

## \$30-million arena plan unveiled



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BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A \$30-million arena/pool project was unveiled April 6 highlighting two pools, two full-sized ice rinks – one slightly smaller than the other – and underground parking for some 90 cars.

The preliminary design for Westmount's new sports and recreation centre features pedestrian entrances on all four sides and natural lighting for transparency from outside and inside. It would be built to meet the "silver" standard for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

The plan includes a 25-foot pool of eight lanes entirely separate from a kiddies' pool, both slightly sunken below a berm with seating.

The new, smaller rink would be built between the existing pool and the tennis courts. The larger, 200-foot-long NHL-size rink would be built on the site of the current one, with the likelihood that it would offer skating year-round.

As well as offices, the plan shows two sets of locker rooms, a pro shop, expanded teen centre, café and an all-purpose room with a terrace overlooking the pools – all aimed at serving as a community centre.

"My big hope is that we can bring people together on this and provide a resource the city will be proud of now and in the future."

The smaller rink would be floored over in summer to provide an all-purpose area. Its changing rooms would serve pool users.

It would allow for the addition of girls'

## Flower show boasts green roof



City gardeners, from left: Mélanie Banninger, Christine Dupuis and Hélène Bazinet add finishing touches to the Spring Flower Show that includes the planting of a green roof on the conservatory cottage. The display, with bunnies, opens April 8 and can be viewed weekdays 10 am to 9 pm and weekends 10 am to 5 pm. It will be officially unveiled at the Vin d'honneur. See p. 3

and women's hockey, broomball and other programs now lacking. It would also address the growing demand for exercise programs for children and older persons, and expand the use of rinks by schools during the day.

"We have to build a facility that offers opportunity for the future," said Mayor Karin Marks. "It would be very short-sighted not to do so."

Infrastructure grants, private funding and the outcome of tax-impact studies remain unknown, she said.

"We've pushed ourselves to be ready to

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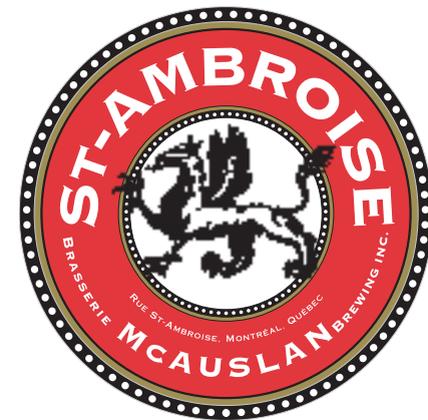
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# Outstanding service recognized at *Vin d'honneur*

Four Westmounters to receive civic honours posthumously at the city's *Vin d'honneur*, April 7 at Victoria Hall, will join the ranks of 50 other outstanding citizens so recognized. The event was launched in 1990 by then mayor May Cutler to highlight the richness of contributions made by citizens to the local and wider community.

## A. Y. Jackson (1882-1974) Artist, Group of Seven



A founding member of Canada's Group of Seven painters, Alexander Young Jackson grew up in Montreal, moving to Hallowell St. with his family at age 22 in 1904. His career took him to Toronto after 1913 where he worked for many years before settling in Ottawa.

He was wounded in action in France during World War I and became a Canadian war artist from 1917 to 1919, during which time he painted devastated towns and villages in France and Belgium. He loved the outdoors and spent much of life thereafter sketching and painting Canadian scenes including the Arctic, which he visited twice.

He was recognized during his lifetime for his contribution to Canadian art.

## Arnold Heeney (1902-1970) Lawyer, civil servant, diplomat



A.D.P. Heeney is credited with making Canada's public service a professional organization based on merit and uniform standards.

Born in Bellevue, Ontario, and growing up in Winnipeg, Heeney spent many summers visiting relatives in Montreal. After studying at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar, he graduated in law from McGill and married Margaret Yuile. They raised two children, Brian and Patricia, at their home on Montrose Ave. Among his many contributions were his service as secretary to the World War II cabinet of Prime Minister Mackenzie King and being part of the establishment of NATO. He served two terms as ambassador to Washington forging improved US-Canada relations.

## Mordecai Richler (1931-2001) Author, essayist, satirist



Mordecai Richler is one of the best known and most successful Canadian writers.

Despite outraging many different groups for his outspoken opinions, he won numerous awards and international respect.

While many of his novels were set in the working class area near St. Urbain St. where he grew up, Richler lived at 218 Edgehill Rd. for five years (1974-1979).

He spent much of his time in the Eastern Townships. With his second wife, Florence Wood, he had five children: Daniel, Noah, Emma, Martha and Jacob, all active in the arts.

His work included 10 novels, three children's books, numerous essays and journal articles, and radio and screenplays. His screenplay for *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* earned him an Oscar nomination.

## Jessie Boyd Scriver (1894-2000) Pediatrician and researcher



Trailblazing the admission of women into medicine at McGill, Jessie Boyd Scriver went on to carry out landmark research in sickle-cell anemia and build pediatrics into a separate specialty.

She lived most of her life in Westmount, where she maintained a thriving practice while working at The Montreal Children's Hospital. She became its archivist after retirement. Scriver worked briefly in Boston after her marriage to Dr. Walter Scriver.

The couple then returned to carry out research at the Royal Victoria Hospital. They lived first on The Boulevard, then at 510 Roslyn Ave for more than 35 years.

Charles Robert Scriver, their son, followed his parents into medicine, establishing the Scriver Family Visiting Professorship in Genetic Medicine shortly before his mother's death at 105.

## Less energy consumed during this year's Earth Hour in Westmount

Westmounters cut electricity consumption by 4.3 percent during Earth Hour this year, according to Hydro Westmount officials. This compares with 1 percent in 2008.

"The conclusion is that people are getting into it more enthusiastically," director Pierre Dubé said.

The event, which took place March 28 between 8:30 and 9:30 pm, encourages people to reduce energy use by turning off lights and lowering thermostats for one hour. In Westmount, there was also participation from Hydro Westmount, which

turned off lights at the lookout and below in Sunnyside Park for a Dark Sky star-gazing event.

"We saw a rapid decline of 2.3 percent immediately at 8:30," Dubé said. A subsequent drop during the next hour, compared to an average for this period, was attributed to the worldwide initiative that had been joined by Westmount.

A 5-percent decrease reported this year by Hydro Quebec for the entire province remained unchanged from last year (see *Westmount Independent*, April 15, 2008, p. 4).



### Brian Gans

Notary  
Title Attorney

briangans@briangans.com

4060 St. Catherine West  
Suite 620  
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## At Second Glance

## Engaging citizens



BY HEATHER BLACK

This month, Westmount citizens will be asked to comment on the arena-pool proposal. Why? Because it's smart politics with benefits for citizens and city hall alike.

**Why participate?**

A recent Ipsos-MORI poll for the UK government, "Measuring the Impact of Empowerment", showed that citizens want to influence local decision-making and have their views known on issues that affect them. Many indicated that they preferred a consultancy role (50 percent), to direct involvement (48 percent).

Moreover, citizens who influence city hall tend to be more positive about their community. Citizens who participate in decision-making processes report an increased sense of belonging and cohesiveness. They rank empowerment third - after perceptions of safety and knowing their neighbours - in rating community satisfaction.

Participants in watchdog groups also are more likely to report community satisfaction. For them, trust in local organizations increased from 53 to 75 percent, and support for city hall increased slightly.

Ipsos-MORI reports that satisfaction with city hall rises where residents have "higher feelings of influence." These individuals were more inclined to trust city

hall (57 percent) than those who didn't (41 percent). Citizen ownership in the decision-making process generally increases support for government initiatives and ensures their success. Good will is generated, and protest or violence is averted - an important consideration in some areas.

Research also reveals that citizen empowerment leads to better services and outcomes for individuals and communities. Open meetings and input from community groups such as the Westmount Municipal Association clarify community concerns and introduce expertise. The citizen consultative process increases public accountability and often leads to innovative solutions.

And the downside to participatory democracy? This study indicates the citizens who have lost influence report a decrease in community satisfaction. According to the report's authors: "This points to the vital importance of maintaining residents' role in decision-making once it has been developed." The consultative process can only be retracted at the peril of elected representatives.

Community empowerment is a process that provides citizens with opportunities to influence local decision-making, but it must be exercised. So this month when pollsters call, participate. Relaying a measured and well-considered opinion is part of a very smart process.

*Heather Black is a communication designer. Contact her: [www.blackheajea@gmail.com](mailto:www.blackheajea@gmail.com)*

# WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

**We are Westmount.**

EDITOR:  
David Price 514.935.4537

EDITORIAL COORDINATOR:  
Kristin McNeill 514.223.3578  
[indie@westmountindependent.com](mailto:indie@westmountindependent.com)

CHIEF REPORTER:  
Laureen Sweeney  
[laureen@westmountindependent.com](mailto:laureen@westmountindependent.com)

ADVERTISING CONSULTANT:  
Arleen Candiotti 514.223.3567  
[advertising@westmountindependent.com](mailto:advertising@westmountindependent.com)

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## Latest news on the arena/pool renewal project

FROM MAYOR KARIN MARKS  
AND COUNCIL

As part of Council's on-going commitment to provide residents with timely information regarding the Arena/Pool Renewal Project, we are providing updates on the most recent news and developments regarding project planning initiatives.

It is always difficult to find the balance between a council's role to lead and have a vision for the community and the citizens' desires and abilities to be part of this evolving process. In an attempt to find the best ways for us to balance these two elements, we are proposing a different schedule of public meetings and the dis-

presentation will be made at each meeting. Comments and suggestions will be documented and made available on the City's website.

- Council has agreed to delay the mailing of a complete information package to after the public information meetings. This information guide will include detailed background, a discussion of options available, overall cost estimates and the potential property tax implications. It will also integrate valuable suggestions made by residents during the two information sessions.

- A third information session will be held after the documents have been received and any changes have been made, by mid



*A rendering of the new pools.*

tribution and availability of information on the arena project.

- At the last Council meeting, held on April 6, the architectural firm Lemay and Associates made a presentation of the proposed Arena/Pool project to Council. This presentation was well attended and offered residents their first opportunity to view conceptual sketches of the proposed new facility.

- Council confirmed the dates of the first two upcoming public information meetings on the Arena/Pool Renewal Project:

- Saturday, April 18, 2009 at 12 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at 7 p.m.

- These meetings will take place at Victoria Hall. In preparation for these meetings, residents are invited to consult a series of documents providing background information on the web at [Westmount.org](http://Westmount.org). Information packages will also be available at the library, the arena and Victoria Hall. Residents are invited to take part in either session, as the same

to late May.

- An arena blog has been launched. Please visit [www.Westmount.org](http://www.Westmount.org) to participate in constructive conversations between the Office of the Mayor and the population of Westmount.

- A telephone poll on the project will be conducted later on. It is intended to help Council understand its residents' perceptions and opinions regarding the project. In addition, concrete numbers will enable Council to dispose of an exact measure of public opinion.

- In order to receive regular e-mail messages on the Arena/Pool Renewal Project or other information related to Sports and Recreation activities, we invite you to complete your personal E-Westmount profile at [www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org).

For information on these or related issues, please refer to our Web site at [www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org) or contact Brigitte Stock, Director of Communications at 514.989.5371.

**Letters to the Editor, p. 7**

## Civic Alert

## Chagnon steps up on arena funds, train and Ville Marie

BY DON WEDGE



“I’m searching for the correct channel,” was MNA Jacques Chagnon’s response on his efforts to ensure Westmount obtains funding for the arena/pool project.

It is one of a trio of local issues that Chagnon is following closely and on which he is hoping to broker solutions between the Liberal government and his constituents.

The other issues are the nuisance created by the trains, which brings “angry people” to seek his help, and the rebuilding of the Ville Marie autoroute and Turcot interchange.

Chagnon has a reputation for working behind the scenes on behalf of his riding, sometimes a tricky path, as it is split between Westmount and downtown Montreal.

He has been Westmount’s MNA for 23 years and says that the highway to Quebec City is “part of my life.” He estimates hav-

ing driven it 3,000 times.

After last December’s provincial elections, he was re-elected deputy-speaker and currently presides over the morning sessions. Chagnon also represents Quebec in the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), where he is now first vice president. He will become its president in 2010.

He began the year with a COPA conference in Ushuaia, the most southern city in the world and the capital of Tierra del Fuego, Argentina.

The MNA has a reputation for doggedly following projects. Mayor Karin Marks has frequently noted that his support led to the changes to the agglom laws that were eventually introduced last summer.

**Tobacco fund exhausted**

Finding money for the arena has also become a drawn-out process. In 2007, when the artificial turf soccer field was being proposed, Chagnon thought it might be at least partly funded by the tobacco tax. This was the surcharge the province introduced to pay off the Olympic

Stadium debt. When the liability was cleared, the government decided to use the income to fund recreational projects.

“I suggest Westmount get in an application for its share,” I recall him urging at a time when the artificial turf was just a concept.

However, that source of money is no longer available. “It funded projects totalling close to \$250 million. Even if there were three times that budget, it would not be enough to fund all the requests,” he told me this week, adding the warning: “There are more applications than can be met and they are relatively small – not the level Westmount requires.”

“I’m looking around to see where there might be help for the eventual construction of an arena and pool. At the end of March, Quebec signed an agreement with the federal government for public works, and I’m hopeful that something could be found there. But it’s not easy.”

Another seemingly intractable problem is the noise and vibrations from the trains with the divided responsibilities involving CP Rail, which owns the tracks, and the

Agence métropolitaine de transport (AMT), the train operator.

“A few years ago, I arranged a meeting between some affected Westmounters and Joël Gauthier, the head of the AMT. Subsequently, there seemed to be some track improvements, but in recent months I have started to hear from angry residents again.

“I met Gauthier again in February and have a follow-up appointment this month. In the future, there are going to be a lot more trains on the line so there must be more care over the impact on residents.”

**Airport shuttle preference**

Chagnon believes that the line will eventually be the one chosen for the airport shuttle and the best solution would be for the AMT to own the tracks. “Unfortunately CP is not a very willing seller,” he admits.

“Even if I am wrong about the shuttle route, at least we would have the assurance that the people are better protected.”

Chagnon is also hearing ..... from another “concentra- *continued on p. 6*

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## Opinion

## New arena requires underground parking

BY CYNTHIA LULHAM, CITY COUNCILLOR (DISTRICT 7) AND PATRICK MARTIN, CITY COUNCILLOR (DISTRICT 1)

There has been much comment of late by Westmounters who reside in the vicinity of the arena and pool that there is a severe parking problem in the area. And there is concern that it will be worsened by any reconstruction of the ageing facilities, which may lead to an expansion of sports activities.

Allow us to give you the opinion of two city councillors who are most involved in this subject, namely Cynthia Lulham, who is councillor for the affected district and commissioner for Urban Planning, and Patrick Martin, councillor for District 1, member of the Urban Planning Committee and professional engineer active in the field of transportation planning.

Residents affected by arena activity should rest assured that we are fully aware of the traffic problems and that we are resolved to improve the situation. In fact, we view the reconstruction, which is necessary and long overdue in any case, as an important element of the solution to traffic and parking problems in the area. It offers a unique opportunity to set things right after years of difficulties.

**Pushed for parking study**

We have pushed for the undertaking of an independent parking study by experts and we are pleased to report that such a third-party study is at last underway. As much as anecdotal evidence and opinions of residents and councillors may add colour to the perception of the problem, only a scientific approach can have the full confidence of all parties that the proper solution has been put forward. Some of the considerations of the study are:

- Hockey programmes, swimming, tennis and the nearby refurbished playing fields impact demand for parking in various seasons and at different times of day.
- Inter-city games, with many visiting players, add to the parking load.
- Many apartments, triplex and duplex buildings in the area have no off-street parking for occupants or for guests.
- Institutional facilities contribute significantly to parking demand, including Westmount Park School, the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf, Westmount Park Church, the Batshaw Youth and Family Centre and the current activities at the

Royal Montreal Regiment armoury (RMR).

- The RMR building may one day allow additional use of its large gymnasium by residents, integrated with Westmount's sports programmes.

- The addition of the proposed, second full-sized hockey rink would increase parking requirements.

- A number of parking spots may be lost through any expansion of the existing sports facilities and will need to be replaced.

**On-street parking lacking**

Preliminary results of the parking study confirm that currently there is not enough on-street parking available, that the addition of a proposed second rink and the possible eventual increased civilian use of the RMR armoury would exacerbate the problem in a critical way, and that there is no land available for additional useful on-street parking.

This would assuredly lead to the conclusion that the only solution is to take advantage of any reconstruction of the arena to provide for underground parking. And there is only one chance to avail of this unique opportunity; it cannot be added later, once the buildings have been refurbished or reconstructed.

Not only would it accommodate additional parking for renewed or expanded sports and recreation facilities, but it would alleviate the existing parking pressure in the area for residents and their guests in both winter and summer, during peak hours of activity on the rinks and the adjacent new soccer field. And it would have the additional advantage of bringing arena traffic to a drop-off zone below grade inside the building, improving traffic flow while reducing noise and inconvenience to neighbouring residents.

The proposed renewal project for the arena, pool, teen centre and community centre with an integrated parking capability is an exciting one, and will be an enhancement to the city in general, and to the immediate area in particular, serving neighbouring citizens as well as those who must travel to the facility.

**Editor's note:** It may interest readers to know that the armoury land to the east of the arena is owned by the city of Westmount and is leased to the RMR under a long-term lease that expires in 2024. See "RMR" (March 3, p. 1) for details.

## Opinion

## WAMCAM misrepresented

In response to the letters of Mr. Grossman and Mr. Matossian in the *Westmount Independent* (April 1, p. 7), I would like to restate the position of the Westmount Arena Moderation Campaign (WAMCAM) so there is no misunderstanding.

I would further ask "the likes of" Mr. Matossian who represents a very "limited interest group," to refrain from making unsubstantiated "false and misleading pronouncements" about WAMCAM.

With respect to the Grossman letter stating that "skewed data has been presented...", Mr. Grossman has presented no information to substantiate this false allegation.

The WAMCAM group has clearly said that it *does indeed support a renewal* of the arena and pool.

What we have also said is that there needs to be:

- A building, sized properly for the chosen location,
- Adequate parking,
- Proper traffic management and policing,
- Safety for pedestrians,
- Prudent financial management considering our taxes and our debt.

Not once has the "hockey lobby" shown awareness that there could be any impact on the local community due to a much larger, higher-volume arena. Not once have they acknowledged the serious problems associated with going forward without even having a professional traffic and parking study.

The facts are: there has been no public discussion of financing the project other

than hoping for an unknown amount of government or private money, no serious analysis of parking requirements, no discussion of extra policing for the increased volume of cars and team buses, no presentation of impact on streetscape and green spaces, no pedestrian safety studies, and – finally – no data on the final cost of the project.

Hopefully, all these questions will be answered and presented to the commu-

nity in the next weeks by the city administrators, based on the \$400,000 already spent in design and consulting fees.

The *Gazette* recently reported estimated massive cost overruns for the MSO Concert Hall (\$162 million over estimate), and CHUM (\$1.6 billion over estimate).

Perhaps the "the likes of" Mr. Matossian and Mr. Grossman would like to guarantee to the taxpayers that there will be no cost overruns on the arena.

WAMCAM is raising legitimate and vital questions in the true Westmount tradition. Those who complain about our pointed questions demonstrate their inability to muster sufficient facts to debate the issues.

The truth is, the chosen location for the arena is "very tight," as was said one year ago by Mr. Bruce St. Louis (Westmount's former director general) at the very first public meetings. Land and money are at a premium, and that means the city will have to make choices that truly consider all the limitations.

Gary Ikeman, WAMCAM



Arena parking is on many people's minds. This lot has 26 spaces, including those with restrictions.

## Chagnon: Trains a solution

.....  
continued from p. 5

tion of angry people" – those worried by the dislocation that will be part of the Ville Marie autoroute rebuilding. Again he sees the train as a major part of the solution. "Expensive, but necessary."

Chagnon anticipates a big expansion of rush-hour rail traffic that would minimize the tie-ups that could otherwise throttle Sherbrooke St.

"I have promised Joël Gauthier that I will be seeing him frequently until these issues are resolved," said the MNA. As he has shown on many issues in the 23 years as our representative, Chagnon will probe the corridors of government until he can find solutions to the most intractable of problems such as these three.

Citizen activist  
Don Wedge's email address is  
dwedge@sympatico.ca

## The Inquisitive Westmouter



Does anyone know what this box is affixed to a tree in Summit Park? Is it some sort of bird feeder or tin-box nest for the incoming spring arrivals? Please write to us with your ideas at [indie@westmountindependent.com](mailto:indie@westmountindependent.com).

## Letters to the Editor

### WOODPECKER IS PILEATED

Just a note to let you know that the bird in the photo on p. 8 of the April 1 issue is a pileated woodpecker, not a red headed woodpecker. The pileated is our largest woodpecker and at one time was very rare, but it has now made a comeback and can often be seen in stands of mature woods.

Love the paper. Keep up the good work!  
PHYLLIS GALBRAITH, MONTREAL WEST

### GOOD JOB ON SNOW REMOVAL

Now that April's here, kudos and thanks to the crew at Public Works for a first-rate job on snow removal. One did not have to venture far afield to see the contrast with certain areas outside Westmount.

Streets cleared of snow and ice in a timely fashion can attract non-residents to do their shopping in Westmount. By any measure, that's economic 'sustainability.'

DOROTHY LIPOVENKO, YORK ST.

### VOICING OPINIONS POSITIVE

There is no doubt that Stan Grossman enjoys living in Westmount (*Independent*, April 1, p. 7). He is like most people who choose to live here, and the reasons he

gives for liking Westmount are probably the same reasons that most of us would give.

But there is an important reason for living here that he fails to mention. Westmouters are able to voice their opinions on any number of subjects and, more importantly, they do so.

We are fortunate that we have a question period at city hall that does not require that we write a letter requesting to get on a list. There is no time limit, and generally all questioners are listened to with attention. We have local newspapers that print our letters, and Westmouters are mostly quite involved in the city.

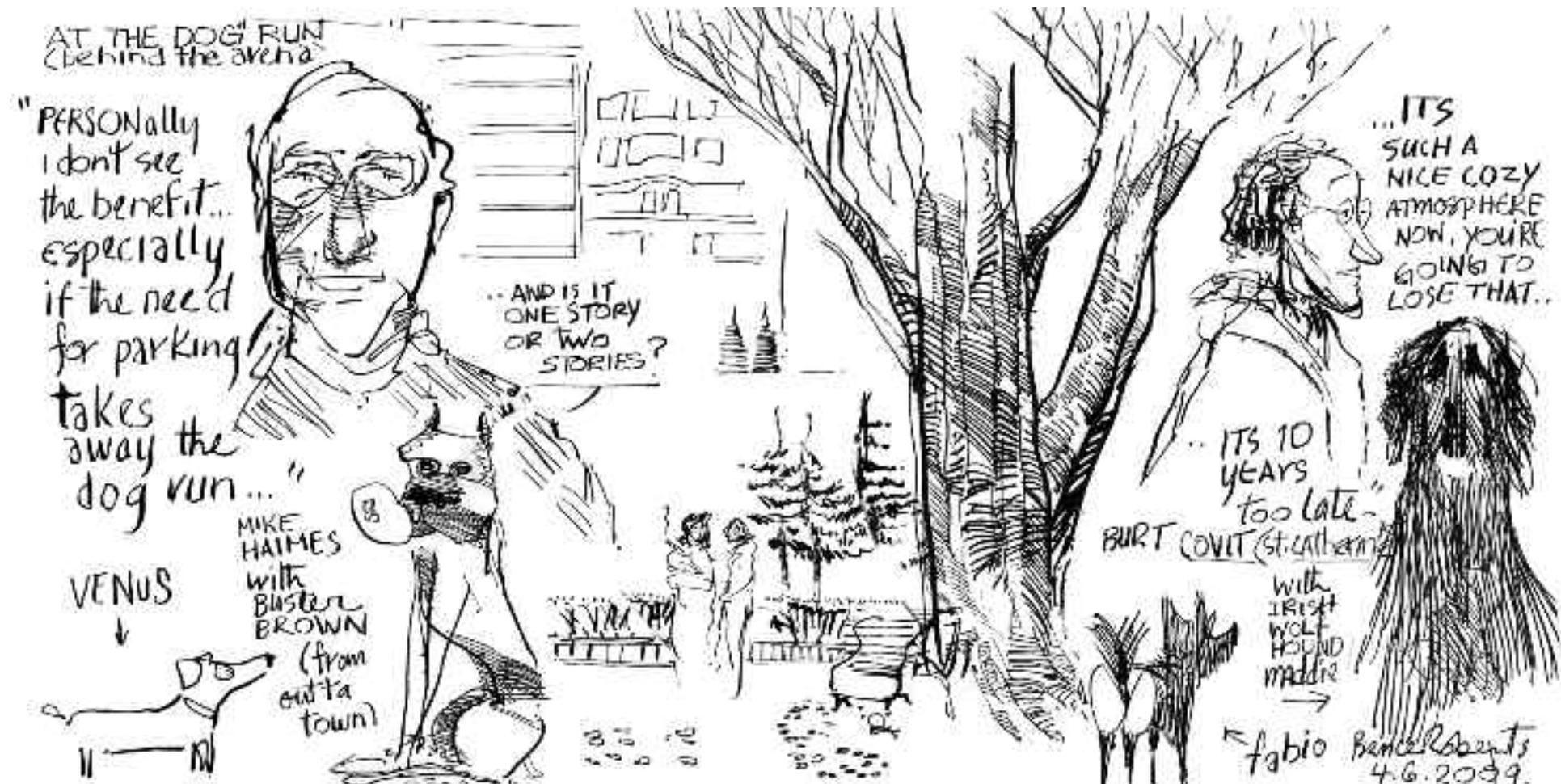
However, instead of considering people's concern over municipal projects and processes as a positive aspect of living here, Mr. Grossman calls such involvement a maligning of the city. The truth is that not all citizens see things the same way, and the positive part of living here is that we are able to state our case if we do not consider a particular proposal an improvement. Debate is healthy.

It is too bad that Stan Grossman puts down people who take part in it.

MARILYNN GILLIES,  
MELVILLE AVE

## Not a Court Reporter: Views on arena

By BRUCE ROBERTS



## News &amp; Views

## After 25 years, Erhard and Marlene pass the torch at Café Maisonneuve

BY RICHARD ROCHESTER

The small counter-style restaurant Café Maisonneuve is not just a coffee shop, but a neighbourhood institution and meeting place. I have had my offices near Claremont and de Maisonneuve for nearly 50 years, and every day I have looked forward to a home-cooked hot dinner at lunch hour in this café.

For the last 25 years, this little restaurant, located at 4920 de Maisonneuve Blvd., has been owned and operated by Erhard Grunikewicz and Marlene Weis.

Both came to Canada from Germany: Marlene in 1955 from Cologne, and Erhard from Stuttgart in 1966. While Erhard managed the German Beer Gardens on Cremazie Blvd., Marlene, who graduated from a famous hotel school in Germany, was employed by the Bonaventure Hotel's Castilian Dining Room and was



Erhard Grunikewicz and Marlene Weis.

the first female sommelier in Canada. While at the Bonaventure, she recommended the best choice of wines to Omar Sharif, Harry Belafonte and Maurice Chevalier.

Erhard and Marlene married in Expo year, 1967, and looked forward to someday

owning their own business. As they both worked in various restaurants over the next few years, they saved up and purchased Café Maisonneuve in April 1984 and presented a menu of home-cooked soups, full-course dinners with delicious homemade cakes and pies for dessert. Erhard and Marlene both have a passion for cooking that has drawn in a steady, permanent clientele over the years. They both remember most of their customers by first name and many have become personal friends.

Erhard arrives at the restaurant at 4 am every morning. Even though the official opening time is 6 am, night-shift workers, policemen, meter readers and Westmount's Corporation Yard employees show up for a hot breakfast shortly after his arrival and are welcomed in with Erhard's big smile. When Erhard and Marlene retire

on April 15, after 25 years of ownership, I am really going to miss this jovial couple, whom I now consider good friends.

Café Maisonneuve has been sold to Renan Alvey, who grew up working in his family coffee-shop business in Panama. He will be assisted by his wife, Emma, originally from El Salvador. Renan was previously employed in coffee shops at the Ross Pavilion of the Royal Victoria Hospital and, before that, in the Allan Memorial coffee shop. I think this experience will enable him to carry on a successful business after Erhard and Marlene retire.

Where else can you get a full, home-cooked dinner for under \$11.50 these days? You will see me there!

Café Maisonneuve's business hours are 6 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday.

Richard Rochester lives on St. Catherine St.

## 2nd rink = underground parking

go when infrastructure money becomes available because there is tremendous competition for these grants.

"Whatever it is going to cost taxpayers, however, I cannot believe that it won't increase property values for Westmount to have a first-class recreational facility - whether you use it or not," Marks said.

While original costs were projected at \$25 million, the additional amount is tied to the building of an underground, one-level garage with elevator—a cost of at least \$3.3 million. This goes hand-in-hand with the addition of a second hockey rink, which would put even greater strains on existing on-street parking.

This was considered to be the most cost-appropriate option for the future, Marks said.

Estimates to renovate the existing facility would cost \$14 million," she explained. "The other alternative was to knock it down and rebuild with only one large rink, which would cost \$19 million."

The decision to add the second rink (180- or 185-foot long) "unfortunately" required the underground parking, she said.

The overall plan was set to be presented at the city council meeting of April 6 by architects from the Lemay consortium, after press time. The presentation was to be filmed and posted on the city's website.

Despite the provision for underground parking, Marks said, "we will be encouraging people to come by foot or on bicycle as much as possible."

This will be facilitated by pedestrian entrances off Lansdowne, St. Catherine, the main entrance at Academy Rd., and one off de Maisonneuve that leads directly to the teen centre.

The grassing over of current exterior parking spots just north of St. Catherine, would serve to integrate the street into Westmount Park.

The appearance of the building's exterior remains un-

der review by PAC, the city's architectural design committee, until the design is finalized, Marks said. It is understood that attempts are being made to harmonize it with the adjacent RMR armory.

Efforts to meet LEED standards include reuse of water, heating/cooling controls, energy-rated windows and a LEED certified-green roof. This does not necessarily require a planted roof, Marks explained. There are other options such as reflective roofs.

In order to maintain the height of the new facility at the existing level, the rinks and locker rooms will be well below grade.

## Third info meeting planned

At an afternoon-long arena meeting April 3 attended by all of council, Marks said, it was decided to push back the delivery of information packages until after information meetings. The first two will take place as originally planned on Saturday, April 18, and Tuesday, April 22.

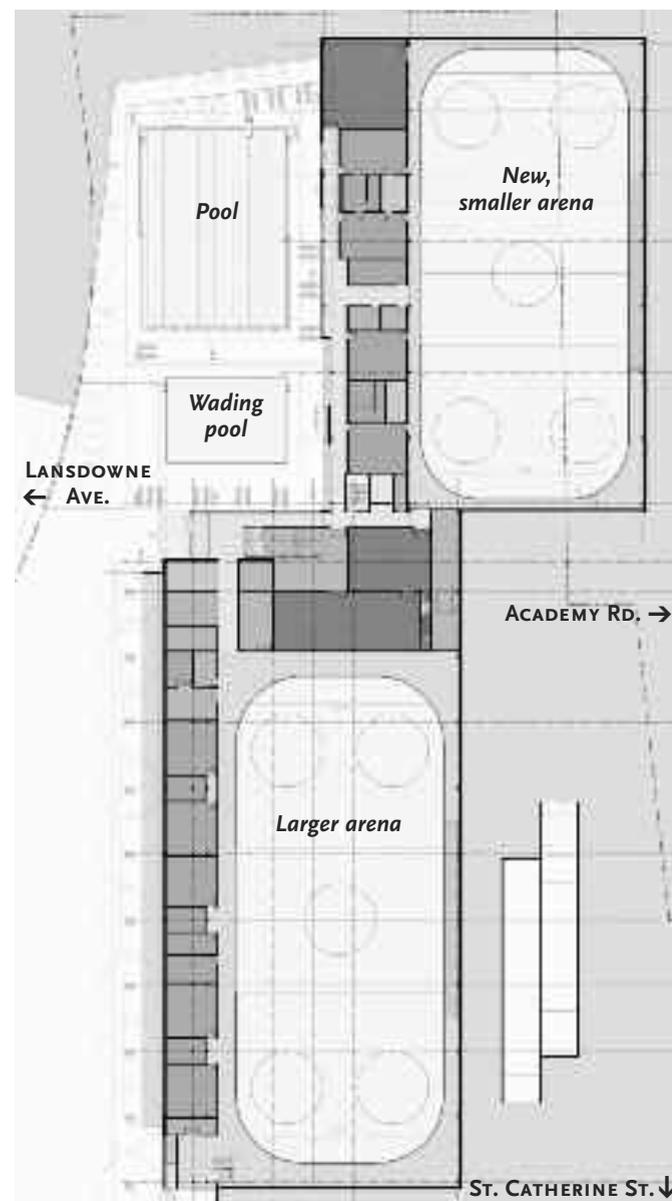
A third information meeting will now be added in mid to late May to explain adjustments that may arise following the other sessions.

As a result, the telephone poll of residents regarding the arena plans will also be held later than expected.

The packages were to have been distributed April 7, 8 and 9, but those dates did not allow time for the receipt of all information in time for translation.

Instead, the preliminary design and as much background information as possible would be posted on the city's website April 7. A blog will also be created.

Background studies related to Phase 1 of the project will be available for consultation at Westmount Public Library. With some 200 pages, they are too heavy for posting online and will not be translated from the original French.



Bird's eye view of proposed arena and pools

Westmount vous informe...

Westmount vous informe...

## Westmount Page

www.westmount.org  
info : 514 989-5200

Vol. 3/06

Publié par Westmount • Published by Westmount

**ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES**  
**Collecte de sang du maire**

La collecte annuelle de sang du maire se tiendra le vendredi 17 avril de 14 h à 20 h au Victoria Hall. Donnez du sang, donnez la vie ! Info : 514 989-5265.

**La galerie du Victoria Hall**

La galerie du Victoria Hall a le plaisir de présenter une exposition jumelée des œuvres de Nathalie Guez et d'Homeira Mortazavi. Nathalie Guez expose une série de chaises uniques alliant beauté, fonctionnalité, des influences africaines en matière de design et une esthétique résolument moderniste. L'exposition se déroulera jusqu'au 21 avril.

**BIBLIOTHÈQUE****Vente de livres des Amis de la bibliothèque**

Les Amis de la bibliothèque tiendront une vente de livres le samedi 25 et dimanche 26 avril, de 10 h à 17 h, dans la salle Westmount de la bibliothèque. Si vous avez des livres en excellent état que vous aimeriez donner aux fins de cette vente, veuillez les apporter à la bibliothèque dès maintenant. Tous les profits tirés de cette vente serviront à acheter de nouveaux livres pour la bibliothèque. Info : 514 483-5604.

**Club de lecture anglaise**

Joignez-vous au club de lecture anglaise le mardi 21 avril de 19 h à 21 h pour discuter du livre *Remembering the Bones* de Frances Itani. Info : 514 989-5386.

**Club de lecture française**

Joignez-vous au club de lecture française le mercredi 15 avril de 18 h 30 à 21 h pour discuter les lauréats du prix Goncourt. Info : 514 989-5386.

**Club de lecture pour ados**

Aucune liste de lecture imposée et aucune date limite, seulement des discussions au sujet des livres que tu as lus ! Notre prochaine rencontre est prévue le jeudi 23 avril à 16 h. Info : 514 989-5229.

**Conférences sur la santé****Trauma**

Le mercredi 15 avril – 19 h  
Dr. Tarek Razek, chef de la traumatologie au CUSM

**DATES À RETENIR****Le 8 avril - 8 h 30 à 16 h 30**

Période d'inscriptions - non-résidents  
*Activités de loisirs printemps-été 2009*  
Aréna de Westmount

**Jusqu'au 21 avril**

Exposition : Nathalie Guez & Homeira Mortazavi  
La galerie du Victoria Hall

**Le 16 avril – 19 h****Association historique de Westmount**

Conférences printanières 2009  
La pâtisserie POM  
Conférencier : Peter Harrison  
Bibliothèque

**Le 17 avril – 14 h**

Collecte de sang du maire  
Victoria Hall

**TRAVAUX PUBLICS****Distribution d'arbres**

Dans son budget 2009, la Ville de Westmount a prévu un montant de 5 000 \$ pour la distribution d'arbres aux résidents. Ces derniers peuvent obtenir sans frais un arbre parmi les suivants: le pommetier Royalty, le lilas Ivory Silk ou l'olivier de Bohème. Les bons de commande sont disponibles à l'Hôtel de Ville ou à la Bibliothèque publique de Westmount jusqu'au 16 avril prochain ainsi que sur notre site Internet [www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org).

**HOTEL DE VILLE****Congé de Pâques**

Veuillez noter que tous les bureaux administratifs de la Ville de Westmount, soit l'Hôtel de ville, le Victoria Hall, Hydro Westmount, et les Services de la sécurité publique, des sports et loisirs et des travaux publics seront fermés le vendredi 10 avril et le lundi 13 avril en raison de Pâques.

De plus, la Bibliothèque publique de Westmount sera fermée les vendredis 10 avril, dimanche 12 avril et lundi 13 avril.

Prenez note également qu'il n'y a aucun changement quant aux collectes des ordures et des résidus alimentaires qui s'effectueront selon l'horaire normal.

**COMMUNITY EVENTS****Mayor's Blood Donor Clinic**

The annual Westmount Mayor's Blood Donor clinic will take place on Friday, April 17, between 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Victoria Hall. Give blood. Give life. Info: 514 989-5265.

**The Gallery at Victoria Hall**

The Gallery at Victoria Hall is pleased to present a duo exhibition of the works of Nathalie Guez and Homeira Mortazavi. Nathalie Guez presents a series of one-of-a-kind chairs that bring together beauty and function, African design influences and a distinctly modernist aesthetic. The exhibition runs until April 21.

**LIBRARY****Friends of the Library Quality Book Sale**

The Friends of the Westmount Public Library will be holding a book sale on Saturday and Sunday, April 25 and 26 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Westmount Room of the Library. If you have any books in excellent condition that you would like to donate to this sale, please bring them to the Library now. All proceeds from this sale go towards purchasing new books for the Library. Info: 514 483-5604.

**English Book Club**

Join the English Book Club from 7 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21 as they discuss *Remembering the Bones* by Frances Itani. Info: 514 989-5386.

**French Book Club**

Join the French Book Club from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15 at 6:30 p.m. as they discuss books that have won the Prix Goncourt des Lycéens. Info: 514 989-5386.

**Teen Book Club**

No set reading list and no deadlines, just talking about the books you're reading and comparing notes with other teen readers! We will meet on Thursday, April 23 at 4 p.m. Info: 514 989-5229.

**Health Series****Trauma**

Wednesday, April 15 - 7:00 p.m.  
Dr. Tarek Razek, Chief of Trauma, MUHC

**DATEBOOK****April 8 - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Registration Period - non-residents  
*Spring/Summer 2009 Recreation Activities*  
Westmount Arena

**Until April 21**

Exhibition: Nathalie Guez & Homeira Mortazavi  
Gallery at Victoria Hall

**April 16 – 7 p.m.****Westmount Historical Association**

Spring Lecture Series 2009  
POM Bakery  
Speaker: Peter Harrison  
Library

**April 17 - 2 p.m.**

Mayor's Blood Donor Clinic  
Victoria Hall

**PUBLIC WORKS****Tree Distribution**

The City of Westmount has allocated \$5,000 in its 2009 budget for the distribution of trees to its residents. You may obtain one tree free of charge from the following selection: Royalty Crab Apple, Ivory Silk Lilac and Russian Olive. Order forms are available until April 16 at City Hall and Westmount Public Library as well as on our website [www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org).

**CITY HALL****Easter Holidays**

Please be advised that all administrative offices of the City of Westmount (City Hall, Victoria Hall, Hydro Westmount, Public Works, Public Security and Recreation) will be closed on Friday April 10 and Monday, April 13 for the Easter holiday.

Westmount Public Library will also be closed on Friday April 10, Sunday April 12 and Monday, April 13 for the Easter holiday.

Please note that garbage/kitchen waste collection is unaffected, and will take place according to the regular schedule.

**Westmount, à votre portée.** Pour toute question ou commentaire, veuillez nous contacter :  
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**assistance@westmount.org**

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## Post: no peanuts, no bagels

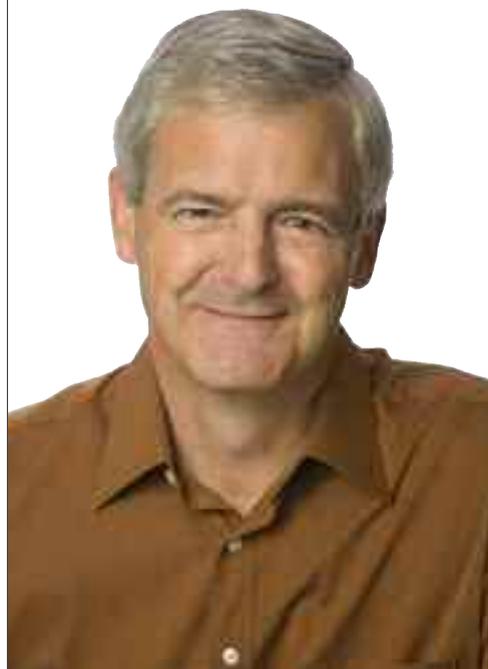


Were city of Westmount workers reading the *Indie*? The *Independent* wrote about this squirrel-feeding hotspot at de Maison-neuve and Victoria in its March 24 edition (p. 10). Soon after, this city sign went up,

pointing out to perps that feeding squirrels is illegal in Westmount. Are there any new, post-sign peanuts here amid the older ones? The *Independent's* CSI team has not yet reported back.

## Best Wishes from Marc Garneau

Member of Parliament - Westmount-Ville-Marie



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Passover and Easter*

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2. LET THE GOVERNMENT HELP PAY FOR THOSE RENOVATIONS!  
Our Government is offering a 15% rebate on home renovations between January 27, 2009 and February 1, 2010. Consider products like low-consumption toilets, quality windows, insulation and efficient furnaces. Review and confirm that your project will be subsidized and don't forget your Building Permit – this cost is included in the 15%!

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# MGH Auxiliary to host spring art fundraiser



Artists Barbara Schloss, Evelyn Gold, Nancy Lydon, Abigail Sibley, Jennifer Blachford, Frances Foster, Ingrid Harrison, Nancy Hyde, Anthony Hobbs, Sara Peck Colby, unidentified, Pamela Stewart, Ann McCall and Jane Desjardins – with Auxiliary members Yvonne Mass (co-chair of the art exhibition), Sue Khan, Lorna del Castillo, Martha Tsadilas and Andrea Ritchie (president of the Auxiliary).

The Auxiliary of the Montreal General Hospital, which includes many Westmounters, is presenting its fifth annual Art Exhibition and Sale, which in turn features the work of many Westmount artists.

In addition to the artists photographed above and at left, Westmount artist Gabrielle Pilot is contributing works. She was profiled in the *Independent* of September 23 (p. 18).

The exhibition's vernissage (\$25) takes place on Tuesday, April 14 from 5 to 9 pm and the exhibition runs from April 15 to 16, 9 am to 5 pm. Both events take place at the hospital's Livingston Hall Lounge (1650 Cedar Ave., 6th floor).

All proceeds will be used to purchase portable ECG machines, which enable patients to be tested without going to the cardiology department.



Works by the late Westmouter Graeme Ross will be at the show. He died in October 2008.

## Despite green bin success, more garbage sent to landfills

Although nearly 100 tonnes of kitchen compost was collected in Westmount's start-up scheme last year, more overall waste was sent to landfills last year than in 2007. Despite reduced trash collection from homes, plus improved blue box recycling and green waste services, the city sent 10,062 tonnes to dumps, about 300 tonnes more than in the previous 12

months.

About 70 percent of all waste was trashed.

"We have to learn to do better," said Jenny Patton, chair of the Healthy City Project's environment committee. "We must create less waste. The 30 percent diverted from landfills was only half of the government's target for 2008."

"The city is doing better," countered city councillor George Bowser, the Public Works commissioner.

"The total domestic garbage pick-ups were slightly less – even allowing for the new green bins. The amount sent from the containers in the Works yard was 40 percent more, however.

"This may be a reflection of the superior service Public Works has been delivering. Street cleaners, Madvacs, the 90 odd bins placed for public use in parks and on the streets are all well used.

"Last year's emphasis on abrasives rather than salt means a lot more grit and sand had to be carted away," Bowser added. "The better the city does its work, the higher the tonnage to be dumped."

Patton accepted Bowser's analysis. "Nevertheless, there is much work to be done to improve recycling in apartments and for the commercial sector," she pointed out.

"Because the recycling participation among homeowners is so strong, I wonder if we have neglected other areas. Perhaps we need something like Montreal's eco-quartiers working on a year-round basis."

Bowser welcomed the recent initiatives of the Canadian environment ministers who propose more emphasis of the first R

– reduce.

"It's not entirely the consumer's fault if goods are over-packaged or use non-recyclable materials," he said. "Governments, municipalities and citizens would all benefit from better manufacturing."

In Westmount last year, recycling at 2,328 tonnes was slightly more than in 2007. As with garbage, there was a noticeable, 55 percent increase in the amount taken to the Public Works yard.

Green waste collection – mainly leaves – accounted for nearly 1,800 tonnes.

Although smaller in volume, but important for avoiding their toxic pollution, e-waste increased 27 percent to 23 tonnes and household hazardous waste rose almost 15 percent to more than 25 tonnes.

Both Bowser and Patton expect the position to be transformed from May when the green bin service is expanded to all single-family dwellings.

"We are preparing to complete this stage of kitchen waste collections across the city and expect this will make an enormous difference to the residue sent to landfills," said the city environmental coordinator Marina Peter.

"The green bin scheme, which was launched last May and increased in November, now serves 2,000 homes. This will grow in May to 4,700." DW

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## Ski marathon draws Westmounters

Westmounter Marie Sicotte recently finished her third Canadian Ski Marathon ([www.csm-mcs.com](http://www.csm-mcs.com)) and her first in the "Gold/Coureur des Bois" class.

The event's 180-km classic cross-country course runs from Lachute through Montebello to the Gatineau region near Ottawa.

The Gold designation is reserved for the 200 or so skiers each year who complete the event in two days, stay outside overnight and carry their own gear. Volunteers from the Canadian army and other groups staff the course for the whole 2,000-person event, and provide overnight skiers with two bales of hay (to act as bedding) and hot water.

At the halfway mark, Sicotte shared a fire with former Canadian Olympic skier Chris Blanchard and Westmounter Ian Aitken.

"It is not a race," explained Sicotte. The motivation is to see "how far you can push yourself and there is unbelievable camaraderie. Participants include grandmothers who do it every year and children who are trying to finish their first 15 km."

Sicotte is no stranger to endurance events. She finished her Bronze level ski marathon in 2006 and her Silver in 2008. Training begins at Christmas each year



Marie Sicotte taking a pause during the 43rd Canadian Ski Marathon.

## Supporting women at McGill – since 1888



Westmounter Joan McGuigan (right) recently attended the McGill Women's Alumnae Association's Annual Scholarship Reception at Royal Victoria College with, from left: Rita Tenenbaum, Aurora Trusewicz (recipient of the Susan Cameron Vaughn Scholarship), Pina Marra (MWAA president) and Janine Schmidt (Trenholme Director of Libraries). The MWAA was founded in 1888 by McGill's first women graduates.

and she has usually logged 600 km by event day in the middle of February. In 2005, she was one of 18 women to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa in support of the Montreal Canadiens Children Foundation.

Will she participate in the ski marathon next year?

"Absolutely, but I won't commit again to the Gold event, yet."

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# Greene Watch

BY ERIN STROPES AND INDIE STAFF

## Birkenstock-Naturino unveiled

The Naturino shoe store at 1325 Greene has re-opened as Birkenstock-Naturino after a month-long remodeling hiatus. The store has nearly doubled in size, and has partnered with Birkenstock Canada to offer a greater range of high-quality adult and children's footwear. The addition of the popular Birkenstock line, says owner Glenn Neven, reinforces the store's commitment to offering comfortable and well-designed shoes for all ages. As well as having the latest Birkenstock sandals on display, the store is able to order any model and have it in-store within a day.

## Greene therapy?

Greene Ave. is well known for clothing boutiques and art galleries, but it may be on the way to becoming a centre for alternative and holistic therapies.



Glenn Neven of Birkenstock-Naturino, with the store's new selection of Birkenstock sandals.

Two professionals whose presence on the street speaks to this possible trend are Melanie Halpert and Terryann Nikides, practitioners of BodyTalk. Nikides is also a practitioner of BodyTalk's sub-discipline BreakThrough.

Halpert explains that BodyTalk is based on the premise that the body can heal itself "when things are synchronized." BodyTalk is non-invasive. Practitioners tap head and chest with their hands to establish communication pathways between different parts of the body. It was developed by John Veltheim, an Australian chiropractor and acupuncturist.

A migraine sufferer is a typical client for Halpert, but the focus won't necessarily be on the head. Some other part of the body or even a memory could be the source of the problem. "[Finding the source of the problem] is like unraveling a ball of yarn," she said.

Halpert has been practising at the Westmount Wellness Centre (1225 Greene Ave.) since summer 2008, where she also acts as the group's receptionist.

Nikides is also located on Greene Ave., in her case, since 2002. (She has no storefront. To reach her, email leurbanretreat@gmail.com). Although their two practices are not related, they refer clients back and forth. Nikides taught BreakThrough to Halpert, although Halpert does not use it professionally.

BreakThrough is based on belief systems and how they can impact health. Practitioners use seven steps to explore the unconscious and "see what is holding [clients] back," according to Nikides. She draws an analogy between the revelations of BreakThrough and how children can stop seeing monsters once the lights are turned on, "and the pile of laundry becomes a pile of laundry." She stresses that the approach is based on deduction, not

analysis. Her clients include people with all sorts of illnesses, including cancer, panic attacks and migraines.

Nikides travels internationally to teach BodyTalk and tells the story of one South African woman who seemed 20 years younger after a single session.

How is the traditional medical community reacting to BodyTalk? "They are just starting to learn... [A positive reaction] is growing," said Halpert.

Nikides added that BodyTalk can be a complementary or a stand-alone treatment. And for serious illnesses, "Of course, you want Western medicine in there as well."

They both cite the books of Bruce Lipton, Candice Pert and James Oschman as evidence that the more traditional scientific community is taking positive notice of BodyTalk.



From left, BodyTalk practitioners Terryann Nikides and Melanie Halpert.

## Origami open, looking for space

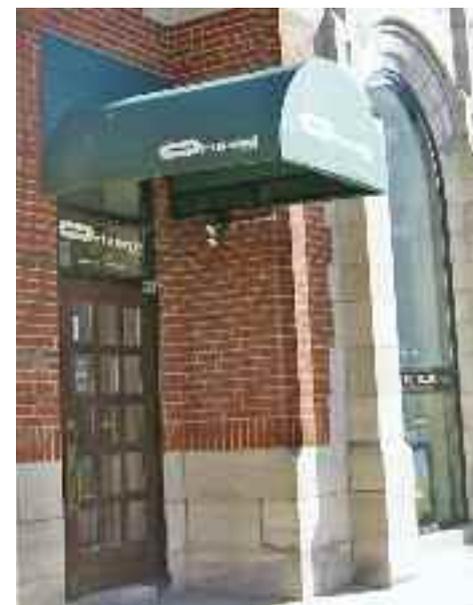
Wedding invitation specialist Origami has closed its Greene Ave. location, but is still open. It can be reached at its usual phone number, 514.938.4688.

Owner Roberta Lawee explained that her lease was up, and she and the landlord could not come to terms for a new rental period.

When the "End of Lease" sign went up in her storefront, her "clientele was most distressed," said Lawee.

It was a pleasant surprise for her, "You never know what people are thinking until they say it."

Origami has been in business for over 19 years, 18 of them on Greene. Lawee is looking for a new location, preferably in Westmount.



Origami's longtime Greene Ave. storefront. Photo: Erin Stropes

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# Allstars dance at Victoria Hall

BY HEATHER BLACK

Victoria Hall rocked on March 28 with the *joie de vivre* of salsa, jive, waltz and fox-trot. Students from E-Motion Danse Academie performed with Westmount dancers before an audience of guests and peers at a lively dinner-dance.



From left: Instructors Sergei Elimanov, Elena Klimina, student Billie Feliciano and instructor Slavik Tudorovsky, with E-Motion dance school.

The E-Motion dancers combined creative interpretation with physical sport. Dancing to Saint-Saens as well as Elvis,

original choreography by students and instructors conveyed innocence or sensuality, grandeur or play.

Dancers from Westmount Community Centre also performed. Instructor Natalie Kalinowicz with students Donna Olsen and Jana Hazarin belly-danced to an enthusiastic crowd. While in “All That Jazz”, choreographed by Wendy Hoyos, Victoria Hall and E-Motion students danced up a storm.

## Time to shine

E-Motion director Sergei Elimanov credits the success of TV show *Dancing with the Stars* with a renewed interest in creative dance. At his academy on St. Lawrence Blvd., he offers self-expression within traditional forms to groups and individuals alike. He emphasizes that, in his classes, every student is a star. And it shows.

Every performer, teen or senior, shone. “Allstars Night”

was organized by Westmount Community Events coordinators Maureen Lafrenière and Virginia Elliott.

## Comin' Up...

TUESDAY, APRIL 7: ArtNow speakers include Jason Goldsmith “Big Blue Hug”, Susan Mott of 9 Artistes 9/Galerie Cactus and photographer Kate Fellerath. Westmount Public Library, 7 pm. Free.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8: Start of public viewing of the city’s **Spring Flower Show** at the Conservatory. Monday to Friday, 10 am to 9 pm. Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 5 pm.

FRIDAY, APRIL 10: Les Idées Heureuses, under musical and artistic director Geneviève Soly of Westmount, presents a Good Friday concert of **Baroque music** at l’Église de Jésus (1202 Bleury) at 5 pm. Tickets \$30, regular; \$25, seniors; \$10, students. [www.ideesheureuses.ca](http://www.ideesheureuses.ca) / 514.843.5881.

TUESDAY, APRIL 14: Westmount Horticultural Society presents “**Wild Mushrooms: The good, the bad and the ugly**” with Jean-Pierre Dion and Jacqueline Beaudry Dion. Takes place between 7 to 9 pm at the Westmount Public Library. Doors open at 6:30 pm. [www.whsociety.com](http://www.whsociety.com)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15: “**Trauma—Surviving the emergency room**” by Dr. Tarek Razek, Chief of Trauma, MUHC. Westmount Room of the Westmount Public Library at 7 pm. Free. Register with circulation desk 514.989.5299.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17: **Mayor’s Blood Donor Clinic** between 2 and 8 pm at Victoria Hall. This year, Westmount’s goal is 100 pints of blood. Info: Community Events 514.989.5265.

MONDAY, APRIL 20: Opening performance of a modern adaptation of Sophocles’ “Antigone.” Part of **Marianopolis’ ArtsFest**, an annual weeklong culture and arts celebration. The play runs from April 20 to 22. Free and open to public. Performances start at 7:30 pm in the auditorium (4873 Westmount Ave.)

TUESDAY, APRIL 21: The Women’s Canadian Club of Montreal’s annual Spring luncheon with guest speaker and Westmounter **Heidi Hollinger**, international portrait photographer. St. James Club (1145 Union Ave.) at 11:30 am. \$50, regular; \$55, non-members. 514.489.0975.



## SHOP WESTMOUNT!



Salon Sophie’s Sophie Perkowska in foreground at right with (from left) colleagues Irina Jgnatova and Andrew Chmielowski; and client Mike Bristol – who has been getting his hair cut by her for 20 years.

It was business as usual at Salon Sophie on March 31. Clients are getting their hair cut for spring, and business is steady and recession-proof. “Otherwise we would have to get a bailout,” explained barber Andrew Chmielowski. The location has been a barbershop for around 80 years. Salon Sophie has been there for 12.

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## Magazines

“Les mystérieux bienfaits de la musique” by Benoit Helme in *Psychologies Magazine*, Feb. 2009, p. 76

“The serious need for play: how it improves your creativity, emotional health and cuts stress” by Melinda Wenner in *Scientific American MIND*, Feb/March 2009, p. 22

“The 25 most influential books of the past 25 years” by Rosemary Ahern in *Mental Floss*, Mar-Apr 2009, p. 36

## Books on CD

*Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals* by Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson. This groundbreaking book by renowned scientist and animal welfare advocate Temple Grandin, provides stunning insights into the very real emotions and thoughts of animals.

*Handle with Care* by Jodi Picoult. After her daughter contracts a fatal disease, Charlotte O’Keefe must confront some serious questions that ultimately lead to one final epiphany: what constitutes a valuable life.



## Doctor's lives with a local connection

*Doctor to the North: Thirty Years Treating Heart Disease among the Inuit* by John H. Burgess. The story of Dr. John Burgess’ remarkable career as professor of medicine and director of cardiology at Montreal General Hospital and especially his services to the Inuit also introduces the reader to heart disease and cardiology.

*The Heart Specialist*, a novel by Claire Holden Rothman. Inspired by the life of Dr. Maude Abbot, Rothman has written a moving novel of a woman who challenged the medical establishment at the end of the 19th century and succeeded in becoming one of Canada’s first female doctors.

## Armchair travel at its best

*La frousse autour du monde* by Bruno Blanchet. At the age of 40, Blanchet sold all his possessions and went for a trip around

the world, his only source of income being a weekly article about his travels he wrote for *La Presse*. *La frousse autour du monde* is a collection of these often hilarious diaries.

*La maison du calife: une année à Casablanca* by Tahir Shah. Shah bought a dilapidated mansion in Morocco, with the intention of renovating it, and moved there with his wife and young children. Needless to say that it was an eventful year. Through the chronicle of their high and low points, Shah shares delightful insights into Moroccan culture.

## Picture books just in time for spring

*The Perfect Nest* by Catherine Friend. Jack the Cat decides to build a perfect nest for a chicken to lay an egg so that he can make himself a tasty omelet! Jack gets more than he bargained for when not one but three eggs hatch and the chicks be-

come quite attached to him!

*J’ai grandi!* by Ruth Krauss. As the seasons change a little boy notices that everything is starting to grow but wonders if he is growing yet.

## Reference

*Guide to American Graduate Schools: the most comprehensive guide to graduate and professional study in the United States, 2009-2010* edition.

*Preparing your income tax returns: 2009 Edition for 2008 returns.*

*L’État du monde 2009: annuaire économique et géopolitique mondial*

## Bike path open

The bike path through Westmount is now open. (Officially opened on April 1). For any questions, contact Public Works 514.989.5268.

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## Westmount Profile: Captain Mike Finner

# Combining civilian and army roles

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

**M**ike Finner has just returned from 18 months at Kandahar Airfield in his civilian job as a technical writer and quality assurance consultant – one of 600 Canadians working in Afghanistan for a contractor that provides logistical support to NATO bases.

And now, as an army reservist captain with Westmount's Royal Montreal Regiment, the Claremont resident is about to depart for Sudan as a UN peacekeeper.

"I joined the army for a summer in 1984," he says, "and I've never had a reason to quit. Now my civilian and military lives have come together."

Over more than two decades, in fact, one has led to the other with much of his civilian contract work being with companies active in related defence projects. In the case of Afghanistan, Finner's knowledge of Russian was also a key element. "Russian is still spoken by many people there," he explains.

Between civilian contracts, Finner volunteers for military missions with the UN, including peacekeeping in Bosnia in 2001.

### Strong UN supporter

"I've always been a supporter of the UN," he explains. As a youth in Renfrew, Ontario, "I was a member of our UN club at high school and participated in mock UN assemblies."

Leaving any day now for Sudan, he expects to be en route or already arrived in Khartoum to celebrate his 25th anniversary in the Canadian Forces. He'll serve with some 40 Canadians that form part of the UN observer team in the south of the country.

"The role of the UN observers," he explains, "is to observe the 2005 peace agreement that followed the civil war between the south and the north." Under the agreement, the south will be able to vote by referendum in 2011 whether or not to leave Sudan. Meanwhile, the south was able to position its leader as Sudanese vice-president. Darfur is in the



Captain Mike Finner

west.

A graduate of Carleton University in languages in 1992, Finner also obtained a certificate in commercial languages from the Pushkin Institute in Moscow.

Deciding to build a career on his ability to write, he pursued various courses in technical writing and documentation and began working as a technical writer for Software Development Kits at Matrox Electronic Systems in Dorval.

### Worked on Balkans project

His six-month tour of duty in Bosnia in 2001 with the army led to a civilian contract with ATCO Frontec Europe, a contractor working in Velika Kladuša, in northwest Bosnia-Herzegovina, on a Balkans rationalization project. This is the same firm he worked with in Kandahar.

Back home, his contract work included documentation of air defence systems for Rheinmetall Canada (Oerlikon) at St. Jean sur Richelieu.

It was at this time that he transferred from Ontario regiments to the Royal Montreal Regiment, which, he says, has been "welcoming and diverse."

With his focus now on Sudan, Finner says he would recommend joining the Canadian Forces reserves as a sideline for any young person looking for adventure. It has certainly served him well.

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