27 in the main sanctuary while standing behind a veneration icon representing the Holy Trinity to which the church is dedicated.

Rev. Vranić's appointment as parish priest came as Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church was celebrating its 70th year.

The anniversary was marked in October by a visit by His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Porfirije, the 46th spiritual leader of the Serbian Orthodox Church. He came with Damjan Jović, state secretary of the ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

The Serbian patriarch was accompanied by His Eminence Metropolitan Mitrofan and a dozen priests, including Father Đorđe Cimeša and Father Živorad Subotić, former priests at Holy Trinity Church. Rev. Vranić, with the help of volunteers, had renovated and beautified the church, so that an especially beautiful service might take place.

Honorary consul for the Republic of

Serbia Marina Gavanski-Zissis, who was among those attending the service in October, said the church "echoed with the beautiful voices of priests and bishops and the church choir, and we all felt carried away to the heavenly paradise."

Dejan Ralević, ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to Canada, as well as Mila Mulroney, wife of late former prime minister Brian Mulroney, were also among those attending 70th anniversary services.

The celebration was organized by the Circle of Serbian Sisters with financial support from the Republic of Serbia and the Montreal Serbian community.

A few facts about Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church:

- The first Serbs arrived in Montreal before World War I, between 1912 and 1916. There were between 10-50 Serbs in the area at that time. Serbs in the Montreal region number in the thousands today, though not all are regular members of Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church.
- Originally a Presbyterian church, the Melville Ave. building is protected by a city of Westmount architectural heritage status, according to Rev. Vranic.

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**Police Report****‘Mother and Child’ stolen from Prince Albert square – Police asking for witnesses, video**

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Investigators at the Montreal police's Station 12 are asking residents and business owners to help identify the individuals who stole a large sculpture from Prince Albert square on Sherbrooke St.

The sculpture, *La mère et l'enfant*, was created by internationally renowned artist Léa Vivot and was loaned to the city of Westmount by its owner in the spring of 2022.

It is surmised that the perpetrators may have stolen the sculpture for its scrap metal value. Copper and bronze are currently among the most commonly stolen metals.

“We’re having an issue with a lot of copper being stolen in the Westmount area,” said Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit, noting that the targets have included churches, as well as buildings or structures where thieves seek out copper wiring.

As reported in the October 29 issue of the *Independent*, St Léon de Westmount Church on de Maisonneuve Blvd. was broken into and robbed in the middle of the night on October 23. A police report described the item stolen as being made of copper with an estimated value of \$1,000.

According to a statement on the city of Westmount website, the city first became aware of the Prince Albert square theft on November 27. It is believed the sculpture may have been stolen sometime overnight, or possibly during the preceding weekend, said Cst. Yigit.

The police are asking business owners in the vicinity who are equipped with security cameras to go over the footage to see whether there are any signs of suspects.

A few days after this incident, according to a Station 12 report, the police responded to an attempt to steal copper piping at the Westmount conservatory and greenhouses next to the public library.

Between midnight and 1 am on November 30, long after closing hours, a suspect, equipped with a power drill, was spotted inside the conservatory. “He was going after the copper piping,” said Yigit, adding that the suspect had fled by the time the police arrived.

According to Cst. Yigit, the Montreal police have been dealing lately with incidents involving copper materials stolen from vacant buildings. However, he noted that the suspects have become more daring lately, breaking more often into secured or locked buildings.

**Lululemon gets special investigator**

The Montreal police have assigned a special investigator to deal with thefts committed at Lululemon premium athletic gear stores in the Montreal region – including one of the most recent at the Westmount Lululemon outlet on Sherbrooke St.

Around 4:30 am on December 4, someone threw a rock through the store's glass front door, then entered and stole \$30 that had been left in the cash register. Although a lot of merchandise was found later by the police scattered on the store's floor, it was estimated that \$5,000 worth of high-end Lululemon leggings were stolen.

“Lululemon seems to be clothing of interest,” said Cst. Yigit, noting the current inclination by thieves to target this particular brand.

**Pick-up stolen**

A Ford F-150 pick-up truck belonging to a housekeeper looking after a home on Westmount's Mount Stephen Ave. was stolen on the afternoon of November 19 when it was left untended outside with the key in the ignition.

“While the person in question was occupied working, someone got in the vehicle and left with it,” said Yigit.

However, there was good news later when the truck was recovered in Ottawa.

**Land Rover theft foiled**

The quick thinking of the owner of a brand-new Land Rover parked on Lansdowne Ave. around 2 am on December 2 may have helped avert it being stolen after the police were notified of the presence of potential car thieves.

According to the incident report, two suspects dressed in black were seen walking around the vehicle with a flashlight.

They were also seen taking a cell phone picture of the car's vehicle identification number (VIN) plate located between the dashboard and the windshield.

According to Yigit, the owner summoned the police, who intercepted a car that corresponded to a description they received. The suspects were questioned and the incident is under investigation, added Cst. Yigit.

According to insurance industry officials and the police, car thieves can use images taken of VINs to potentially clone a car's unique digital identity and bypass the keyless entry system.

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Photos: Jeff Shoer

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**IN THEATERS ON  
 DECEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>** Les Films pale

## Kramer honoured for roles, contribution at Jewish General

Westmounter Irwin Kramer was recently awarded the Outstanding Major Donor Award by the Quebec chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

According to a press release, he is a software industry pioneer and founder of two companies who is now vice-president of the For a Bright Future Foundation, which promotes "opportunities for underrepresented children in education, health and personal development."

In 2008, he joined the board of the Jewish General Hospital Foundation, and later assumed the roles of treasurer and chair of its grants committee.

Kramer and his family have also contributed to urology research with a \$5-million donation to the Rhona and Irwin Kramer and Family Prostate Cancer Targeting Centre.



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# Team SWATTOO wins SWAT tournament for children's hospitals



BY MARTIN C. BARRY

The Selwyn House School Old Boys put up a good struggle but were defeated 2-1 by the SWATTOO at the Westmount recreation centre December 1 in the championship match of the 2024 SWAT tournament for the benefit of the Montreal Children's Hospital and St. Justine Hospital.

The two finalist teams not only played fiercely against each other, but also raised more than \$30,000 in a concurrent competition for afflicted children and their families, stated Jim West and Adam Cutler, co-chairs of the 33rd SWAT tournament.

Former city councillor Nicolas Matossian, a founder of the SWAT tournament and father of the late Nicolas Matossian Jr., said this year's tournament, like prior ones, "resulted from the efforts of my SWAT

teammates and wives, the overwhelming contributions of Westmount's retailers and professionals, players from eight teams, Mayor Christina Smith and councillors, the WRC managers, the extraordinary and helpful rink attendants, Francois Leroux, the *Westmount Independent* and a plethora of volunteers, including, without limitation, the RCMP, referees and timekeepers."

The Westmount Old Timers Hockey Tournament was initiated in 1989 by members of the Senior Westmount Allstar Team (SWAT) to bring together teams from various regions to compete in a friendly charity tournament.

The idea was inspired by Nicolas Matossian Jr., a young patient at the MCH. Diagnosed with terminal brain cancer, he believed there was an urgent need to find the means to combat the disease.

Members of the SWATTOO, Selwyn House School Old Boys, SWAT tournament organizers, volunteers, as well as members of Westmount city council, are seen here on December 1 at the Westmount recreation centre at the conclusion of the 2024 SWAT tournament.

With his friends, he organized two golf tournaments, which during his remaining lifetime raised over \$50,000 and enabled him to start his own fund for the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation. Spurred by his example, SWAT members decided that they too could organize a fundraiser and make a difference and the SWAT tournament was born.

Over the past 32 years, the SWAT tour-

namment has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars and is projected to continue doing so with a growing fundraising goal.

Funds raised by the tournament are also used as seed money to leverage contributions to attract matching funds to kick start projects, such as a multi-million joint research program with St. Justine Hospital towards a cure for glioblastoma, the deadliest of brain cancers.



Members of SWATTOO (the winner of this year's SWAT tournament) are seen here December 1 with Westmount city councillor Kathleen Kez and the tournament's trophy.

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## Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

# Growing up all legs and floppy ears, here is Levi!

Oh my, a gangly thief of hearts ... Levi is quite handsome, with his dark mask of puppyhood and huge soulful brown eyes. He is quite an affectionate and playful young fellow as well, a bit goofy in his ways. Growing tall legs first, we all know that very young stage where ears and feet seem to show promise.

Levi is presently at the Montreal SPCA kennel, hoping for a family to cuddle with and enjoy a neighbourhood lifestyle very soon. He is very healthy, up to date on his puppy inoculation program, neutered and microchipped.

For more information on him, please

refer to the Montreal SPCA website at [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com), scroll to his information page by his identification number, 2000221376, and plan your trip to consult an adoption coordinator for a visit and adoption discussions. The shelter is open every day, from Monday to Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm, then Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. It is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West, Côte des Neiges, Montreal H4P 1X4.

Please go soon for Levi, he will enjoy the Westmount facilities and make such great puppy friends.

Your neighbour, Lysanne



# Apollo and Aphrodite kittens



## 9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Apollo is the tiny grey tabby and Aphrodite is the precious orange tabby version. They are perfect little bundles of love and silliness, which makes family life so perfect with them.

These kittens are available now for adoption, waiting in their cages at the Montreal SPCA cattery. They are very healthy, up to date on their kitten inoculation programs, sterilized and microchipped.

Please open the Montreal SPCA website at [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com), then refer to Apollo and Aphrodite's information pages through their identification numbers: 2000221758 for Apollo and 2000221764 for Aphrodite.

The daily schedule for visits is posted on their information pages, from Monday to Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm, then Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. Once you have chosen your next available day and planned your visit, the address of the shelter is 5215 Jean Talon St. West, Côte des Neiges, Montreal H4P 1X4.

On arrival, you will visit with an adoption coordinator and kittens at the cattery,



to further discuss your interest and adoption. You will need a carrier and, if you do not have one or you don't really like the one you have, you can select a model that suits you at the in-house boutique, where there is also a selection of foods, grooming items, toys and accessories.

Apollo and Aphrodite kittens need the best home and you are an excellent family, holding them close to your heart is the most valuable gift of all.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

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# Crowe BGK blood clinic raises 22 donations for Héma-Québec

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

A Héma-Québec blood donor clinic hosted by the Westmount branch of the global accounting firm Crowe BGK on November 19 gathered 22 blood donations – most of which were from first-time donors.

Out of 33 donors, 24 had their very first blood donation experience, according to Ellianna Reale, marketing and communications coordinator at Crowe BGK's St. Catherine St. offices.

## 22 donations

From all the receptacles of blood gathered by Héma-Québec, 22 were deemed to be useable.

After processing and separation in a Héma-Québec laboratory, 66 products would be available for transfusion to patients in Quebec hospitals, said Reale, "helping to save many lives," she added.

According to Reale, this was the first time Crowe's Westmount office undertook to sponsor a blood donor clinic. Branch COO Ingrid Jensen had first expressed an interest, then delegated the task of getting things organized to Reale, who was already a regular blood donor.

## No space? Think mobile

Although Héma-Québec accepted the company's invitation, the Crowe BGK offices lacked space to accommodate all the blood agency's on-site needs, Reale said.

So, the agency brought out its mobile blood unit, which they parked on Gladstone Ave. just around the corner from the main entrance of the Crowe BGK building.

## More clinics coming?

"It's been a great way for us to be able to participate in a blood drive without having to host them inside," said Reale. She said it was the company's hope other firms in the area would also agree to host blood-donation clinics.

In the meantime, Crowe BGK's plans are to sponsor a blood donor event again – possibly next summer.

"I would like for it to become a regular thing," said Reale. "It's a cause I believe in. I've donated over 10 times. So it would be really good to have the company do this again."

► Crowe BGK Westmount's Ellianna Reale, left, is seen here on November 19 with Héma-Québec mobile blood unit supervisor Richard Forest.



*Happy Holidays!*



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# Toy Tea triumphs in new format at new locale



## Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE



Laura Petty, Steve Jarvis, Daphne Shamie, Alicia Hamilton, Geeta Suchak, Pipe Major Stevens, Ginger Petty, Guardsman Chu, Matt Budd/Santa, Guardsman Daoust, Master Corporal Galavis-Navarro, Mary Liistro Herbert, Julie Mayne Minkoff, Andree Sauter, Sylvia Rourke, Annemarie Bertrand, Jessika Bertrand Fellner.

Guests arriving at the Toy Tea were welcomed by ceremonially dressed Canadian Grenadier Guards.

(Based in Montreal's Canadian Grenadier Guards' Armoury, the Grenadiers is a Canadian Army primary reserve infantry regiment belonging to the 34 Canadian Brigade Group, which is within the 2nd Canadian Division.)

It made sense that the Grenadiers were the stalwart sentinels: **Ginger Petty**, Tea Toy founder and president, is an honorary member; in fact a lieutenant colonel.

The lads' vivid red jackets and tall furry black hats are also an iconic symbol of England, and indeed, the tea was terribly British.

So there were no Proustian *madeleines* – that's terribly French – but a *Downton Abbey* moment.

Held at a private club, a massive dining table bore all the correct elements of a full afternoon tea. Little cucumber sandwiches on thinly cut bread – ..... crusts cut off, of course – *continued on p. 30*



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Karen Sue Potter, Claire Kruyt and Nancy Rowat.



Rachel Janssens, Jessika Bertrand and Claudia Argento.

**Social notes, cont'd from p. 29**

were a huge hit. Scrumptious scones were served correctly with clotted cream and jam. Tantalizing trays of bite-size brownies, cakes and cookies were a mouth-watering magnet.

A gleaming silver Georgian/Regency-style tea urn reflected the charming holiday décor: wintery white bow-tied penguins shared space with a doe and her fawn.

Decorations were stunning: black-and-white checked Christmas tree balls were tied with red ribbon, the glorious colour echoed in the voluminous draped tablecloth bedecked with ivy.

The tea opened with a bagpiper, and throughout the day holiday songs were

sung by school choirs from The Priory, Selwyn House, The Study and LCC. The new venue established a fashionable finesse.

Ladies were afternoon elegant. Pearls were perfect. Bags wore initials. Shoes ranged from Furlanes (classic velvet Venetian gondolier loafer-slippers) and stylish high boots to stilettos with Louboutin branded red soles.

The successful foray into a downtown venue was due to the **Ginger Petty's** vision working with committee members **Geeta Suchak** (president), **Edward Miller** (vp), **Sylvia Rourke** (treasurer), **Julie Mayne Minkoff**, **Laura Petty**, **Jill de Villafranca**, **Andrée Sauter**, **Tammie Yared**, **Mary Liistro Hebert**, **Jessika Bertrand Fellner**, **Jessica**

**Choueke**, **Alicia Hamilton**, **Annemarie Bertrand**, **Daphne Shamie** and **Hainya Wiseman**.

Volunteers **Jessika Bertrand**, **Claudia Argento** and **Rachel Janssens** aided arrivals.

Noted amidst the crowd were **Rosemary Niro**, **Cheryl Glense**, **Nadia Niro** and **John Anthony Luzio**, **Christine Omeara**, **Nancy Rowat**, **Karen Sue Potter**, **Claire King**, **Diane Ferrara Scalia**, **Christina Molson**, **Regina Husa** and **Jessica Choueka**.

The tea was really the icing on the cake, as it were. Now the real work begins. **Ginger Petty's** garage is piled high with crates of new toys. For many years, **Jonathan Goodman** has supported the cause. **Knight Therapeutics**, of which he is executive chair, lends volunteers, greatly assisted by **Heidi Rackover**. They, and other keen workers, unpack boxes sent by generous toy manufacturers and re-pack toys in large age- and gender-specific-labelled bags ready for pick-up from 31 shelters.

As holiday season arrives, it's sometimes easy to forget how lucky one is. However, many children are not as fortunate. For over 40 years the **Toy Tea**, a non-profit charitable organization, has donated non-violent toys to families in need. For a long time, the tea was free at **Victoria Hall**, or the "ticket price" was a new non-violent toy. Today, the event's ticketed format and refined venue imparted a special flair, ensuring a star is born.



Christine Omeara and John Anthony Luzio.



Christine Molson and Regina Husa.

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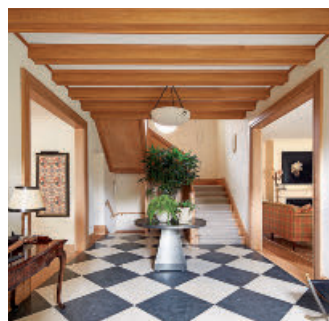
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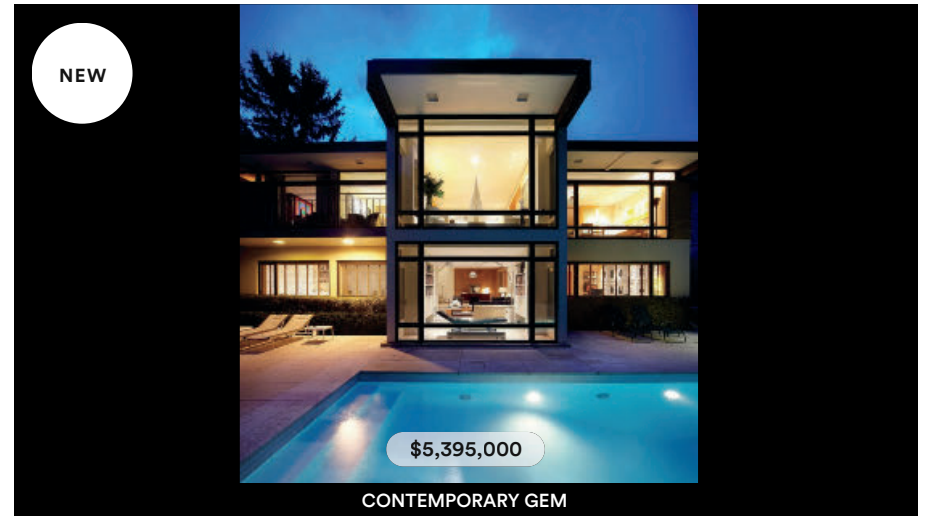
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