

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly Vol. 20 No. 2b

We are Westmount.

February 10, 2026

'More' approval sought & granted

New council takes its turn to vote on 500 Claremont

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Fully eight years after the large 500 Claremont residential project was first approved and went on to survive numerous different council votes, the project resurfaced on last week's city council agenda for February 3.

Now near completion and now advertised as renting, the former large, heritage-rated institutional building at Windsor Ave. has been transformed into apartments. This follows partial demolition, COVID delays, unannounced removal of 17 large trees and re-construction work on Claremont.

Listed simply on last week's council agenda without details as "approval – 500 Claremont," concerned neighbours to the

south attended the meeting having already believed the project was "a done deal" and having been unable to obtain information.

"What is the proposed change?" asked Frank Philpott.

The addition of one bedroom on the sixth floor, Mayor Michael Stern replied.

Considering that the mayor, along with four councillors, were new to the issues that neighbours had raised with the project over the years, Philpott summarized how the loss of the huge trees will impact the privacy of their properties as well as safety concerns anticipated from so many cars going in and out of the Claremont garage. "There is still no stop sign or traffic lights."

Neither was there any required green-space for the benefit of the neighbours as a

continued on p. 4

Winter Carnival means games!



Right in the centre of the bin! Eight-year-old Gia was a champion at this event, as Westmount's 41st Winter Carnival took place at Murray Park February 7 under overcast skies and cold conditions. A light dusting of snow added to the atmosphere, but the chilly breeze was probably the reason for a smaller turnout than the last couple of years. Hot chocolate, hot dogs, roast marshmallows, taffy and vigorous activity kept everyone bubbling with enthusiasm. Most events started at 10 am and it all wrapped around 3 pm. Sports and Recreation staff, augmented by a large number of volunteers, kept the events running safely and on schedule. See p. 2, p. 11 and p. 12 for more photos.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.



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'Proud of the team we have at Public Works'

Current employee Racette named assistant director of Public Works

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Patricia Racette was appointed assistant director of Public Works at the city council meeting January 13. As the largest department in the city, Public Works handles not only roads, infrastructure and city buildings but also parks, green spaces, planting, snow removal, garbage and environmental matters.

She joined the city in 2019 as an environmental technician then became head of the Environment division in 2023.

She has a bachelor's degree in environmental science from McGill and obtained a master's in environmental engineering from École de technologie supérieure, a public technical university in Montreal, and became an environmental inspector with Laval.

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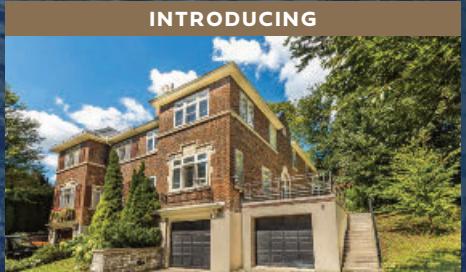
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Council okays city's legal action against owner of 'rotten' tree on Upper Belmont

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council January 13 approved an expenditure of some \$20,000 in legal expenses concerning a tree that fell in an incident August 12, 2025 at 810 Upper Belmont.

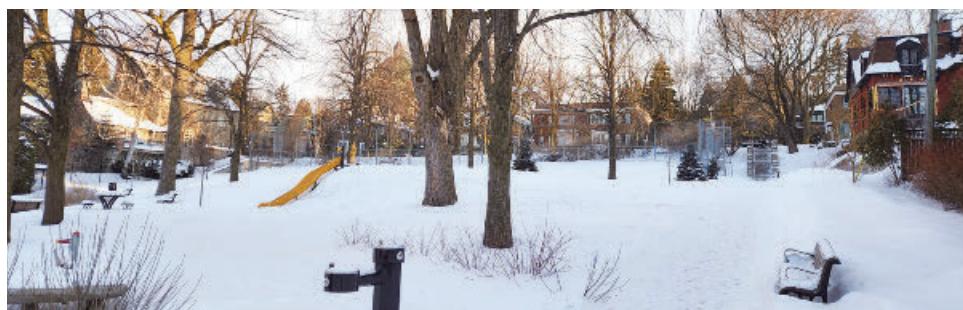
The tree, a private one on private property, was described as having "partially fallen" and posed "an imminent danger to three neighbouring properties, users of Devon Park" and Hydro Westmount (see story August 19, 2025, p. 3).

According to the council resolution, a decision had been made at the time by the city after an assessment by the city's Public Works forestry engineer "to proceed with the immediate felling of the remaining

part of the tree for safety reasons." It had been assessed as "rotten." The cost of the city's intervention was reported as some \$27,397.

Power shut off

The initial incident was reported to have occurred around 3:45 pm, forcing electricity to be shut off. "Despite having been notified at the time," the legal action claims, the owner "refuses to pay the city the amounts owed." To recover the amount, legal action was taken by the law firm of Bélanger Sauvé. Moved by Councillor Matt Aronson, the motion was carried unanimously.



Looking east at Devon Park on February 9. Upper Belmont is in the background. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

During the recent cold emergency we have tried to answer calls and help everyone we could. To the people we helped to restart their boiler or clear ice from their air intake and exhaust pipes our agreement was that after the cold snap ends or after the heating season ends you will have the equipment verified to optimize its performance. This is your reminder.

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- Check blower belt wear, tension and alignment
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Public Security reports 2 car accidents on snowy hills

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Two separate car accidents in Westmount on a snowy day January 29 took place on hills, according to Public Security reports, starting with one outside 488 Mountain.

Noticed and reported at 6:04 pm was a Volkswagen wedged between a city light pole and a parked car on the west side while Public Works was on the scene salting the road. Both car owners were requested to fill out a joint accident report.

Police were subsequently called and the heavily damaged Volkswagen was towed away. The fire department also was on the scene to disconnect the battery during which time the street was barred to traffic.

Later in the evening

At 9:51 pm, a call was received from Public Works concerning an accident in the Glen tunnel under the railway tracks. A southbound vehicle had hit the wall of the tunnel, deploying its airbag. Complaining of pain in the right shoulder and possible whiplash, the driver was taken to the nearby Glen superhospital by Urgences Santé. Flares were put out to warn of the obstruction.

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Early Valentine's lunch kicks off Winter Carnival



From left, Westmount mayor Michael Stern and Contactivity director Benita Goldin at a Valentine-themed lunch held February 5 at Victoria Hall to kick off the city's Winter Carnival, as is tradition. 112 diners attended.

PHOTO COURTESY OF B. GOLDIN.


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500 Claremont, cont'd from p. 1

promised "benefit."

Seeking more info

John Stewart, who also lives immediately south of the property, reported that workers were being allowed to park outside as early at 5 am on Saturday and work inside a plastic-covered area. "This is a residential area," he pointed out. Mayor Stern said this would be "looked into."

Later in the meeting, when the motion concerning 500 Claremont came up for adoption, newly elected District 5 councillor Shawn Moss, who is now the city's urban planning commissioner, explained in presenting the resolution that the addition of the requested bedroom had been considered and recommended by the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) at its meetings held January 13 to 15.

District 2 councillor Jonathan Chomski briefly left the council chamber during the

council vote, later telling the *Independent* that because one of the principals associated with the project had previously served as his official campaign agent, he felt it "important to leave, in part, to respect the appearance of possible conflict" (see separate statement, below).

Looking back

As far back as December 4, 2017, the city council – itself newly elected at the time –

had approved a resolution to override some zoning regulations for 500 Claremont that would trigger the start of a potential zoning regulation (see story December 12, 2017, p. 1).

As a result and "in a break with tradition," Mayor Christina Smith had explained, she would raise her hand in approval "to declare the approval was truly unanimous."

Chomski explains his non-vote on Claremont project

District 2 Councillor Jonathan Chomski provided the following statement concerning his brief exit from the council chamber February 3 and recusal from the vote regarding the council's approval for the change at 500 Claremont, which was recommended by the Planning Advisory Committee.

"This is a long-standing project that was approved by a previous council and is already near completion," he told the *Independent*. "The applicant returned to PAC and council only to seek approval for a minor modification.

"By circumstance, one of the principals associated with the project had previously

served as my official agent and representative during the October election [period]. While this had no bearing on the original approval, and while the project itself had already been authorized by a prior council, I felt it was important to respect not only the formal ethical rules, but also the appearance of a potential conflict."

It was for that reason, he continued, that "I recused myself both from the PAC discussion and from the council vote. Situations like this arise from time to time in municipal governance, and I believe it is essential that council consistently uphold both the letter and spirit of our ethical guidelines."



500 Claremont on February 9.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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City adds fencing to Holton stairs, hopes for repairs this spring



The staircase connecting Holton Ave. and Mount Pleasant Ave. has been closed since April 2025, first with a concrete Jersey wall only, as seen September 5, 2025 at left. More recently, city workers added fencing, as seen February 5.

By JENNIFER BALL

The entrance to the staircase connecting Holton Ave. and Mount Pleasant Avenue was closed for precautionary reasons in April 2025 with a Jersey wall, and fencing was added on February 5, presumably to impede anyone from using the closed stairs.

Pedestrians have been using the stairs despite the concrete barrier and signage, and the lack of snow shovelling.

At the November 17 council meeting, de Casson resident and recent municipal council candidate Alex Chamlian asked Mayor Michael Stern if the city was com-

mitted to putting the dollars aside in the 2026 capital works budget to fix the stairs.

Mayor Stern replied, “Our Public Works and Engineering departments are reviewing options now to determine what we can do, maybe on an interim basis, to reopen the stairs and we’re looking at that now.”

On February 5, Mugisha Rutishisha, director of communications for the city, told the *Independent* that “The city aims to begin work in the spring. The Public Works department is currently finalizing the procurement requirements. Until a contract is awarded, we cannot provide a specific timeline or start date.”

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WALK PRUDENTLY



I spy: deep-water "footholes," boot size 8 to 9, outside 5 Saisons on Greene Ave. A threat to ankles, axles and anything rolling through. *Au secours!*

NATASHA ARORA, WOOD AVE.

GUESS THE 'WORD OF THE YEAR'

I have had a little game that I play every January. It's called "Guess the Word of the Year." I have no award for myself if I come to the same conclusion as the dictionary experts from various publications and I usually get it wrong.

The emergence of a whole new language with the rush to understand the sweeping changes brought about by the headlong acceptance of AI in our lives has, of course, brought with it a new and vigorous need for wording.

Hence the selections by the two doyens of the dictionary trade. The choice of the grand-dame of dictionaries, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, is "rage bait." The runner-up from the *Merriam-Webster* is "slop."

Both relate to the inundation of junk on our internet connections that are overwhelming users looking for factual results that have merit and not just reams of blather.

I personally had chosen the word "precarity." If you have an old copy of either referenced dictionaries, you will not find the word listed. It has materialized by itself and now seem to enjoy a life of its own.

It is a useful word and has a certain clip to it that suggests authority. It is certainly more adept than its forerunner "precariousness."

I await with anticipation for its first appearance in the *Independent*.

MICHAEL ST.B. HARRISON,
MOUNTAIN AVE.

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

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Police Report

Stayner Park chalet death probably a drug overdose, say police

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Police at Station 12 on Stanton St. have confirmed to the *Independent* that the death of a man late last month in the public restroom building at Stayner Park in lower Westmount may have been the result of a drug poisoning, more commonly known as an overdose.

As we reported last week (p. 7), a 35-year-old man was found dead in the park's restroom building on January 31. The incident was reported by a witness who saw police cars, an ambulance and a hearse outside the building.

The fatality was confirmed two days later by a Montreal police headquarters spokesperson, saying the police did not suspect any criminal involvement, but that an autopsy would be done to determine the cause of death.

Late last week, Station 12 spokesperson Cst. Mike Yigit said that although the case wasn't resolved, "we're entertaining the idea that it may be an overdose."

Although Cabot Square, a few blocks to the east in the city of Montreal, is well known as a gathering place for the homeless, their activities rarely spill over into small parks and green spaces in Westmount, Yigit added.

"There is no park in Westmount that is known to have homeless people living there," he said. "It happens occasionally, so it is possible." He said Stayner Park "is not a problematic area for us. Definitely not a Cabot Square-type of park."

As well, he noted that as reports of drug overdoses have become more common, they have come to be associated somewhat inaccurately with the homeless.

"Overdoses are across the island and not only unique to the homeless," said Yigit, while adding that overdoses among the homeless get reported more often because they happen in public spaces.

Vehicle thefts rising?

The theft of a pick-up truck in Westmount in late January, as reported to police at Station 12, suggests that organized vehicle thieves are becoming active once again following a respite.

The theft on January 29 of the full-size 2023 white Toyota Tundra pick-up had some of the hallmarks of professional criminals.

After snatching it from a parking space on de Maisonneuve Blvd., they drove it to an underground parking lot in downtown Montreal.

This was presumably so that it could "cool off" while the perpetrators determined whether the truck had any geolocation devices aboard that would allow the owner or the police to find it. As it so happens, that's exactly what happened.

The officers investigating determined that surveillance cameras at the garage recorded images of the vehicle being driven in, as well as the suspects as they were leaving. The Toyota Tundra ranked number nine on a 2024 list of the most stolen vehicles in Canada.

Shoplifting continues

Organized shoplifters are continuing to make an impact at clothing and apparel boutiques in Westmount.

On January 30, according to a report filed at Station 12, four suspects walked into the Lululemon store on Sherbrooke St. at the corner of Prince Albert Ave., grabbing merchandise, then quickly running out.

"Lululemon is a very popular *marque*, so oftentimes these types of clothing are targeted," said Yigit.

Last year, staff at Station 12 stepped up their efforts against shoplifting in light of a surge of brazen thefts at higher-end Westmount fashion boutiques like Lululemon.

Among other things, the merchants were advised by the police to install security cameras (if they hadn't already done so), and to modify how merchandise was displayed on open racks so that it wouldn't be as vulnerable to theft.

Law enforcement officials have reported that shoplifting has become more sophisticated in recent years, with groups of individuals working collaboratively to steal large quantities of merchandise for re-sale through online auction sites and e-commerce marketplaces.

Mini-Retail Review

Leonidas moves to Westmount Square

Leonidas, formerly at 318A Victoria Ave., has moved to Westmount Square. The shop's renowned Belgian chocolates make the perfect sweet ending to sushi, from the always packed Sushi Bar Kim opposite.

The *über*-popular place, celebrating over 20 years, also offers take-out. The perfect picnic amidst the orchid-filled atrium eating area at Westmount Square - or a snow picnic! - VR.

Mayor Stern explains his voting habits, new ways to repair streets

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Mayor Michael Stern opened the relatively short and businesslike city council meeting February 3 by explaining that, in regard to why he raises his own hand to vote on various motions: "I always vote because I have an opinion and I think people should know my opinion."

Previously, a mayoral vote was typically used as a tie-breaker, although there were exceptions (e.g. see p. 4), including one (compensation) required by statute (see February 12, 2019, p. 8).

Stern then switched to the city's recent adoption of its operating and capital works budgets held at a special council meeting January 16 with particular reference to the "complicated process" of going to tender and the impact of this winter's weather.

The roads "are terrible" given the impact of melting and raining followed by freezing. Recently, the city used some five tons of asphalt on each of two days, he said.

Repairing in 'squares' – not pothole by pothole

As a result, the city will be working on many different measures and "new technologies" such as undertaking repairs of potholed streets in large sections, which should be more solid than filling many separate potholes, he explained. It is an approach that should last five years, he continued.

The meeting went on with updates and comments from individual councillors such as a meeting between District 6's Paul Levine (whose commissionership involves "law and order") with police officials. Topics included demonstrations that blocked access to residents of some buildings such as Westmount Square. "Police are willing to meet with residents," he said. As a result, a demonstration the previous Sat-



Mayor Michael Stern, centre, presents the city's operating budget on January 13. He is flanked by councillors Gurveen Chadha and Shawn Moss.

urday (January 31), "was more peaceful," he said.

Reports

While Councillor Gurveen Chadha listed off many events slated for the library, Councillor Kathleen Kez reminded residents of Public Security's care packages for people living on the street (see February 3, p. 3) while finance commissioner Antonio D'Amico pointed out that March 9 is the date for the first tax bill payment.

Councillor Jeff Shamie said he had met with a resident concerning traffic on Gros-

venor Ave. in the block of Roslyn School to explore ways to mitigate traffic though that school zone.

Councillor Jonathan Chomski explained that the first of capital works infrastructure tenders coming up involved Sherbrooke (Grosvenor to Strathcona), Grosvenor, Mountain, Greene and a portion of Claremont (Sherbrooke to Lorraine).

The 7 pm meeting, including questions and a lengthy agenda, was over at 8:30 pm, after which the council adjourned to continue a closed-door meeting of the general committee.



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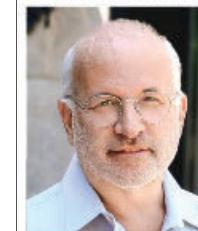
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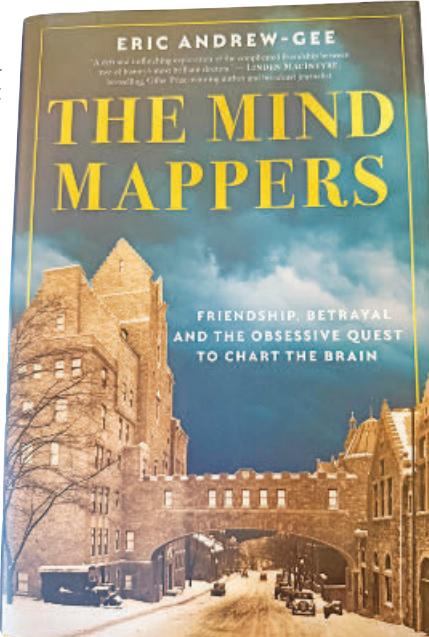
Rotary Report

New book: Penfield and Cone mapped the brain, but lost each other

By JENNIFER BALL

Amity, disloyalty and the irrepressible quest to chart the human brain are explored in a recent book about the Montreal Neuro's founders Dr. Wilder Penfield and Dr. William Cone. The book was written by *The Globe and Mail's* Quebec correspondent Eric Andrew-Gee and published last year by Penguin/Random House Canada.

Dr. Rolando Fausto Del Maestro is the William Feindel Professor Emeritus in neuro-oncology and director of the Neurosurgical Simulation Research Center at the Montreal Neurological Institute and Hospital, where he has been involved in simulating brain surgery by creating virtual



The Mind Mappers by Eric Andrew-Gee. It was published in 2025 by Penguin/Random House Canada.

scenarios. On February 4, he interviewed Andrew-Gee about his book *The Mind Mappers* in front of a Rotary Club of Westmount audience at Victoria Hall.

Revolutionary researchers

The work of non-fiction centers on two giants of local neurosurgery, Wilder Penfield and William Cone, two men who revolutionized neurology. The book is also a valentine to Montreal, which emerged as a global Mecca for brain research after Penfield founded the Neuro here in 1934.

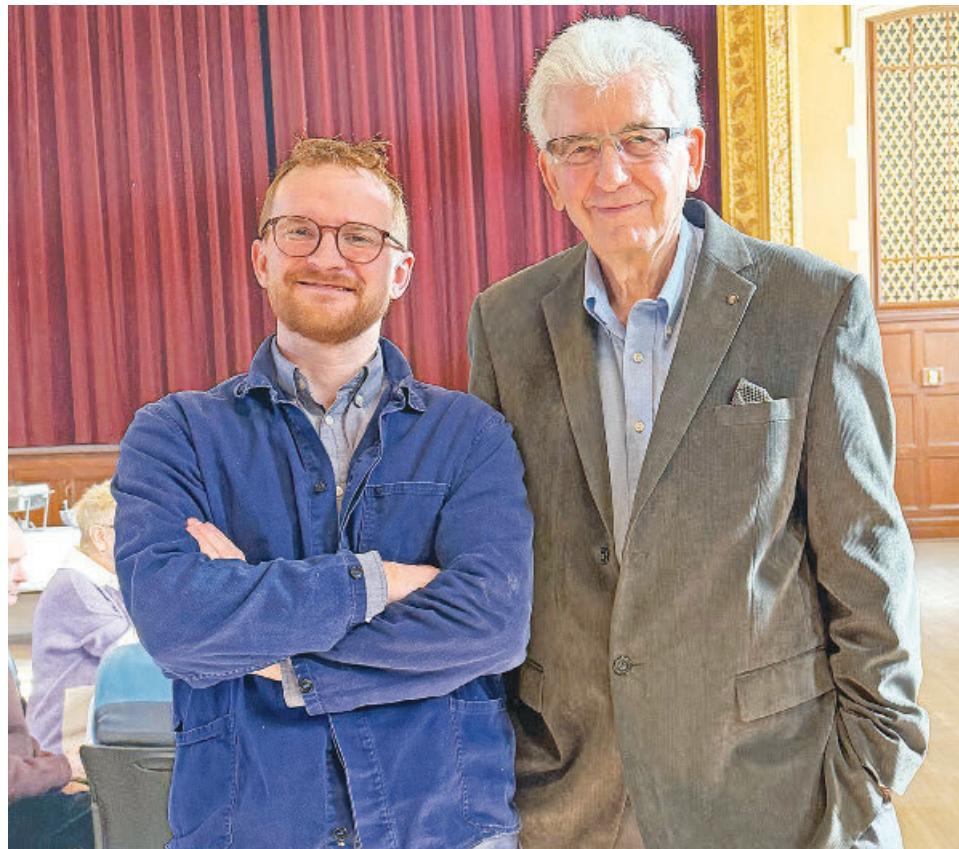
For the book, Andrew-Gee mined

the extensive resources of McGill's Osler Library. His research led him to say of the duo, "They had this hand-in-glove relationship, incredibly intimate and fruitful for a long time, until a dispute over succession of the directorship of the institute and other interpersonal issues pulled them apart in this really quite tragic way."

Different focuses

The book explores Penfield's specialty of epilepsy surgery, which necessitated putting an electrode on the surface of the patient's brain while they were awake. He discovered – sometimes by accident and sometimes somewhat deliberately – what the different areas of the brain did through this method.

Andrew-Gee highlights how the two scientists were polar opposites. Penfield



From left, Eric Andrew-Gee and Dr. Rolando Fausto Del Maestro in Victoria Hall on February 4.

was interested in the higher reaches of science, mapping the brain and ultimately hoping to understand the difference between the mind and the brain, and how they interact. Cone, on the other hand, was a pure technician, a surgeon who was primarily interested was in healing and whose secondary interest was learning the secrets of the mind.

Andrew-Gee explained that their story is one of triumph and tragedy because they accomplished these extraordinary things all through the 1950s, but their friendship came to a really bitter end.

"They mapped the brain but they lost

each other."

The *coup de grâce* came in 1959 when Cone expressed a sense of betrayal once Penfield announced to the institute staff that he was retiring. He then set up a nominating committee to select his successor without disclosing the information to Cone nor assuming that Cone was the heir-apparent.

The author said, "It's sort of the end of this really historic friendship in the history of science."

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

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Savoir-Fer Boucherie knows meat, cheeses and fish



Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Welcome to another new neighbour. Savoir-Fer Boucherie has just opened.

I'm sure you get the subtle play on words: it resonates perfectly. Riffing on the saying *savoir faire* – which means "know-how" – Matthew Snarch has demonstrated just that. The chef-butcher-owner does, indeed, know how.

He offers top-of-the-line quality beef, hence also the reference to "fer" (iron in English) "as red meat is one of the best sources for heme-iron." (Heme is an iron-containing compound that forms the non-protein part of hemoglobin.)

However, don't just ask, "Where's the beef?" Your choices also include lamb, pork and chicken (from PEI and Charlevoix) – all organic. Cooking options range from *sous-vide*/just heat and eat (butter chicken my favourite) to home-made sauces (try the balsamic with fig!).

The charcuterie counter proffers fabulous cheeses (no need to fight market crowds anymore), famed chorizo Iberico "born in Spain" and "acorn-fed" Bellota ham.

His tapas shelf has sought-after La Brujula sardines and tuna belly from Spain and olives from Sicily.

Along with your take-home delights, daily luncheon take-out offers a choice of just-made sandwiches.

You can enjoy it right there by the welcoming "fire" and listen to cool jazz; or picnic in the snow.

Pop in or order online at Savoir-Fer, the only butcher shop in Westmount.

►Matthew Snarch



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NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE DU CONSEIL

Mardi 3 mars

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, March 3



Taxes foncières 2026

Les comptes de taxes foncières pour 2026 seront livrés par la poste dans la semaine du 9 février. Ils sont également déjà accessibles via la plateforme en ligne Voilà! westmount.org/taxes

Restez à l'affût des opérations de déneigement !

L'application **Info-Neige** permet de suivre l'état des rues et l'avancement du déneigement. Elle permet aussi des alertes personnalisées.

westmount.org/deneigement

Dépôts illégaux : éviter une amende !

La Ville rappelle aux résidents qu'il est strictement interdit de se débarrasser de tout résidu ménager dans les poubelles publiques ou sur les espaces publics sous peine d'amende. westmount.org/actualites

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Exposition : Tuba Qurban

Du 16 janvier au 20 février, La Galerie du Victoria Hall. Venez découvrir l'exposition **Ce qui luit** de l'artiste Tuba Qurban ! À travers le potentiel de l'image imprimée et des fibres naturelles, l'artiste explore les contrastes entre la matérialité du papier et les surfaces translucides.

westmount.org/événements

Ciné-club :

Exhibiting Forgiveness (2024)

24 février, 14 h, Victoria Hall. En anglais. Joignez-vous au Ciné-club ! Un artiste en pleine ascension voit sa vie bouleversée par la visite inattendue de son père, un ancien toxicomane en voie de guérison qui cherche désespérément à se réconcilier avec lui. westmount.org/événements

Club de films documentaires :

The Stand (2024)

25 février, 19 h, Salle Westmount (Bibliothèque). En anglais. À l'automne 1985, un petit groupe d'Haidas s'est rassemblé sur une route forestière boueuse de l'île Lyell et a refusé de bouger. Il s'en est suivi un acte de résistance pacifique historique qui a déclenché une prise de conscience à l'échelle nationale. westlib.org



Concours littéraire créatif McEntyre

Jusqu'au 22 mars, Bibliothèque de Westmount. Participez au Concours littéraire créatif McEntyre 2026 autour du thème **Se trouver !** Que ce soit par une histoire, un poème ou un essai, exprimez votre vision de l'identité et de la communauté. Le concours s'adresse aux élèves du primaire et du secondaire qui fréquentent une école de Westmount, y résident ou sont abonnés à la Bibliothèque publique de Westmount.

westlib.org

Rencontre d'auteure : Catherine Mavrikakis

26 mars, 19 h, Victoria Hall. L'auteure discutera de son livre *The Annex*. La traductrice Kathryn Gabinet-Kroo se joindra à la conversation.

westlib.org



Stay on top of snow operations!

The **Info-Neige** app allows users to track snow removal operations and street conditions, and also offers the option to receive personalised alerts. westmount.org/snowremoval

Illegal Dumping: Avoid a fine!

The City reminds residents that it is strictly prohibited to dispose of any household waste in public garbage cans or on public spaces under penalty of fines.

westmount.org/news

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Exhibition: Tuba Qurban

From January 16 to February 20, The Gallery at Victoria Hall. **Discover Shimmering**, an art installation by Tuba Qurban! Through the potential of the printed image and natural fibres, the artist explores the contrasts between the materiality of paper and translucent surfaces. westmount.org/events

Film Club:

Exhibiting Forgiveness (2024)

February 24, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. Join the Film Club! An artist on the path to success is derailed by an unexpected visit from his estranged father, a recovering addict desperate to reconcile.

westmount.org/events

Documentary Film Club: The Stand (2024)

February 25, 7 p.m., Westmount Room (Library). In the fall of 1985, a small group of Haida people stood on a muddy logging road on Lyell Island and refused to move. What followed was a landmark act of peaceful resistance that sparked a nationwide reckoning. westlib.org

Property Taxes 2026

Property tax bills for 2026 will be delivered by mail during the week of February 9. They are also available for consultation on the Voilà! online property portal. westmount.org/taxes

Spring Sports and Recreation Registration

Registration for spring 2026 began on Tuesday, **February 10**, for Westmount residents. Remember to reactivate your account online before registration.

westmount.org/activities

Opt in to personalised notifications!

Never miss a collection date, and be advised of any delays or schedule changes by opting in the municipal notifications via the Citizen Portal.

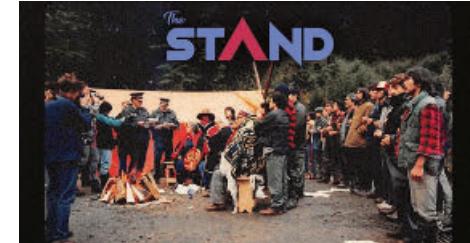
westmount.org/collections

McEntyre Creative Writing Competition

Until March 22, Westmount Library. Join the 2026 McEntyre Creative Writing Contest on the theme **Finding Yourself!** Through a story, poem, or essay, explore identity and community in your own words. The contest is open to elementary and high school students who attend school in Westmount, live in Westmount, or are members of the Westmount Public Library. westlib.org

Author event: Catherine Mavrikakis

March 26, 7 p.m., Victoria Hall. In French. The author will discuss her book *The Annex*. The translator, Kathryn Gabinet-Kroo, will join the conversation. westlib.org



Winter Carnival means food – and mascots



It was the right day to be cozying up to a fire and munching roasted marshmallows. Westmount Scouts representatives Chris (red jacket) and Dan (white jacket) were handing out marshmallows and re-purposed metal coat hangers. Since log fires are no longer allowed in the city, gas fire pits were provided.



Mascots Bee Safe and Olaf generated lots of smiles as they hugged unsuspecting residents.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.



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Henry: Adorable, affectionate, kittenish



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Henry is adorable and affectionate, bringing laughter and joy wherever he goes. A sweet grey-and-black tabby, he is available for adoption from the Montreal SPCA cattery. He is cuddly and playful, a great little friend who still shares in his kittenish ways.

Henry is one year young, very healthy, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped.

To find out more about him, please scroll to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, search for his information page from his identification number, 2000383198, and plan your trip to the shelter to visit Henry as it is open every day.

It is open for visits and meetings with adoption coordinators from Monday to Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm, then Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. The Montreal SPCA is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West, Côte des Neiges, Montreal, H4P 1X4.

Just a note to suggest you bring your carrier or you can choose one from the selection at the onsite boutique that offers foods, accessories and toys, all that is needed for you to settle Henry in when you

Public works, cont'd from p. 1

“Over the past few years, a big part of my work was focused on waste management,” she explained. “One of the greatest challenges has been helping residents adopt proper waste sorting practices, especially the food waste [compost] collection.”

She acknowledges that “any change in daily habits takes time, and we focused on clear information and ongoing improvements. I’m encouraged by the progress



get home with him.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne

we’re seeing, and I’m confident our community will continue moving in the right direction and reduce the amount of garbage sent to landfill.”

She’s “really proud of the team we have at Public Works. Our group is made up of experienced, highly competent people who care about providing reliable services to residents. We’re committed to continuous improvement and to delivering the kind of service our community deserves.”

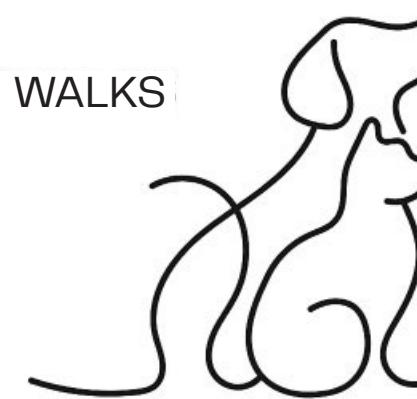
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Katie loves everyone – and cuddling

Westmount
A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

Precious Katie is a delightful Yorkie mix, a lovely young companion who is quite social and affectionate. She is presently in a foster home and is ready for a new family as her previous owner has passed away. She loves everyone around the home and would be fine on her own in the daily routine of cuddling, play and walkies, or enjoy sharing with a companionable small family dog or cat.

Katie is a very healthy three-year-old, up to date with her inoculations and spayed.

As a petite 15-pound girlie, she would be better in a family with children who are a bit older.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at my email lysow@gmail.com for more information on Katie and more adorable



photographs.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne

Winter Carnival means hockey!



At the city's Winter Carnival February 7 at Murray Park, the M7 Wings boys (under age 7) were battling it out on the ice to the roar of supporting parents.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

MMFA ball celebrates freedom, highlights Monkman exhibit



Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

The much-anticipated Montreal Museum of Fine Arts ball was sold out, again. Titans, tsars and stars gathered under the theme of freedom – “the freedom to be oneself, to love, to create, to innovate.”

Celebrating Quebec and Canadian art, the 65th edition of the museum ball was presented by IG Private Wealth Management. The evening paid special tribute to the museum’s signature exhibition *Kent Monkman: History Is Painted by the Victors*.

The gala was co-chaired by Erik Ryan, special advisor on stakeholder engagement AtkinsRéalis; Jérôme Pécresse, chief executive, aluminium and lithium Rio Tinto; Tracy Robinson, CEO CN; and Alexandre L’Heureux, CEO, WSP Global.

Famed Fogo Island Inn executive chef Timothy Charles, collaborating with the Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth, created the gourmet menu highlighting special flavours from Newfoundland. The gala’s artistic

continued on p. 14



Timothy Charles, Erik Ryan, Mary-Dailey Desmarais, Stéphane Aquin, Jo-Anne Duchesne, Alexandre L’Heureux, Tracy Robinson, Henry Mizrahi, Ulric Adom and Renée Condo.



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Social notes..., cont'd from p. 13

direction was by the MMFA Foundation team and Agence Niché. The event's partner-artist and set designer was artist **Rénée Condo**, a member of the Mi'kmaq community of Gesgapegiag. Condo also created a special banquet hall.

Noted during the eve were the MMFA's Rossy Foundation director **Stéphane Aquin**; Zhao-Ionescu chief curator **Mary-Dailey Desmarais**; and the MMFA Foundation's chair board of trustees **Henry Mizrahi** and director **Jo-Anne Duchesne**.

Minimalism was out of the closet for the night. Hashtag outfits included dramatic drag dresses, long glamorous gowns, short cocktail dresses and innovative cosplay outfits. And, of course, 50 shades of black.

Some opted for shimmer: sequins grabbed attention. Noted admiring Monkman and his studio's work were **Mélanie Charbonneau**, film director/screenwriter; **Ulric Adom**, CFO Aluminium at Rio Tinto; **Yves Lalumière**, CEO Tourisme Montréal; **Philippe Fehmiu**, host ICI Musique; **Caroline Monnet**, multidisciplinary artist; actors **Florence Longpré** and **Nicolas Michon**; **K-Maro**, singer, producer, gallerist; and **Anne-Sophie Mignaux-Kamar**, MMFA's Women of Influence Circle.

Also seen in the chic crowd were **Paul Desmarais III**, **Pascale Bourbeau** and her husband **Pierre-Karl Péladeau** and his daughter **Marie Péladeau**, **Charles Lafontaine**, **Nicola Merola**, **Manon Blanchette**, **Serge Grimaux**, **Claude Blanchet**, **Julie Insley** and **Pauline Marois**.

Guests were welcomed – and entertained – by acrobats and drag queens. The benefit gala, crucial to ensuring the future of the museum, raised \$2 million.

(PS: Mark your agendas. The next museum ball will take place November 7, 2026.)

► Right, Paul Desmarais III, Mary-Dailey Desmarais, Florence Longpré and Nicolas Michon.

►► Far right, from left, top: Marie Péladeau, Charles Lafontaine, Nicola Merola, Manon Blanchette, Serge Grimaux and Claude Blanchet; seated: Julie Insley, Pierre-Karl Péladeau, Pauline Marois and Pascale Bourbeau.



Fierce fashion: drag queen dazzle.



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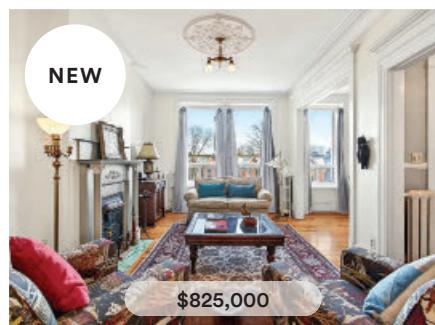
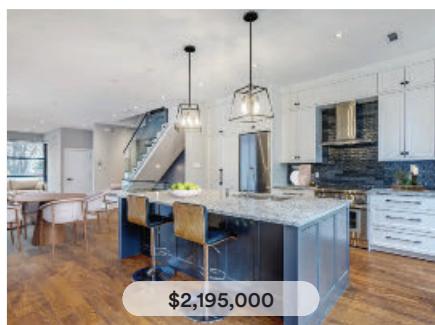
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