

Mayor Stern dons the chain of office



From left, Susan Stern, incoming mayor Michael Stern and their son Aaron at city hall on November 5 at a preview event before his official swearing-in November 7. See p. 14 for another photo.

PHOTO: LAUREEN SWEENEY.

Hallowe'en? Over!



As seen on de Maisonneuve Blvd. near Metcalfe Ave. on November 4.

PHOTO: Independent.



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At least one other 'sick fox' still at large

Local group helps capture 'sick fox' on the mountain

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Editor's caveat: This article is news, not an endorsement of the newsmakers' actions. The *Independent* does not advise anyone to get close to wild animals for any reason, especially those that can bite and/or that can be infected with rabies. – DP.

While chasing foxes fell out of favour in the UK two decades ago, a small group of animal-loving Westmounters that has been tracking a pair of sickly foxes around the mountain in order to capture and treat them are reporting some success.

"Tonight, we actually rescued one of the foxes in upper Westmount on Sunnyside," Victoria Ave. resident Diana Anderson, who *continued on p. 3*

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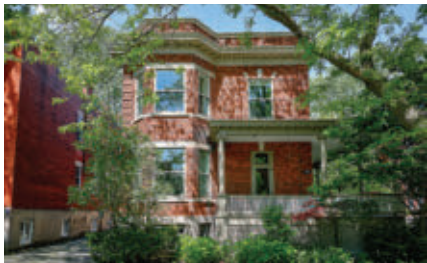
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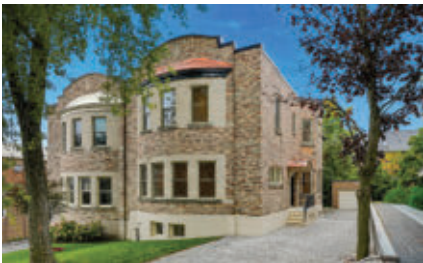
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Foxes, cont'd from p.1

has been leading the group, said in an e-mail to the *Independent* on November 1, adding that the fox has been named Sunny.

"It was amazing how people came together," she said. "People stopped in cars or on foot to tell us where the fox was seen. They called in at all hours and posted to social media. We were able to track his/her habits and after two weeks were able to catch it."

Anderson said the captured fox is being treated for mange and will be released in a rural location somewhere north of Montreal. "We now know there are more than one who are still sick," she said. "We are calling on the city to develop a wildlife plan to address these sick animals."

Foxbook?

Using Facebook, people had been posting where the fox had been seen wandering, with some joining the group to try to rescue it, according to Anderson.

Although the members had been posting progress reports whenever a fox was sighted, others, including the SPCA and Westmount Public Security, appear to have been far less eager to get involved in the operation.

Anderson claims to have called both, as well as the Quebec ministry of Natural

Resources and Fauna. They failed to become involved, she maintains. "We called Public Security. We called the SPCA. Nobody will help in this situation," she said.

"We share Westmount with a lot of wildlife – ducks, foxes, coyotes," said Anderson.

Many of the sightings were near the summit, around Sunnyside Ave. and Belvedere Rd., but at least one fox was seen around Barat Rd. around the base of the mountain, as well as on Lansdowne Ave. as far south as Sherbrooke St.

Anderson said they were never certain whether they were dealing with more than one fox. She said they were told by one urban wildlife control specialist that the best course of action might be to let the fox die "and let nature takes its course," she

said.

But she insisted that the fox or foxes in question, which appeared to be suffering from mange among other possible maladies, were "treatable" and that a wildlife trapper they were working with agreed to carry out a rescue.

Jean-Yves Lemay, who helped capture the fox through an animal rescue service he runs called Détresse Animal, said he's probably the only operator of this type in Montreal willing to track down distressed foxes because foxes are notoriously evasive and difficult to capture.

Rabies?

According to information posted on the Quebec ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources' website,



rabies, a contagious and potentially fatal disease, continues to be a health risk to humans.

Although it is transmitted primarily through bats, foxes are among the animals that also can be affected. "The red fox is suspected of having caused waves of arctic fox rabies cases in southern Québec between 1950 and 2000," states the ministry's website.

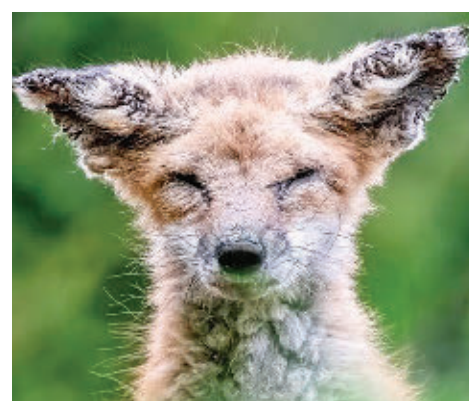
Lemay dismissed this concern. "I have never seen anything about a fox or a coyote or a wolf with rabies," he said, maintaining that the vast majority of rabies cases in Quebec usually involve raccoons and skunks.

The *Independent* tried without success to reach Westmount Public Safety director Greg McBain as well as the SPCA for their responses to Anderson's claims. Although we left several voice mails, they had not been answered by our deadline.

◀ Two photos of a fox spotted on October 21 by the group on The Boulevard.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KARIM BOUZIDI/KARIMBOUZIDI.CA.

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Remembering Canadian women of World War II

Westmount’s ‘lost’ female Legion: ‘General Price Quebec Branch #206’

By TIM REID

The Westmount armoury was built 100 years ago for the Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR), originally called the 14th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The battalion, which served with distinction in World War I, was created at the beginning of the conflict as a composite regiment made up of sub-units from Montreal militia regiments Les Carabiniers du Mont Royal (later renamed Les Fusiliers du Mont Royal), the Canadian Grenadier Guards and the Victoria Rifles. When the regiment got back to Canada at the end of the conflict, the 58th Westmount Rifles, which had done home service and furnished reinforcements, ceded its place in the order of battle to the RMR.

Who was Charles Basil Price?

One of the legendary founders of the RMR was Charles Basil (“C. B.”) Price. He spent nine years as an enlisted soldier in the Victoria Rifles before receiving his officer’s commission in 1914, though he soon relinquished it to take on the critical post of company sergeant-major in the new battalion.

He would go on to first win a Distinguished Conduct Medal and later a Distinguished Service Order after being commissioned again as an officer.

Between the wars, he served twice as commanding officer of the Royal Montreal Regiment and again for the 7th Duke of York’s Royal Canadian Hussars at the outbreak of World War II. He was promoted to command the 3rd Infantry Brigade in the UK and later to major-general in command of the 3rd Division.

One of General Price’s sons, Lyall, was one of the youngest squadron leaders in



Major General (retired) C.B. Price, in the black suit, as overseas commissioner of the Canadian Red Cross Society, and several staff officers, standing in front of two mobile soup/coffee kitchens presented by the Canadian Red Cross to the Cornwall (Falmouth) Battalion of the Home Guard.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROYAL MONTREAL REGIMENT MUSEUM.

the Royal Canadian Air Force and won the Distinguished Flying Cross before dying in a training accident.

His daughter Marjorie served in the Women’s Transport Service of the UK’s First Aid Nursing Yeomanry and narrowly survived the German bombing of the Café de Paris. Another daughter, Helen, served with the Red Cross.

(General C. B. Price is not related to the Westmount Independent’s editor.)

The Canadian Red Cross overseas

When General Bernard Montgomery decided to bring in younger officers to lead Canada’s divisions, Price decided to stay in Europe as overseas commissioner for the Canadian Red Cross Society in the United Kingdom until the end of 1944, travelling all over North Africa, Italy and northern Europe.

As per Sarah Glassford, an archivist at the University of Windsor and author of *Mobilizing Mercy: A History of the Canadian Red Cross*, the Canadian Red Cross Corps was created in 1940 (prior to the introduction of female units in the armed forces) as a way to mobilize younger women who were not as keen on more traditional forms of Red Cross wartime voluntary service such as knitting, bandage-rolling, quilting, jam-making, fundraising and POW parcel-packing.

Corps members were envisioned as a well trained, disciplined, specialist set of committed volunteers who could be mobilized quickly in case of an attack on Canada.

Out of 15,000+ who were enlisted in the corps’ Canadian detachments during the war, 641 women from across Canada served overseas. The other detachments were located in Canadian urban areas.

Corps members were distinguished from ordinary Red Cross volunteers by their distinctive military-style uniforms,

their quasi-military chain of command, practice of military drill and the specialized training they received in one of four areas of nursing auxiliary, transportation, food or office administration. They also had to commit to a high number of weekly volunteer duty hours.

A unique (almost) all-female Legion branch

The corps was big on *esprit de corps* in general, but the members of the overseas detachment in particular bonded very strongly as a result of their overseas service and closer experience of the war’s battle fronts. They held their first reunion dinner in 1946, and quickly created their own organization known as the Overseas Club that was something of a hybrid between a veterans’ association and an alumna organization.

As far as we can tell, the Montreal detachment was the only chapter of the Overseas Club that also had the status of a Legion branch.

In 1947, it was formally recognized as Quebec Branch #206 and named for General Price, whom they had served under. The fact that General Price was the Legion’s dominion command president at the time may have helped its recognition.

Price honorary president, sole male

As honorary president, he appears to have been the only male member. He felt very proud to be associated with these women and their contributions. Given General Price’s connection to the RMR, #206 became the second Legion branch to hold its meetings in the Westmount armoury in addition to #14 (the RMR Association).

There were some other all-female branches across the country – in addition to the ladies’ auxiliaries – mostly consisting

of women who had served in the all-female corps and as nursing sisters with the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps.

At the time, the Legion helped make sure that female veterans obtained the same benefits as the men. However, like the merchant marine, the Red Cross volunteers were not initially classified as “veterans” after the war, but were eventually given some recognition and benefits after a lengthy advocacy campaign.

It was while helping in an effort to track down the RMR’s World War I battle standard that I discovered the existence of the #206. With its members getting older, the branch ended its Legion affiliation in 1976 and its colours were laid up in St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Knowlton, Quebec, where General Price had retired.

Colonel Price’s younger son, Jack, later also retired to Knowlton. He was one of Canada’s most distinguished test pilots and a member of the Golden Hawks, the precursor of RCAF’s Snowbirds demonstration team.

As a long-time Knowlton resident and RMR veteran myself, I had seen the colours but had not fully grasped their significance. All this to say that we do not always realize the rich history that surrounds us and the feats of the giants that we should be trying to live up to.

Honi soit qui mal y pense

Captain (Ret.) Tim Reid, CD did tours with the Canadian forces in Bosnia & Herzegovina and Ethiopia/Eritrea as well as civilian missions for the UN and OSCE in Rwanda, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, Libya, Ukraine, Moldova and the Palestinian Territories.

“Honi soit qui mal y pense” is the Royal Montreal Regiment’s motto.



The colours of the General Price Quebec Branch #206 at St. Paul’s Anglican Church on October 3.

Public Security issues tickets for illegal use of gasoline-powered blowers

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With a potential for snow any time now, Public Security asked residents and contractors to remember the city's prohibition against the use of gasoline-fired leaf blowers and the dumping or blowing of

leaves into city drains. It came after two reported incidents, October 29 and November 4.

"This is a reminder to all not to leave leaves on the sidewalk or where they can be blown into a drain," said Public Security director Greg McBain.

The first incident was reported to have occurred October 29 when a caller reported hearing a noisy blower in use from a back yard on Sunnyside, Public Security officials said.

Responding to the complaint, a patroller verified the user's operating permit and a fine of \$458 was issued to the company he worked for.

The subsequent call November 4 generated a ticket in the lesser amount of \$158 applying to the individual rather than the company he worked for because, in this case, a company had not authorized his use of the blower.

Man falls, treated at Melville and Melbourne

A man who fell October 21 at Melville and Melbourne was initially treated by passers-by and Public Security before being treated by Urgences Santé.

Public Security officials said the man, an "elderly" Westmount resident, was

found lying on the ground where several passers-by were assisting him. Conscious, he was described as having sustained open cuts on the left hand and forehead, which were cleaned and bandaged.

Urgences Santé was reported to have arrived at 6:12 pm and took charge. No other details were reported.

Heavy water truck hits median at St. Catherine and Glen

A heavy-duty water truck heading north on Glen Rd. October 24 "collided" with the median on St. Catherine at 6:48 am, Public Security officials said.

Described as designed to carry some 9,000 kilograms, the truck had to be emptied into the sewer before being towed away around 7:51 am. While the truck itself was "severely" damaged, no injuries were reported.

We welcome your letters

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AUBRY

A true Westmount legend celebrates his 35th birthday

We all know Leonard Cohen, Sam Roberts, Caroline Rhea, and other international show business legends born in Westmount. However, we know less about the people who contribute to the greatness of this beloved city on a daily basis—those who, lacking vast renown, demonstrate a wealth of heart and soul day after day.

Mathieu Aubry, also known as "le casque" by his friends, is one of these pillars of modern Westmount. Born in Boucherville, he settled on the southwest slope of Mount Royal about a decade ago. His involvement resonates throughout the neighborhood; he is always generous, helping others with any task imaginable,

radiating a beatific smile, utterly incredulous at the boundless world that shines so brightly. For Mathieu, lending a hand is simply second nature. After all, he is the son of two nurses, Raymond Aubry and Monique Bernard.

Mathieu's partner, Noémie Archambault, is well aware of her sweetheart's immense generosity. «Math is the perfect boyfriend. Funny, kind, thoughtful, and not just with me. He's always thinking of others, always there for his (many) friends. It's impossible to go anywhere with him without bumping into someone he knows, even deep in the St-Alexis woods» she confides, reached by phone between Latin dance classes on Montreal's South Shore.

For his 35th birthday, we wish him all the happiness in the world. And, above all, we hope he remains the sweetheart he's always been.



From: Noémie Archambault, Olivier Boisvert-Magnen, Mathieu Aubre, Florence G. Lemieux, Youness Elhariri, François Lord, Didier Charette, Nahila Bendali, Marilyn Moreau, Laurence Boucher, Thomas Picotte, Stéphanie Robi, Maxime Paquette, Mathilde Hébert, Julie Roy, Julien Poissant, Ann-Marie Trépanier, Christian Jobin Landry, Bruno Lessard, Gabrielle Lévesque, Mathieu Cauchon, Laurent Corbeil, Caroline De Benedictis, Claudia Bouffard, Cassandra Gosselin-Martin and Gabrielle Laila Tittley.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANK YOU, INDEPENDENT, VOLUNTEERS – CONGRATULATIONS ELECTION WINNERS

Thank you, *Westmount Independent*, for your extensive coverage of this municipal election campaign. Like all Westmounters, I appreciate the work that you and your team do, and your intelligent interest in our city.

I trust you will allow me to congratulate all who ran and made this election exciting. This includes those who volunteered on campaigns, including my own wonderful team. Of course, a special congratulations go to those who won and to our new mayor, Michael Stern. I am rooting for this new council to set Westmount back on track.

Campaigning was both a rewarding challenge and an enriching experience. I truly enjoyed meeting so many people in our community, and I will continue to root for and work for Westmount. Let's see what we can do *together* to support this council and move our city forward.

LYNNE CASGRAIN, MAYORAL CANDIDATE

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR ANSWERS ON PPU

Congratulations to all the successful candidates and to Mr. Stern on his election. I thank each of you, and everyone who ran, for stepping forward to shape the future of our city.

I feel compelled to remind our newly elected representatives of the clear mess-

age sent by voters. In its October 21 edition (p. 18), the *Westmount Independent* surveyed candidates on their positions regarding several key issues – including the possibility of repealing the [southeast] PPU. When we compare those responses to the election results, it's evident that candidates who pledged to repeal the PPU were not elected. Not a single successful candidate received a mandate to reverse it.

I look forward to this new council honouring that mandate. Let's continue revitalizing Westmount with thoughtful planning, new homes and opportunities for growth. I encourage this council to bring fresh energy to the task of building a neighbourhood where residents can downsize within the community they love, young people can find attainable housing, families can thrive, and we can all enjoy beautiful, safe and welcoming spaces.

ESTELLE PIGOT, MELVILLE AVE.

PLEASE FORGET YOUR WEEKLY GARBAGE PLEDGE

Congratulations to Mr. Michael Stern, the new mayor of Westmount. His message to supporters was that he would use his financial/accounting experience to make better decisions of where and how scarce resources (i.e. \$) are allocated.

We all hope the Stern team at city hall can achieve this.

One promise Mr. Stern made numerous times on the campaign trail was to bring back garbage collection every week. This, I believe, does not see the forest for the trees.

If we double waste collection in our city, we double the costs.* If Westmounters cannot make do with collection every two weeks, there are only two possible reasons why this would be so.

- 1. Citizens are not using the recycling or composting days, and instead putting everything out on "garbage" day, or
- 2. Citizens are producing way too much waste.

Mr. Stern stated that families with infants cannot possibly hold onto dirty diapers for two weeks. I agree, but let's be realistic. The number of households with babies in Westmount is a small percentage of our overall population. The city should set up a couple of well-designed diaper drop-off bins for parents to use whenever they need.

I would further argue the people of Westmount can also handle recycling and compost collection every other week. Positive change begins with smart and sustainable habits of behaviour.

MICHAEL OSTERLAND, MELBOURNE AVE.

***Editor's note:** Since garbage is every other week in "winter" only, the total cost of going back to weekly pick-up (assuming constant pricing) would not be double, but about 35 percent more. For Westmount garbage purposes, "winter" is from October 1 to May 1. – DP.

BUDGET, RESPONSIBILITIES, REPLIES SHOULD BE IN PROMPT, PLAIN LANGUAGE

Following my earlier correspondence with a mayoral candidate and in the *Westmount Independent* (September 16, p. 6, October 21, p. 6, October 28, p. 8), the city's director general finally stepped up to the net – with a written reply:

"In the 2025 PTI, funds were earmarked for a clay tennis court re-surfacing project [for Stayner Park].

"This project first requires the hiring of a landscape architecture firm to assess the actual state of the courts and to prepare a plan and *devis* [estimate] that outlines the specific types of interventions needed.

"In the year following this analysis, a contract would then be launched to secure a company for the work identified in the analysis.

"Departmental priorities shifted during the year and the analysis of needs for re-construction of Stayner Park tennis court will be addressed in upcoming years. This will be determined based on the newly elected council's PTI budgets."

In plain terms, the project was funded, then quietly dropped – bureaucratic code for *Stayner wasn't important enough*. That

extra phase increases cost and delay: a budgeted line item no longer guarantees delivery.

It also raises a larger question: why couldn't the [then] commissioner of Sports and Recreation and Parks and Green Spaces – the political head responsible for this file over four years – answer these same basic questions when first asked?

The DG's reply calls it a "shared responsibility" between departments – an accountability gap I raised weeks ago. In practice, that means *everyone and no one* is responsible.

Although I first contacted the commissioner turned mayoral candidate privately over 25 days [before October 30], I received silence and deflection until this public follow-up [October 30]. The DG's message copied the councillor, mayoral candidate and assistance@ – for optics more than ownership.

Residents deserve named accountability and follow-through, not bureaucratic limbo. When budgeted projects drift into "upcoming years," transparency and credibility vanish with them.

NATASHA ARORA, WOOD AVE.

DID MAYORAL CANDIDATES' DEBATE TOPICS REFLECT CITY'S CONCERNS?

The mayoral candidates' debate held on October 23 [at Victoria Hall] was an excellent opportunity to better understand the platforms of those running for mayor. I would like to thank the Westmount Municipal Association for organizing and hosting such a well-run and informative event.

That said, I was surprised that none of the four main themes selected for discussion included any reference to environmental measures or social housing. While the topics addressed seem to reflect the concerns of a vocal segment of our community, I had hoped the debate would have taken a broader approach – one that represented the diverse priorities of all Westmount residents.

A Léger poll conducted in early 2025 surveyed citizens across Quebec to gauge what municipal issues matter most to them. The results were telling: 69 percent cited fighting climate change as a priority, 52 percent mentioned housing affordability, and 79 percent called for more resources to address homelessness. Only eight percent identified crime as a major concern.

This raises an important question: Is Westmount truly unique in its priorities, or were the debate topics chosen in a way that skewed the conversation?

RICHARD DUFOUR, ANWOTH RD.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount

Editor

David Price: 514.935.4537
editor@westmountindependent.com

Chief reporter: Laureen Sweeney

Graphics: Ted Sancton

Advertising sales

Arleen Candiotti: 514.223.3567
advertising@westmountindependent.com

Accounting: 514.223.6138

office@westmountindependent.com

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST-ELECTION, LET'S BREAK FREE FROM THE NEGATIVITY

The results of the election came as we should have expected and were a clear rebuke of the Trumpy slump that we have endured during the past few years.

It seems clear that the vast majority of the population has dropped out of the toxic Westmount diatribes, turned off the divisive sound trumpeted by naysayers and have deafened to personal attacks propagated on the internet and in the media by Mr./Ms. A. Nonymous and even by former elected officials.

This is a dance of death, where the dancers bring their own tune, never step to the same rhythm, never move in unison or converse, but keep repeating this musical charade in the deluded hope that everybody will dance to their tune.

The audience has left, nobody listens to this constant beat of negativity and all avoid this fetid cloud that only brings an acid rain of criticism that kills hope and opportunity.

"Enough!" said the voters, "Give us someone who will grant us the respect of a personal touch, bring back humanity into our dialogue, include and involve us into a world that we all want to make better to-

gether, because united against good or bad challenges, Westmount is unbeatable."

Give us a city that will answer phone calls. Give us someone who says: "How may I help you," who listens to a criticism and shares the opportunity of a solution, who will hear your need for assistance and guidance and who will take you up on your offer to participate or volunteer in our community.

Give us elected officials who place respect and duty above any politics, do not seek favour or fame and do not fear the truth.

Then you will have citizens respond in droves, and fueled by the opportunity to be heard and participate, they will put their shoulders to the wheel and focus their powers on solutions, on making it happen, because we all have something to contribute that will make everyone else better off.

Bless the leader who will bring humanity and respect back to our community, to our conversations, to our relations and to our future.

Our children and grandchildren need it... and we all deserve it.

NICOLAS MATOSSIAN,
DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

Municipal election not over yet – District 7 still in play

On November 7, as the *Independent* was being prepared for an early (Friday) press time, it was alerted to the fact that the election for city councillor in District 7 was being contested. The same day, it was in contact with both candidates running there.

Matt Aronson wrote:

As many of you know, I was re-elected to represent District 7 on November 2. Unfortunately, I will not be sworn in to office with the rest of the 2025-2029 council today, as the results of this election have been contested, and the matter is presently before the court.

I have full confidence in our democratic process and welcome the judicial review to ensure the integrity of our election. I expect a resolution shortly.

Until a new councillor is officially sworn in, I continue to serve District 7 as the incumbent councillor. I remain available and responsive to constituent needs during this process.

I want to thank the residents of District 7 for their patience as we ensure this matter is resolved properly and thoroughly.

Our democracy depends on getting the details right, and I'm committed to seeing this process through with the transparency and integrity you deserve.

I also want to congratulate mayor-elect Stern and my fellow councillors on their swearing-in today. This is an important and memorable moment for them and their families, and I look forward to formally joining them in service to Westmount very soon.

Gloria Rosado wrote:

As you know by now, a judicial recount has been requested, and the matter is still before the court. I have been advised by my lawyers not to comment until the court's decision.

The review is welcome to ensure the integrity of our elections. I have full confidence in our democratic process.

I want to congratulate mayor-elect Michael Stern and elect councillors on their swearing-in today. I also want to thank all residents of District 7 for their confidence and support during the election campaign. We are going to work together to bring forward the issues that matter to you.

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Some things allowed – some aren't

What can candidates, partisans do during a municipal election?

By JENNIFER BALL

If you were asked by a candidate this past municipal election cycle why you hadn't yet voted, who you were going to vote for, or witnessed someone holding a candidate's poster in close proximity to a polling station, you may have wondered what the rules have to say about it.

The answers are outlined in the ministry of Employment and Social Solidarity's Act Respecting Elections and Referendums in Municipalities and Elections Quebec, unpacked for the *Independent* on November 4.

On November 1, a representative of mayoral candidate Michael Stern visited the home of this *Independent* reporter to ask if any clarification was required on Stern's platform, followed by the direct question: "Who are you planning to vote for?"

Julie St-Arnaud-Drolet, spokesperson for Elections Quebec, confirmed that the question was permissible during door-to-door canvassing but prohibited at a polling station.

"The Act Respecting Elections and Referendums in Municipalities does not regulate the content of communications be-

tween political parties and candidates, or their representatives, and voters."

What about whether you voted?

A source who requested that she remain anonymous told the *Independent* that on November 1, a candidate rang her bell to tell her it had come to their attention that she had not yet voted.

The voter was surprised and wondered how they knew this.

St-Arnaud-Drolet explained "Parties and candidates have access to the list of voters who cast their ballots. The voters list includes the name, address, gender and date of birth of voters. This information is confidential, and its use is permitted only for purposes provided by law, for example:

- Communicating with voters,
- Recruiting members,
- Seeking support,
- Promoting voter participation,
- Recruiting volunteers or campaign staff,
- Soliciting political contributions."

St-Arnaud-Drolet also added that "Voting is secret and there is no way to know who a person voted for unless they reveal it publicly."

How close to polling stations can candidates, partisans, posters go?

A source told the *Independent* on November 2 that an individual was seen holding a mayoral candidate's campaign poster in close proximity to the polling station they were about to enter.

According to St-Arnaud-Drolet "No partisan advertising is permitted at polling stations. Each election chairperson is responsible for enforcing this rule and may prohibit advertising in any location near the polling station where it could be seen by voters."

Memories of the election



A smattering of posters left over from the election, as seen November 6 in Victoria village. Candidates have until 15 days after the election – November 17 in this case – to remove them.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

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Detailed schedule released to residents, on budget so far

‘Phase 1’ of Westmount Square plaza reno delayed a bit, into December

By JENNIFER BALL

A massive infrastructure renewal program at Westmount Square, which includes a new water membrane under the exterior plaza and the replacement of the domestic water pipes is under way, with a projected total cost of \$18.4 million.

Phase 1 of the rehabilitation of the Westmount Square exterior plaza began on July 7, was scheduled to be completed in November but has been extended into December.



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Looking down at the laying of the exterior plaza membrane over the Greene entrance to Westmount Square. As seen on November 4.

Phase 2 of the plaza work is scheduled for spring to fall of next year.

At a meeting held on June 26, the board representing residents proposed the program and the shareholders received estimates of the associated costs and a detailed scope of the work (see October 21, p. SL-22 for an overview of the infrastructure renewal program).

Eric Lapointe, general manager of the two residential towers (2 & 3), itemized projected project milestones in a November 3 memo sent to residents.

Lapointe wrote, “Please note that this schedule is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change,” and “Work is under way with only minor ad-

justments from the original plan with no cost overrun and on schedule.”

Interior work (plumbing et alia)

Residents were notified that, starting next year, some of the interior plumbing work will require access to their units and that plastering, painting and clean-up will be required in the aftermath. This interior plumbing work is divided into three phases:

- Phase 1 (January to March 2026) Tower 2 starting with the penthouse moving down,
 - Phase 2 (November 2026 to March 2027),
 - Phase 3 (November 2027 to March 2028).
- In April 2026, the elevator management

system will be worked on, and residents have not yet received the scope of that project.

From November 2026 to April 2027, the “P1” parking level membrane and expansion joint will be worked on. The number of parking spots will be reduced from time to time as the work is conducted in sections.

In spring/summer 2027 and 2028, the exteriors of the towers will be painted.

SA Construction – which specializes in concrete repair and waterproofing – is conducting the exterior plaza work, and Charbonneau Plumbing is carrying out some of the work on the water infrastructure replacement program.



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St. Justine’s Hospital receives \$58,416 from SWAT tournament



By MARTIN C. BARRY

Supporters and members of the Senior Westmount All-Star Team (SWAT) gathered at the Westmount recreation centre on the morning of October 9 to present a cheque for \$58,416 to an official from St. Justine’s Hospital.

“We are grateful to all our supporters, sponsors and volunteers,” said longtime SWAT team member Nicolas Matossian, whose late son, also named Nicolas, helped inspire the creation of the SWAT tournament starting in 1989.

Dr. Sebastien Perreault, a neuro-oncologist and researcher at St. Justine’s, who is also a Westmount resident, gave a brief

account of how SWAT funds have been used in recent years with respect to pediatric brain cancer research.

As he explained, funds received from SWAT have served, among other things, as seed money for studies on ways to improve the care of children with various types of brain cancer tumours.

“So, it does make a huge difference for us,” he said, while adding that results of the studies will be published in professional journals.

Among the guests were Westmount city council members from the outgoing (2021-2025) council. Matossian thanked the city for maintaining its partnership with

SWAT. The city’s Westmount recreation centre (WRC) is the site of the group’s main event (see for example December 12, 2023 p. 24).

The SWAT tournament’s objective has always been to contribute to the acquisition of neuro-surgical equipment and research in pediatric brain cancer at St. Justine’s Hospital, as well as at the Montreal Children’s Hospital.

Over the years, it has contributed to the acquisition of essential surgery/imaging equipment, to palliative care, microbiology, hemo-oncology and to the current research programs for pediatric brain tumors at the MCH and St. Justine’s.



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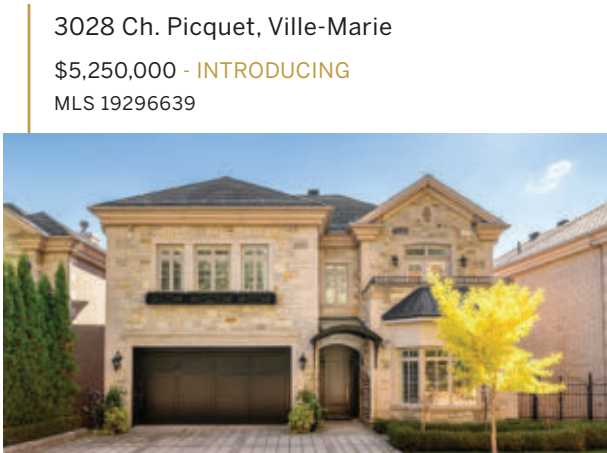
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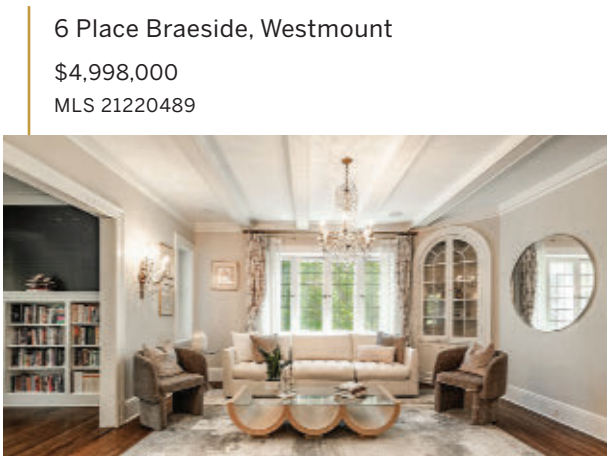
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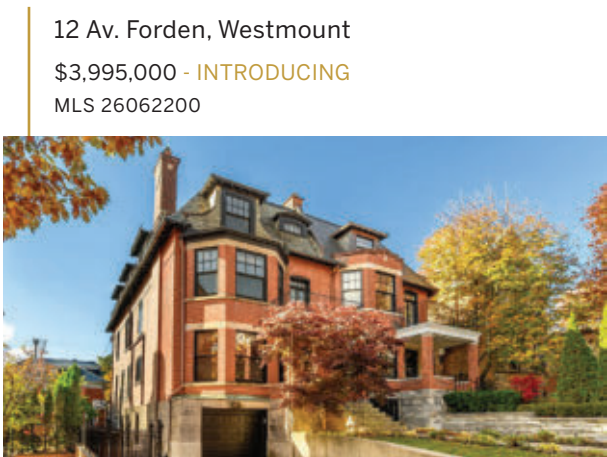
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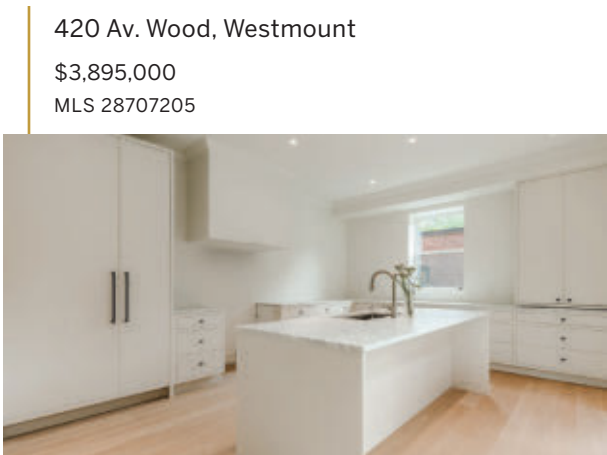
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Stern’s supporters, family gather for preview of swearing-in



From left, Bonnie King, Joshua Cummings, Tina Apfeld, Daniel Smajovits, the mayor’s wife, Susan Stern, incoming mayor Michael Stern, his son Aaron Stern, Adam Daifallah and Eric Letovsky. They were attending a swearing-in preview event for Stern November 5. The event itself was to be November 7. See p.1 for another photo.

PHOTO: LAUREN SWEENEY.

More memories of the election



Election posters seen on Greene Ave. November 7. Candidates have until 15 days after the election – November 17 in this case – to remove them.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.





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Art

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MUHC marks 10 years ... of art



Jacqueline McLaran, Jonathan Meakins, Lorraine Simms and Alexandra Kirsh.

In celebration of the 10-year anniversary of exhibitions at the Glen site of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), the RBC Art and Heritage Centre of the MUHC recently presented works by Lorraine Simms.

The artist creates immersive, patterned compositions drawing inspiration from her collection of preserved flora. Her paintings echo 17th-century *vanitas* traditions and *memento mori* imagery, where symbols of decay prompt reflection on the passage of time.

Simms is a Montreal-based multidisciplinary artist whose work is in major public and private collections across Canada and the United States. The artist acknowledged "the exceptional care she received at the MUHC and the Cedars Cancer Centre."

Present at the premiere of the exhibition were Dr. Jonathan Meakins, chair RBC Art and Heritage Centre, and his wife Dr. Jacqueline McClaran; Alexandra Kirsh, curator RBC Art and Heritage Centre and Lorraine Simms. The exhibition will be on display in the atrium until April 2026.

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Élections municipales 2025 de Westmount

Les résultats des élections municipales, découlant du dépouillement des boîtes de vote, sont maintenant disponibles. Félicitations aux élus et élues ! westmount.org

Sports et loisirs : inscription pour les activités d'hiver
La période d'inscription pour les activités sportives et de loisirs pour l'hiver 2026 commence le **mardi 18 novembre pour les résidents de Westmount** et le mardi 2 décembre pour les non-résidents. westmount.org/activites

Chiens au bois Summit : période sans laisse
Du **1er novembre au 15 avril**, les chiens peuvent être promenés sans laisse au bois Summit de 5 h à minuit. Le bois Summit est fermé de minuit à 5 h. westmount.org/actualites

Appel de candidatures : Comité consultatif d'urbanisme
La Ville de Westmount est à la recherche d'un candidat pour siéger à son Comité consultatif d'urbanisme (CCU) à partir de mars 2026. La date limite pour soumettre une candidature est le 14 novembre à 13 h. westmount.org/comites

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2025 Westmount Municipal Elections
The results of the municipal elections, based on the counting of the ballot boxes, are now available. Congratulations to the elected officials! westmount.org

Sports and Recreation: Registration for fall activities
The registration period for winter 2026 sports and recreational activities begins on **Tuesday, November 18 for Westmount residents** and on Tuesday, December 2 for non-residents. westmount.org/activities

Call for Applications: Planning Advisory Committee
The City of Westmount is seeking a candidate to sit on its Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) beginning in March 2026. The deadline for applications is November 14 at 1 p.m. westmount.org/committees

Summit Woods: Dogs off-leash
From November 1 to April 15, dog owners may walk their dogs off-leash in Summit Woods from 5 a.m. to midnight. Summit Woods is closed from midnight to 5 a.m. westmount.org/news

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BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Club de cinéma documentaire : projections et discussion avec Alex Boya
19 novembre, 19 h, Salle Westmount.
Joignez-vous au réalisateur Alex Boya (*Bread Will Walk*) pour une projection de certains de ses films, ainsi qu'une discussion sur le rôle que jouent la narration et le scénario dans son travail cinématographique. westlib.org



Conférence : Secrets of the Black Belt Investor
3 décembre, 19 h, Salle Westmount. Participez à une rencontre avec Mary Hagerman, auteure de *Secrets of the Black Belt Investor*, et découvrez comment la connaissance de soi, la discipline et la confiance peuvent guider votre parcours vers la prospérité financière. westlib.org

Documentary Film Club: Screenings and discussion with Alex Boya
November 19, 7 p.m., Westmount Room. Join director Alex Boya (*Bread Will Walk*) for a screening of some of his films, as well as a discussion about the roles storytelling and scriptwriting play in his filmmaking. westlib.org

Lecture: Secrets of the Black Belt Investor
December 3, 7 p.m., Westmount Room. Join Mary Hagerman, author of *Secrets of the Black Belt Investor*, and discover how self-awareness, discipline, and confidence can guide your path toward financial prosperity. westlib.org

Parlons opéra ! - Jenůfa
23 novembre, 14 h, Victoria Hall. Parlons opéra ! invite le public à découvrir de façon vivante les grands opéras de la saison avec Pierre Vachon, chanteurs et pianiste. Cette édition explore **Jenůfa**, drame tchèque où l'amour, la honte et la rédemption s'entrelacent au coeur d'une communauté rigide. westmount.com/evenements

La guignolée des Fêtes de la Sécurité publique
Depuis plus de 30 ans, la Sécurité publique de Westmount organise une guignolée au bénéfice des familles dans le besoin à Westmount. Déposez vos dons dans les boîtes désignées à cet effet dans les édifices municipaux. Merci de votre générosité ! westmount.org/actualites

Let's Talk Opera!-Jenůfa
November 23, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. *Parlons opéra !* offers an engaging introduction to the season's major operas with Pierre Vachon, singers, and a pianist. This edition explores **Jenůfa**, a Czech drama where love, shame, and redemption intertwine within a rigid community. westmount.org/events

Public Safety Holiday Food Drive
For over 30 years, the Holiday Food Drive organised by Westmount's Public Safety Department has supported families in need in our community. Drop off your donations in the designated boxes located in municipal buildings. Thank you for your generosity! westmount.org/news



Volume of bottle returns tripled once provincial program broadened

Metro yet to decide fate of bottle-return machine at Victoria Ave. store

By JENNIFER BALL

The franchise owner of the Westmount Metro explained that Canadian food retailer Metro Inc. will make a decision – at a future, unknown date – that could affect those who recycle their cans and plastic bottles at the returns machine in his grocery store.

Gajan Rajasingam was asked on November 5 to address an overheard comment between a store employee and a returns machine user that the machine would be removed sometime in the future, possibly as soon as the end of this year.

Rajasingam explained, “For now, [Metro Inc.] didn’t take any decision about removing or keeping the machine. So, for now, it’s going to stay.”

Rajasingam was asked if he knew when Metro would take a decision. He said, “No clue about that, because I think they have to have a [recycling returns facility] around the store for us [before we can] remove the machines...”

“I don’t know if they found a recycling centre near the store. I think it is the city who decides that.”

Mugisha Rutishisha, the director of



The returns machine under maintenance at the Metro grocery store on Victoria Ave. on April 10, 2024.

Communications at the city of Westmount, was asked on November 5 if the city is aware of the recycling returns facility that Rajasingam described. He was also asked if a recycling centre near the Westmount Metro was planned and if so, where will it

be located and when will it open.

There was no response in time for the *Independent's* print deadline.

Systemic changes increase supply of returned bottles

The *Independent* reported in April 2024 that “a September 28, 2023 article by *La Presse* indicated that phase 1 of the modernization of Quebec’s returnable container deposit-refund program began on November 1, 2023 by standardizing the price of most containers at 10 cents and by including all aluminum beverage cans...”

“All returnable containers, with the exception of glass bottles from 500 millilitres to two litres, will be adjusted to 10 cents. That means there will be an increase in the deposit refund price for all types of cans, except for large cans of beer, for which the deposit will go from 20 to 10 cents. A can of soft drink, for example, will see its deposit price increase by five cents... glass bottles will be refunded at 25 cents” (see April 23, 2024, p. 17).

Also, most plastic bottles – including ones for water, juice and in some cases milk, which were formerly outside the system – are now returnable for money.

Rajasingam’s store only has space for one returns machine. He was asked how the increase in volume of returns has affected his store.

“It’s crazy,” he exclaimed. “It’s triple or even more than that...”

“There’s always a line-up at the entrance of the store, but we were able to manage pretty well with the machine and sometimes customer service accepts cans and bottles...”

“So far, no complaints about that.”



Arthur Younanian
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Mary Hagerman, author of *The Black Belt Investor*, will speak at the Westmount Public Library.

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Newly elected Stern, Chadha make first public appearances

City airs *Hola Frida* film championing inclusion of disabled children

By JENNIFER BALL

The animated film *Hola Frida* by Karine Vézina and André Kadi aims to strengthen the movement for equality and promote greater inclusion of children with disabilities worldwide. It centres on a little girl in Coyoacán, Mexico who contracts polio and then recovers from a life-changing vehicle collision, all *en route* to becoming the world-renowned painter Frida Kahlo.

The film unspooled on November 5 at Victoria Hall.

From her recovery bed, Kahlo started the self-portrait paintings that are indicative of her *oeuvre*. Her muse: her own face as reflected in a mirror above her bed while she lay prone in a body-cast.

Written by Anne Bryan, Sophie Faucher, Émilie Gabrielle and André Kadi, it is based on the book *Frida, c'est moi* (text by Sophie Faucher and illustration by Cara Carmina), published by Edito.

NGO 'Humanity & Inclusion Canada' collaborated on film

Anne Delorme, the director general of Humanity & Inclusion Canada, provided a statement on November 5. "*Hola Frida* re-traces the life of Frida Kahlo, highlighting essential themes such as resilience, diversity and the fight against bullying...

"Humanity & Inclusion collaborated on the film, and [it] is one of the few Canadian



From left, panel moderator Tarah Schwartz, VP of marketing and communications at the MUHC Foundation, panelist Tamara Jacod, global technical specialist in inclusive education at Humanity & Inclusion Canada, and Florence Roche, producer of *Hola Frida*.



NGOs that fully integrates people with disabilities. We are active in more than 50 countries worldwide. We save lives in crisis situations by providing rapid and inclusive humanitarian aid. We re-build futures through health, education and employment, ensuring the inclusion of all disabilities – both visible and invisible. We protect civilians from weapons by clearing landmines and removing unexploded ordnance..."

The event included workstations for young children to colour in Kahlo-inspired

pages and there was a panel discussion moderated by Tarah Schwartz, former CTV broadcaster and vice president of marketing and communications at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) Foundation. The two panelists were Tamara Jacod, global technical specialist in inclusive education at Humanity & Inclusion Canada, and Florence Roche, producer of *Hola Frida*.

Schwartz asked Jacod and Roche "What is Frida Kahlo's most important message for you personally?"

Jacod said, "If there is a child like Frida who has mobility issues, but the school has an access ramp – all of a sudden that barrier is removed and that child can equally participate in [their] school..."

"We owe it to everyone in our society to remove the barriers for people to shine like Frida has shined throughout her career."

Roche, who spoke in French, which was translated by the *Independent*, said, "The message of freedom and liberty" resonated most vibrantly for her.

Stern, Chadha in attendance

Michael Stern spoke at his first community event since being elected mayor on November 2. City councillor Gurveen Chadha, who is newly elected in District 4 (Victoria village above Sherbrooke), was also in attendance.

Schwartz asked Stern the same ques-

tion and he replied, "The movie itself was very inspirational! To see Frida at various stages in her life [when] she had to overcome something, and she was able to do it with determination [because of the] support of the people around her..."

"Her parents encouraged her even when she was discouraged herself."



Newly elected Westmount mayor Michael Stern. The election had taken place only three days before.



Anne Delorme, the director general of Humanity & Inclusion Canada, at the screening of *Hola Frida* at Victoria Hall on November 5.

Just in time for this winter

City prepares for snow with okay for loader contractors, operators at \$654,000

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Renewal of a contract approved by the outgoing city council at its last meeting October 1 prepared the city for the approaching winter season. This was for the rental of loader tractors with operators.

The three-year contract had been initially approved for the winter of 2023-2024 with two renewal options. The first renewal was exercised a year ago for last winter 2024-2025.

The recent renewal for this winter, 2025-2026, was approved for November 1 to April 30 at a cost of \$653,920 for the third year with Ventec. This was the contractor that recently re-constructed Sherbrooke from Grosvenor to just west of Claremont.

At the same meeting, the council cancelled a call for tenders for the rental of loader tractors with operators for the coming season that was deemed non-compliant “and must therefore be rejected,” according to the resolution.

► Looking west from the south side of Sherbrooke near Dawson’s main entrance towards Wood Ave. and the Queen Elizabeth Gardens park on February 14. Westmount will likely soon look like this again. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.



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Frederic, precious pup



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LYSANNE FOWLER

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Frederic is very healthy, up to date with his inoculations for his age and is microchipped. He will be neutered through Gerdy's Rescue when age appropriate.

If you would like to find out more about delightful Frederic, please refer to the Gerdy's Rescues & Adoption website at www.gerdysrescue.org, then scroll to his information page, where you will have more details on him and new photographs as well.

You should not hesitate to click the link to their adoption application form, on



which you can provide your contact information and interest in adoption.

Frederic is a stunning puppy, a dear companion to all in the home.

Your neighbour,

Lysanne

Spotty, but all white



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

I would have thought of Spotty as a name for an a spotted cat, so a moment of pause for Spotty as a stunning white one. His face is so beautiful, being drawn to his pink nose and water-green eyes.

Spotty is curled up in his cage at the Montreal SPCA cattery, waiting for you to visit him and take him home. He is friendly and interested in all that is happening around him, being used to a household routine in the past.

Spotty is a very healthy six-year-old, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped.

To find out more, scroll to the SPCA's website address, which is www.sPCA.com. From there, you can refer to precious Spotty's information page from his identification number, 2000353059. As a next step, it is easy to plan your visit to the SPCA adoption facilities where coordinators are available on a daily basis, every day. From



Monday to Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm, then Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm.

You are most welcome at the shelter, which is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West, Côte des Neiges, Montreal H4P 1X4. They even have an on-site boutique where you can stock up on foods, accessories and toys after adoption to settle in. Spotty is a perfect companion and he would be so happy to come home with you to enjoy family life.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

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Participants will explore how self-knowledge, discipline, and confidence are essential to embracing the journey towards prosperity.

Use the QR code or call 514 989-5300 x5355 to register

Wednesday, December 3 at 7pm
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4574 rue Sherbrooke ouest, Westmount

Ilios gala recalls ancient Greece, raises money for modern causes



Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Helmeted *hoplites* (ancient Greek soldiers) joined Greek “goddesses” to greet guests at the Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society’s (HLBS) Ilios 2025.

Gala honorary co-chairs were **Mary Karamanos** and **Nick Tsatsoulis**. Chair of Ilios 2025 **Effie Vassilas**, Sun Life, attended with her husband **Jimmy Zoubris**, special counsel to then Montreal mayor Valérie Plante.

Guests were welcomed by HLBS president **Belle Grivakis**, the much-lauded driving force behind the organization. Belle led ILIOS 2025 committee members **Cynthia Broccoli**, partner at PWC; **Mary Frank**, director marketing and innovation Bâton Rouge; **Daisy Giagkos**, events at CAE; **Kathy Hamelin**, Dollarama; **Sandra Khoury**; **Maggie Pagonis**; **Eva Primbas**, Valsoft; **Dora Tzavaras**, Christina’s Cuisine; and **Bernice Tzicas**, Progress Accounting. MC was CJAD’s **Elias Makos**, there with his wife **Olivia Wien**.



In centre, Angelina Loffreda and Senator Tony Loffreda.

Noted in the chic crowd were **Nikolaos Karalekas** the new consul general of Greece in Montreal and his wife **Kyriaki Chra**; senators **Tony Loffreda**, who attended with his wife **Angelina**, and **Leo Housakos** with his wife **Demi**; **Basile Angelopoulos**, president Hellenic Com-

munity of Greater Montreal; **Sandra Dampolias**, regional vp BMO; **Michael Vathilakis**, founding partner Renno Vathilakis (the honorary chairperson for Ilios Soirée 2027); **Lia Modesto** and **Pat Savoia**, RBC Wealth Management; **Niki** and **Peter Mammamas**, CEO Foodtastic; **Vicky Bourdakos**,



Michael Vathilakis and fiancée Tamara Haver.

COO Au Vieux Duluth; **Vince Simeone**, Kilo Gateaux, McCarthy Tetraault partner **Mary Pagonis**, president of the Hellenic Board of Trade; and Justice **Ekaterina Tsimberis** and **Denise Vourtzoumis**, president/founder Pink In The City.

continued on p. 22

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Committee: Maggie Pagonis, Sandra Khoury, Kathy Hamelin, Effie Vassilas, Elias Makos, Nick Tsatsoulis, Mary Karamanos, Belle Grivakis, Daisy Giagkos, Dora Tzavaras, Mary Frank and Cynthia Broccoli.



In centre, Harry, Lea and Ernie Grivakis.



Lia Modesto and Pat Savoia.

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Kyriaki Chra, Belle Grivakis and Nikolaos Karalekas.



Elias Bakakis, Sandra Dampolias, Jackie Karamanoukian, Mary Makedonas, Peter Mardakis and Elena Rusu.

the Crane in Barbados for the Live Auction. Sponsors were diamond level: BMO, Renno and Vathilakis Lawyers, and VVS Films; gold: Au Vieux Duluth, Dollarama, Dorex, Foodtastic, RBCDS, RBC and KRB/Trimont; silver: Kilo, Place St-Moritz, Les Aliments Benito/Sea-Ray Seafood and Valsef Dream Big Foundation; copper: Alphabet Cafe, Ambrosia/Lawrence V, Ne-

katrios Pouliezios, BMO; Dubé Latreille Avocats; Ecodomus; Paul Kamateros, Jeff and Sandra Khoury, PearTree Canada and Simard Transport. Monies raised from the sold-out *soirée* will be used to finance HLBS programs, including community assistance, education assistance, bursaries and camps.



Jimmy Zoubis, Effie Vassilas, Olivia Wien and Elias Makos.



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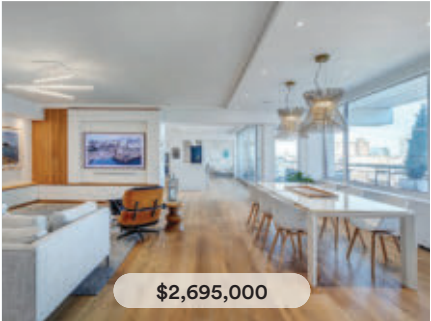


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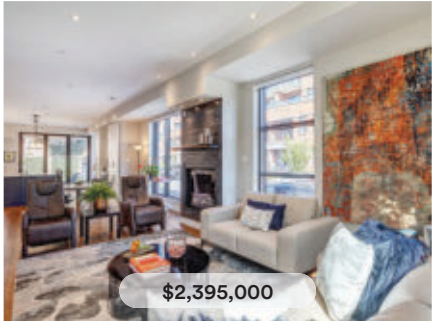


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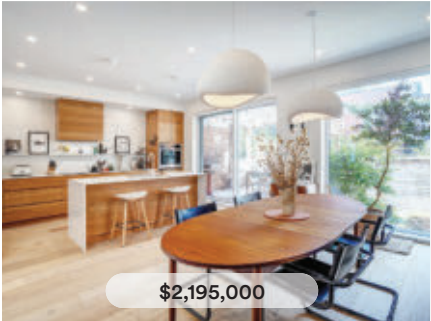
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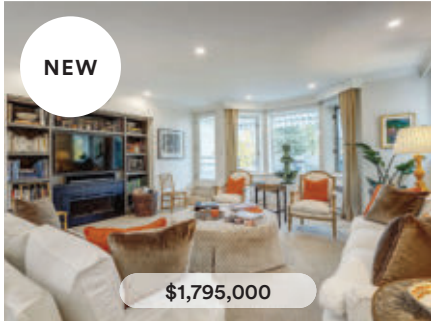
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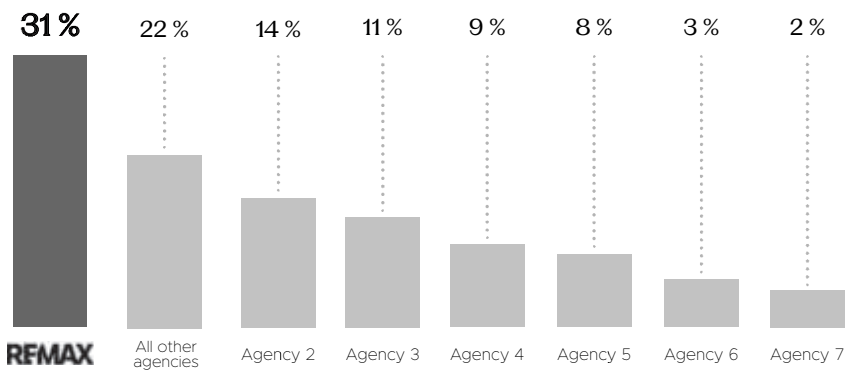
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*Centris data for single-family homes sold in Westmount between January 1st, 2025, and October 27th, 2025.