

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly, Vol. 12 No. 12a

We are Westmount

December 4, 2018

Council hikes pay given 'tax issue,' to align with other cities; uses UMQ calculation – mayor

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council was expected to table legislation December 3 to increase the remuneration of the mayor and councillors, Mayor Christina Smith said last week. It has been frozen since 2009.

The move of Westmount along with a number of other demerged municipalities

is being taken at this time to offset new federal taxation affecting the tax-free expense allowance of elected officials. Without increases, this would reduce the total take-home pay considering the expense account amount has not required receipts.

"It's uncomfortable giving yourself a raise," Mayor Smith said in announcing the plan last week.

Council's proposed increases fall at the lower end of a recommended range by the Union of Quebec Municipalities (UMQ) for a city of Westmount's population and services, she said.

The mayor's base salary would go from \$43,934 to \$68,000, in the UMQ's recommended range of \$67,000 to \$94,000, and the expense allowance from \$16,216 to *continued on p. 6*

Don't Miss It

Thursday, December 6 – Hanukkah celebration, candle lighting and reception by the city of Westmount in collaboration with Congregation Shaar Hashomayim and Temple Emmanu-El Beth Shalom. Lawn Bowling Clubhouse, behind city hall. 5 pm to 6:30 pm.

'Treats and Treasures' raises \$4,000



Centre Greene's annual 'Treats and Treasures' artisan Christmas fair on November 17 raised around \$4,000 for the community centre on Greene Ave. A wide variety of crafters who rented tables donated items that were then raffled off for the benefit of the centre. Seen in the photo wearing mittens produced and sold by an artisan for the benefit of the Chez Doris women's shelter are, from left, Centre Greene executive-director Beth Symansky, board member Erica Bloom, assistant-director Sophie Cram and special events coordinator Heather Hodges.

PHOTO: MARTIN C. BARRY

This issue is the Independent's second to last before our usual Christmas break

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At site of former Hillside clinic

Demo hearing Dec. 17 to present new townhouse project

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A hearing December 17 to demolish the former medical centre at 65 Hillside will examine the plan to build what would be the first new townhouses in Westmount in many years.

Proposed are four adjoining three-storey houses that conform to the current residential zoning and will face Hillside at

the northwest corner of Metcalfe across from the six-storey condos at 175 Metcalfe that replaced the Vanguard School building.

The hearing to lay out the case for demolishing the one-storey industrial-type building and to consider the replacement project is scheduled for 5:35 pm, following the 5:30 pm mid-monthly permits council *continued on p. 6*



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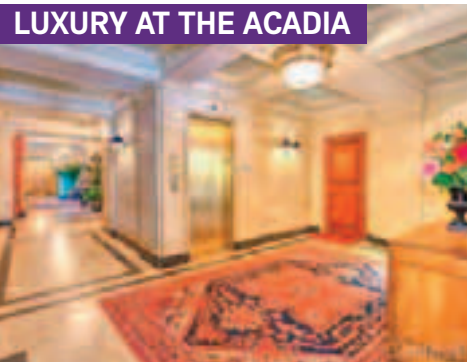
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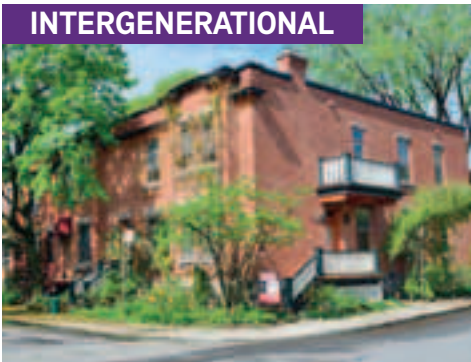
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Community liaison for MUHC super-hospital tunnel

Kiely, McCallum represent Westmount to STM

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Two longtime volunteers have been chosen to represent Westmount on the community liaison committee for the tunnel under construction by the Société de Transport de Montréal (STM) as a universally accessible entrance to the super-hospital from de Maisonneuve at Vendôme.

A high-profile project under way for a year, the aim of the long-sought tunnel is to provide a wheelchair-accessible link not currently available between the Metro station and the Glen hospital.

Along with three residents of NDG, the Westmounters are Maureen Kiely of The Boulevard, a longtime advocate for the new entrance, and Liz McCallum of St. Catherine, whose house backs onto the tunnel construction site.

While both had volunteered and applied for a position on the Comité de liaison Project Vendôme, their acceptance at the end of summer was announced at the November 5 city council meeting by Councillor Marina Brzeski, commissioner of sustainability and accessibility.

“We were the only two who raised our

hands” at a public consultation meeting June 18 when the STM asked who would be interested in serving on the committee, Kiely recalled.

“I’ve been badgering planners over the lack of an accessible tunnel for so many years and have been about as popular as a skunk in a cabbage patch,” she added. Kiely is also a member of the Royal Victoria Hospital’s patients’ committee and a subcommittee on functional accommodation. McCallum is a longtime member of the city of Westmount’s Community Events Advisory Committee.

While the tunnel committee has held only one meeting, September 6 in the trailer on the construction site, she said the STM was very receptive to her insistence that handrails be installed in the tunnel.

McCallum said she also found the STM very “responsive and proactive” to her own complaints that included requests for a fence to provide a visual barrier of the construction site from the back of her house. They had been very good about “committing to resolve issues.”

She said she has been telling other affected residents “the trick is to make a complaint.”

Kiely is still concerned, however, that when many people start using the new de Maisonneuve entrance, there will be no escalators to move them more quickly than elevators. She said she has been told that escalator installation is technically impossible due to configuration of the land.

Technically tough

The work has been technically tough because of a retention basin, unstable soil and other challenges such as replacement of the railway tracks, she said. These have been encountered in trying to “shoe horn” the tunnel into available space after the hospital had been built.

The new tunnel had been part of the initial plan for the super-hospital project but had been eliminated to reduce costs. Its construction began in January 2018 at a projected cost of \$76.5 million and now, after delays, is to be completed sometime in 2020.

The three NDG members of the STM liaison committee are Anouk Laurent, James Luck and Jo-Anne Wemmers.

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to the editor, p. 8

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(MUHC Breast Clinic), p. 28

Comin’ Up, p. 14

Dodge on real estate:

August transfers: Up!, p. 20

Mood of the market
in October: Up!, p. 22



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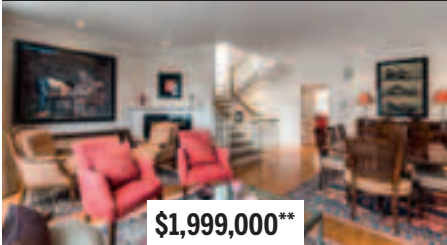
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Demo hearing, cont'd. from p. 1

meeting at city hall.

Both aspects have been recommended by the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) as allowing for the transformation of a nonconforming structure and use into what is now permitted. The proposed development, according to the PAC, would integrate into the residential zoning and context as "an improvement to the current situation."

The vacant corner building that faces Metcalfe but also has an address at 100 Metcalfe abuts a Category I Victorian house whereas the proposed townhouses will face Hillside. This allows for "breathing space" between them in the form of backyard garden space.

The building was originally raised in 1948 next to the Montreal Water and Power Company as an office and warehouse building for P. McCuaig Ltd. This was a mechanical/electrical contractor, which in 1957 added increased warehouse and draughting space when Hillside was still largely semi-industrial.

After a number of different owners, the property was sold earlier this year to a numbered company, on whose board Darren Reid of Verterra developments sits.

The building is described in a historical overview contained in the public demol-



65 Hillside, showing demolition sign in front, 175 Metcalfe to the right.



Current view of the building next to the Category I house on Metcalfe.

tion file at city hall as "a modest industrial building with no redeeming architectural features" that is "not very sympathetic" to the Victorian heritage-rated house next door on Metcalfe.

Since 1986, the medical building had "housed a well-loved pediatric clinic," documents state, but presented an "awkward urban layout on the site dwarfed in comparison to the heritage rated" house next door.

According to an introductory description by architect Nathan Godlovitch of Evoq Architecture, the four new townhouses are to have separate entrances off Hillside with indoor parking over the entire site accessed from a car elevator. This would eliminate the space needed for a ramp and allow each unit to have backyard space. A "penthouse" structure would permit each to access a roof terrace.

The new residential development aims to provide LEED-certified homes of four-plus bedrooms with finished basements, according to developer Reid (see story July 10, p. 1).



Looking southwest, an architectural rendering of the new townhouses, separated by backyards from the houses on Metcalfe. From the city's demolition file.



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Pay hike, cont'd. from p. 1

\$16,595 (the maximum allowed). This information was provided by Mayor Smith before press time and before a budget session for council before the public meeting of December 3.

Councillors' base salary is expected to go from \$14,645 to \$21,677 and the expense allowance from \$7,323 to \$10,838. According to law, a councillor's allowance is half the base salary.

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"The jump looks high," Smith said, "but it is to bring remuneration in line with UMQ recommendations and other demerged cities our size and, of course, to deal with the tax issue."

She said the proposed remuneration will be 0.31 percent of the 2019 operating budget, to be presented December 17.

Westmount will likely not adopt its increases until the January 15 meeting, "to provide time for debate," Mayor Smith said.

In a comparison with two West Island suburbs, the expected new base salaries in larger Pointe Claire would be \$77,256 for mayor and \$26,627 for councillors. In slightly smaller Beaconsfield, they would be \$69,297 for mayor and \$20,374 for councillors.

While Montreal has not increased its council remuneration in the 2019 budget so far, Smith said, this might follow if Quebec also decides to impose similar tax changes.

The Westmount adjustment, she said, is "long overdue to meet changing times," the current remuneration is inconsistent with similar demerged municipalities and

does not reflect today's heightened workload and demands on time such as the receipt of some 100 emails a week.

"The real message," she said, "is how do you quantify this (remuneration) and get good people to run for office when some have full-time jobs?" As it is, she added, the role is not 9-to-5 and has varied hours. Some councillors put more time into it than others, she pointed out, and times have changed since the work of elected municipal officials was considered to be volunteer civic duty.

The UMQ calculation tool takes into account a municipality's population, budget, real estate wealth, municipal services, number of files to deal with and whether the municipality has a large industrial sector, university or hospital.

Weighing in on the remuneration of elected officials a year ago, then mayor Peter Trent, who has long held to his belief that council remuneration was sufficient, explained that many people do not realize the expense allowances do not require receipts and were not taxed. The after-tax equivalent added more to earnings (see story October 10, 2017, p. 8).

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**MONEY AVAILABLE FOR
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Our response to the letter from Mr. Scavone (“Is the WRC finished?”) in the November 27 edition of the *Independent* (p. 8) is as follows:

In the city’s 2019 operating budget (that will be tabled for adoption by council on December 17), we have allocated funds for some landscaping and vegetation around the Westmount recreation centre. This work will occur in the spring/summer of 2019. As for the structure near the bike path, we will investigate possibilities, but solutions are limited due to the direct proximity of this structure to the bike path and available depth for planting.

BENOIT HURTUBISE, DIRECTOR GENERAL
(CITY OF WESTMOUNT)

**THERE WAS (AND IS) NO
SOUTHEAST PLAN TO REJECT**

Former city councillor Samiotis, in her November 27 letter to the editor (p. 8), claimed that as urban planning commissioner, she learned that a small group of people can effectively derail a well-intentioned plan (the southeast redevelopment, I assume) that would have benefitted all Westmounters.

I see no evidence for this.

This group could not have rejected council’s well-intentioned plan because there was absolutely none to reject. Instead, what some residents in District 8 recognized and did reject was the incoherent process of consultation driving the southeast project. I attended virtually all council meetings over those four years and I never heard any councillor lay out

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

what the proposed plan was.

However, during question periods, I did hear endlessly what it wasn’t, and also listened to contentious debates on process and the release of reports. The city’s plan, if it did exist, was a complete mystery then and still is.

In any event, if the previous council had indeed concluded that its proposal was so positive for Westmount, why didn’t it just proceed with the plan instead of leaving it to the current council?

I don’t believe council needs approval from residents for anything in the southeast redevelopment. It is city property, including land and roads. No zoning changes are required* and likely no development would fall under SCAOPI (specific construction, alteration or occupancy proposal for an immovable) guidelines. Therefore, no possibility of a referendum. Council clearly failed to make any persuasive case in its push for a common good, reflecting perhaps serious differences of opinion among council members.

We have a great opportunity now for the current council to re-set and proceed with the southeast redevelopment in an open and fact-based manner while sincerely engaging all residents of Westmount.

DENIS BIRO, BURTON AVE.

*Some of the proposals would have required zoning changes. For instance, in one of our initial stories on the topic, Lauren Sweeney wrote, “Also proposed was allowing housing of three and four storeys on the north side of the street, along with five- and six-storey buildings of mixed use

rising behind them on Tupper as a transition to commercial St. Catherine St.” (June 21, 2016, p. 1). According to city Urban Planning director Tom Flies, whom I spoke to on November 30, and the city’s zoning map on its website, the relevant zone (R6-24-08) is currently limited to three storeys and 35 feet.– DP.

**MONEY FOR MERCHANTS,
BUT NOT MUSICIANS?**

The evening of the November 17, we had the great privilege of attending a concert by the Westmount Youth Orchestra at Mountainside United. The orchestra and conductor were in wonderful form. It was a tremendous audience. The central highlight was an 11-year-old violinist playing Max Bruch’s 1st Concerto. What was remarkable was not the musical aplomb of his playing, which was exceptional, but the warmth of emotion. He played from a position in front of Maestra MacRae at the top of the central aisle of the church. At times, he almost danced while playing in tandem with the orchestra. At the end, while the audience applauded, he shared that appreciation with the whole orchestra. Making his way through each section, he gave a hug to each young musician.

Westmount should be rightly proud of having fostered such musicianship, such fellowship these past 23 years. What is not understandable is how Victoria Hall could have been pulled from underneath this orchestra at the beginning of summer by our administration. In its stead, a Montreal institution, Sacred Heart, graciously stepped in to fill the gap of providing rehearsal space. And now Westmount has earmarked \$200,000 for signs in commercial districts and another \$35,000 for branding. I find it difficult to accept that our youth orchestra is not even given rehearsal space but that our tax dollars are being spent making our shopping streets a “destination.”

Is this the new Westmount Way?
ROGER JOCHYM, LEWIS AVE.

**NO SHERBROOKE BIKE PATH,
PLEASE**

To say that I was outraged to read that council was even considering a bike path on Sherbrooke is a mild understatement (November 27, p. 1). Whilst I appreciate cycling and applaud those who encourage it, there are already multiple routes set aside for cyclists in the city – often at great in-

convenience to residents.

It is already a nerve-racking experience for residents on foot who endeavour to cross Sherbrooke St. at Grosvenor Ave., Victoria Ave. and Lansdowne because of multiple cyclists who a) ride on the sidewalks, b) go through red lights, c) ignore stop signs or d) do not have adequate lighting as darkness falls, let alone wear helmets etc.

Council should remember it has many residents who have physical limitations – often brought on by age and/or medical problems – who cannot move out of the way with dexterity to avoid these scofflaws.

If I wish to use my car, I have to respect the Highway Code, which is obviously the equivalent of ancient writings to the majority of cyclists.

Cyclists already have the bike path on de Maisonneuve, which causes great distress to many friends who live there who have massive difficulty getting out of their buildings safely due to these cyclists, as well as on Côte St. Antoine – where a cyclist was once rumoured to have been seen. But hey – why should residents have priority?

They want a bike path so they can do their errands. Wow, imagine having to go a complete block from the current bike path to the stores – those stores that are not vacant that is! And kids want a special route to cycle down to the recreation centre. Oh my! Remember walking – a basic skill?

Finally, why are the police giving out free lights (“Cyclists should be, and are, lighting up,” November 27, p. 8)? I understand their motive but surely it might be better if they just ticket the cyclists and confiscate their bikes until appropriate lighting is purchased by the cyclist?

WILLIAM BALFOUR, GROSVENOR AVE.

**LOVE MONTREAL, LOVE ACCESS
TO MOUNT ROYAL**

Every week, I look forward to the online edition of the *Independent*, and have been happy to see your coverage of the unwelcome change to accessing the cemetery. I enjoyed two recent letters, one from Arlene Lutter (November 20, p. 4) and one from Beverley Hutchison (November 27, p. 8), which showed how much she appreciated being able to visit the cemetery. As I think of returning to the city that I loved and lived in for many years, if Remembrance Rd. were opened, I would then be more able to visit the three generations of my family buried in a lovely, hilly site.

Hopefully, the many letters you have received about the road closure will help show how important this part of Montreal’s history is to the living.

HELEN (AYER) GOODALL, KINGSTON (ON)

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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Correction

Contrary to our November 27, p. 3 story, former Mayor Peter Trent is in fact a member of the board of the Jarislowsky Foundation. – DP

Budgets for agglomeration, for Westmount and for council members' salaries

Mayor's Column

CHRISTINA SMITH

All of us on city council have recently been immersed in budgets, reviewing the agglomeration council budget, while finalizing our own budget, which will be tabled later this month. In response to a change in federal tax policy, we, like almost all municipalities across the province, are proposing to increase our compensation, which in our case has been frozen since 2009.

Agglomeration reform still needed

On November 29, I joined mayors from the Association of Suburban Mayors (ASM) in voting for the city of Montreal's budget. Having participated at hearings on the capital works and operating budgets as a member of the Finance and Administration committee, I congratulate Montreal for working hard to contain costs. On the other hand, I remain concerned that Montreal's debt is increasing, as is the number of employees that are being capitalized. We also still don't have a comprehensive plan for the rebuilding of our water infrastructure that is vital to the city and long

overdue.

In the end, Westmount is being charged less than originally proposed - our increase is 3.6 percent while the average increase for the ASM is 2 percent. But it is still a significant amount - \$57.2 million of your tax dollars. Right now, we have minimal control over how these funds are spent. And that needs to change. I am hopeful that our discussions with Benoit Dorais, the head of Montreal's executive committee, will address this need and eventually lead to a fairer distribution of costs for services from the agglomeration.

Investing in Westmount

In preparing next year's budget, we are determined to control costs while ensuring city services meet or exceed resident expectations. In 2019, we will be pursuing our investments in urban planning and the permit process, and increasing Public Works' budget allocation. Our capital works budget, which was adopted in November, allocates \$18.7 million in spending on infrastructure and other projects.

Our commitment is to be fiscally responsible and to spend taxpayer money wisely. Aware of mounting budget pressures, I should also point out that we are exploring other sources of revenue beyond property taxes.

Mayor and council remuneration

Due to changes in federal regulations, my colleagues on council and I have been struggling with the issue of our compensation for some time. We ran for office because of our commitment to public service. It has been a very busy year, and we take pride in the contribution we are making.

Since 2009 the salaries of the mayor of Westmount and councilors have been frozen without indexation at \$43,000 for

mayor and \$14,000 for councillor respectively. They would have risen to \$52,500 and \$17,070 if adjusted for inflation.

In addition, we receive a non-taxable allowance of \$16,000 and \$7,000 respectively. As of January, our allowance will be taxed by the federal government, leading to an appreciable reduction in income for all elected officials in Quebec.

This tax change prompted the Union of Municipalities of Quebec (UMQ), the umbrella organization of municipalities across the province, to hire external experts to look at the total compensation of elected officials, establish benchmarks and make recommendations for individual municipalities. Many other cities have already implemented the recommendations, and some have done so retroactively.

The consultants recommend that the mayor of Westmount earn between \$67,000 and \$94,000 along with a taxable allocation of \$16,000 for expenses. The salary of councillors should be anywhere from 10-50 percent of the mayor's base salary.

The motion that we *continued on p. 12*

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Fjällräven, Pendleton, Deus Ex Machina arrive in Westmount

**Au Sommet opens pop-up
store on Sherbrooke St.,
offers three new brands**

Westmount retailer Steve Bucci has just opened his second Westmount store. It's at 4927 Sherbrooke St. (on the north side, just east of Claremont Ave., upstairs) and is using the "Au Sommet" name.

But Bucci is no stranger to Westmount retail, having opened The North Face boutique on the south of Sherbrooke in 2004 (4924 Sherbrooke St.), which led to the opening of The North Face store at Brossard's Dix30 mall in 2012.

The new store - currently a pop-up until the end of February, but who knows? - offers many of the same types of clothing for men and women as the existing one - parkas, coats, jackets, checked shirts, outdoor pants - but features three new brands: Fjällräven, Pendleton and Deus Ex Machina.

Fjällräven is "very Swedish," said creative and e-commerce director Claire McCulloch, and very environmentally conscious, "with a negative carbon footprint." In terms of look? Not unlike Han Solo on Hoth.

Deus Ex Machina "comes of out Australian surf and moto culture," said McCulloch, with a corresponding aesthetic. Net effect? Think Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*.

Pendleton is a traditional North American brand offering clothing and accessories with native art themes, including trade blankets. What's this look like to the average North American consumer? Navajo chic.

Drop by to find out more.

Au Sommet

4927 Sherbrooke St. W.
(at Claremont Ave.)
(514) 489-1517

The North Face


4924 Sherbrooke St. W.
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Library to run weekly tech clinic for snowbirds

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount Public Library is introducing a weekly Thursday walk-in clinic to help snowbirds heading south learn how to connect electronically and keep in touch while away.

“We thought we could help people going away, or those who feel housebound for the winter, to access our many different apps,” said reference librarian Mai Jay. Among them are those for e-books, e-audio, e-mags and now the new Press-Reader that provides more than 7,000 newspapers and magazines from around the world.

Starting December 6, the sessions are being offered on a walk-in basis between 10 am and 12 noon until Christmas and possibly beyond. Appointments can be made at other times by contacting the reference desk at 512.989.5355.

“We’ll help people set up their iPads, tablets or iPhones with all the apps we have,” she said, “including a link to the *Westmount Independent*, which is free online, so they can keep up with local news. There are so many things the library has

apps for that people don’t know about.”

According to Mai Jay, the library has previously noticed a significant spike in e-book circulation in the winter months when a number of residents are away.

Even people who aren’t going away but who may feel housebound over the winter may want to take advantage of the assistance, she said.

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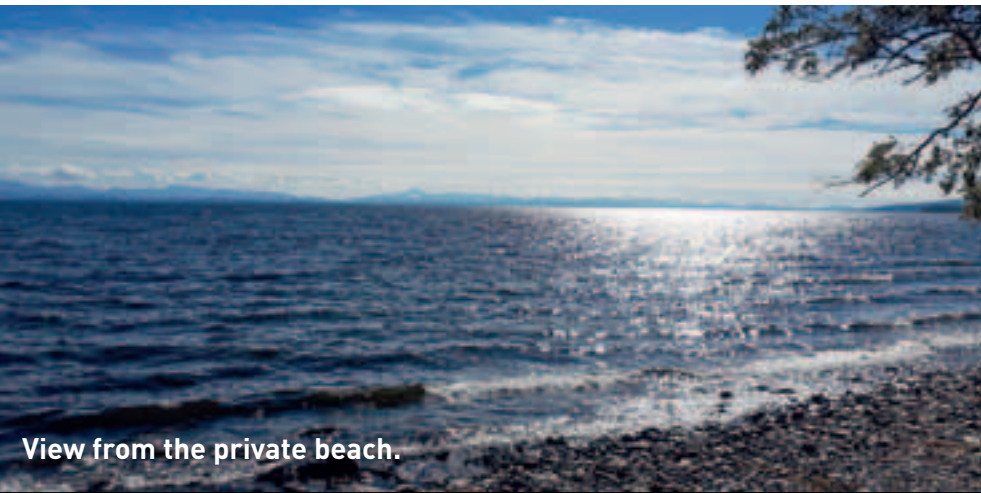
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Plans released for St. Léon School expansion project



The view from above. "Addition" text by *Independent*.

By MARTIN C. BARRY

For parents of students enrolled at Westmount's St. Léon School, where overcrowding in recent years has been a major problem, relief is on the way.

Marie-José Mastromonaco, the Commission scolaire de Montréal's school commissioner for NDG-Westmount, unveiled plans by Montreal's French-language school commission for a building expansion at St. Léon during a public meeting held at the Clarke Ave. school on November 19.

The announcement comes as the CSDM is also undertaking to build two new schools in downtown Montreal, which are expected to absorb a significant portion of the St. Léon student population.

As it is, an overflow of students from St. Léon has been attending classes at an annex located in St. Henri. The creation of the new downtown schools and a realignment of the CSDM's NDG-Westmount district borders are expected to resolve the overcrowding issue at St. Léon.

Mastromonaco said that, as a result, she expects fewer students from outside Westmount to be bused in to St. Léon in the coming years. "The territory of St. Léon will get smaller," she said in an interview with the *Independent*.

"I'm not saying it's going to be just Westmount, but pretty much. But we know that the population of the school and of the city has been getting higher. So we need to build bigger so that all the kids living in Westmount will be able to go to this school."

The new extension, three storeys high (as are the existing school buildings), will be located at the northern end of the St. Léon school yard, jutting out towards Kitchener Ave. over a relatively small part

of the school's current staff parking lot.

Five new classrooms and an additional activity room will be created. Part of the new structure will be covered with a "green roof" that will serve as an outdoor teaching environment. The CSDM previously announced an \$11.5-million cost.

According to Mastromonaco, St. Léon's current population at the Clarke Ave. building is 620 students, with an additional 200 students at the Charlevoix annex on de Courcelle St. in St. Henri. When the extension project is completed, the Clarke Ave. school is expected to accommodate around 700 students, she said, while adding that it will depend on how space ends up being used.

Although some parents at the school were not happy when it was previously announced that students from some of the lower grades would be bused to the Charlevoix annex for the duration of construction, Mastromonaco said the plan was updated with parents' consent.

"It's the kindergarten and first grade," said Mastromonaco. "It should be only that. It's going to depend on the number of children and classrooms."

She said the parents who objected before did so mostly "because of the way it was done and how the decision was made. This time, the decision was made by the principal, with the parents and with the teachers. There was a plan, there was discussion and there was information the way it was done this time."

NOTICE

We wish to inform you that all the patient files of Dr. Bryan Wolfe, chiropractor, have been transferred to Dr. Denise Perron, Chiropractor at 4999 Ste Catherine O. #302, Westmount, Qc. H3Z 1T3; 514-489-0008.



Looking northeast.

ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF MARIE-JOSÉ MASTROMONACO



Christmas Events 2018

Advent Services & Lunch
Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

CBC Sing-In
Sunday, December 9 at 3 p.m.

Carols by Candlelight
Sunday, December 16 at 7 p.m.

The Longest Night Service
Wednesday, December 19 at 6 p.m.

Christmas Eve Family Service
Monday, December 24 at 4 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Monday, December 24 at 11 p.m.

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Farming returns to Villa Maria campus



From left, Kaya Reonegro, Marisa Cannata and Varvara Malyguine, all students at Villa Maria, work at the school's recently set up "techno-farm," which allows students "to discover the virtues of eco-responsibility," according to the school's press release. In the 1940s, local residents were able to buy vegetables from nuns where Claremont meets NDG Ave., on or near the school's current campus.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VILLA MARIA COLLEGE.

Mayor's column, cont'd. from p. 9

tabled calls for the mayor to be paid at the low end of the scale - \$68,000 – with a taxable allowance of \$16,000. Councilors would receive a salary of \$21,000 and a taxable allowance of \$10,000. The amount, while not yet voted on, has been allocated in the 2019 budget and represents 0.31 per cent of our budget.

We maintain that this proposal is in keeping with the time and effort each of us makes to Westmount as well as the compensation of our colleagues in other cities. In fact, our compensation would still be below the average of comparable demerged cities and below that of elected officials of the city of Montreal. It is difficult to put a price on the role of mayor and or elected official, and it is not to say that the compensation should not be greater, but the gap from where it is now is just too large to go any higher at this time.

Although we certainly do not want compensation to be the driving force behind someone's candidacy, we certainly do not want it to be a deterrent. By adjusting our salaries, we are confident that public service will become a more inspiring option for more and more Westmounters.

On behalf of all of us on council, please accept our best wishes for the holiday season.

Music at St. Matthias' Christmas Season 2018

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CONGREGATIONAL CAROLS

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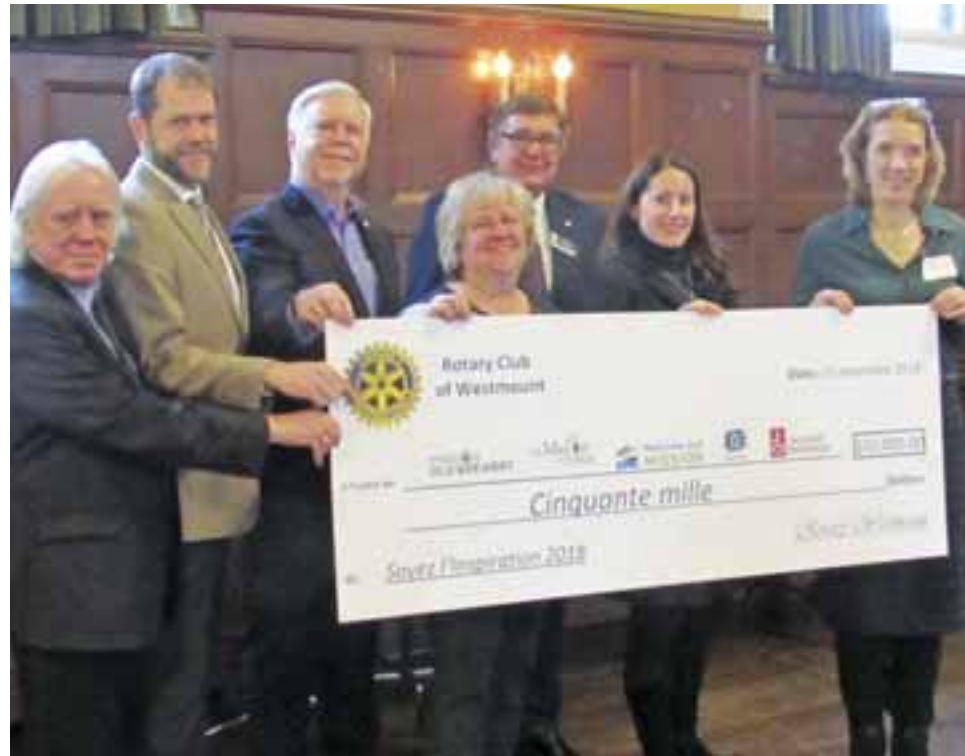
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Rotary gives big cheque to homeless groups



As previously reported (October 16, p. 7), the Rotary Club of Westmount held a “Be the Inspiration” dînatore on October 3 to raise money for groups helping the homeless. On November 21, it gave \$50,000 of the more than \$60,000 raised to five such groups. From left, Michel Petit (of Accueil Bonneau), David Leduc (of the Old Brewery Mission), Sam Watts (of the Welcome Hall Mission), Manon Dubois (of La Maison du Père), Peter Starr and Heather Borrelli (president and vice president of the Rotary club), and Marina Boulos (of Chez Doris).

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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Comin' Up



On December 6, 2017, the spruce in front of city hall was lit up with a bright display of twinkly red lights and shining white stars.
PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

Hanukah celebration, candle lighting and reception by the city of Westmount in collaboration with Congregation Shaar Hashomayim and Temple Emmanu-El-Beth Sholom. Lawn Bowling Clubhouse, behind city hall. 5 pm to 6:30 pm.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

Neighbourhood carolling organized by the city of Westmount. Lawn Bowling Clubhouse. 1 pm.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12

City of Westmount's Christmas tree lighting. City hall. 6:30-8 pm.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

► First performance of *Imagine This*, six short plays presented by Dramatis Personae. Admission by donation, \$10 to \$15 suggested. Reserve at www.theatrewestmount.com or by phone 514.484.2016. Lodge Room, Victoria Hall. 7:30 pm. Also Monday, December 17, 7:30 pm; and Saturday, December 15 & Sunday, December 16 at 2 pm.

► The Westmount Historical Association will hold its December Social 2018 on "Projecting the WHA's Image." See how the WHA's image is projected visually through its website, newsletters and posters. The Gallery at Victoria Hall. \$5.7 to 9 pm.



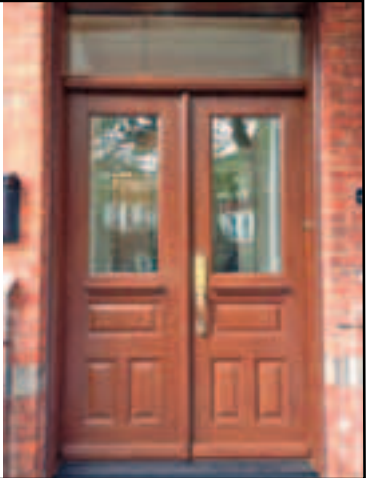
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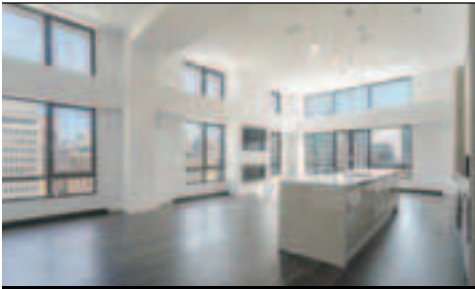
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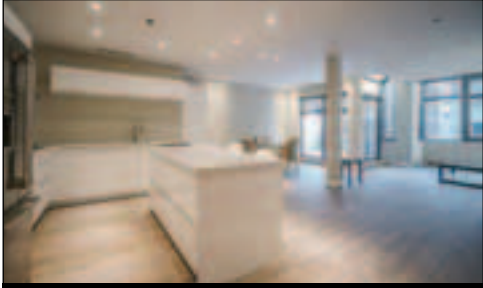
CORNER UNIT | WATER VIEW

“SOLANO”, OLD PORT
\$1,249,000



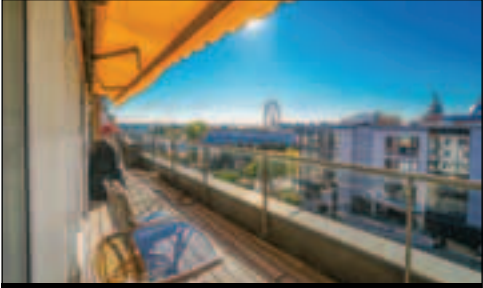
PENTHOUSE | BREATHTAKING VIEW

‘FORT DE LA MONTAGNE’, WSTMT ADJ.
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‘Cover Decarie,’ say activists who want roof put on expressway

By MARTIN C. BARRY

A grassroots group of urban transportation activists who want the city of Montreal to build a permanent cover over the Decarie Expressway say Westmounters would benefit from such a project in the form of reduced dust and car exhaust, which they say now blow into Westmount.

Conceptual drawings for the project have been developed by Pierre Zovilé, an architectural consultant, in conjunction with the late Luc Durand, a highly respected Quebec architect and former eastern NDG resident who passed away last March at age 89.

“There is an impact from the expressway on Westmount,” said Guy Arbour, an engineering consultant and NDG resident who is also involved with the Couvrons Decarie project. He notes that dominant winds in the area blow from west to east and often carry fine particles of sediment into Westmount.

“I think the impact from Decarie on Westmount is significant and this can be demonstrated,” added Arbour who specializes in air quality issues. “Covering Decarie will significantly improve the air quality in Westmount.”

Recalling the days around 25 years ago when he lived in NDG on a street running parallel to the edge of the Decarie Expressway, Arbour said, “Whenever I was opening the window in the morning, there would be soot on the ledge and it would also get on the furniture. It was always there. Permanent. It was the consequence of having tens of thousands of cars driving by every day.”

It was around that time he first decided to take action by seeking to draw together like-minded professionals as well as other supporters in order to put together an action plan with the ultimate goal of building a roof cover over the expressway.

While they haven’t estimated the cost, the two maintain the project could be financed at least partly through “air rights” for the space above the expressway, which would be sold or leased to developers or developed into public green spaces and parks.

Noting that a section of the Decarie Expressway between NDG Ave. and Duquette Ave. in NDG is already covered with a tunnel section, they envision gradually extending it in stages, beginning with Côte St. Antoine Rd. to Monkland Ave., and continuing northward past Côte



Seen here on November 10 on Côte St. Antoine Rd. where it passes over the Decarie Expressway, Guy Arbour (left) and Pierre Zovilé want their lobby group’s plan to cover the busy highway to be taken seriously by the City of Montreal.

St. Luc and Queen Mary roads.

Arbour and Zovilé maintain that the Decarie Expressway, which was built during the early 1960s, was initially conceived to be covered, although its planners never followed through. They note at the same time that several major roadways in places throughout the world, including Paris in

France and Boston in the US, have been covered successfully for decades.

They wonder why officials in Montreal haven’t done the same. “Come on,” insisted Arbour. “We’re not talking about something that is science fiction. It’s been done in a lot of other places in the world.”





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Levenson recognized as JGH volunteer



The Association of Fundraising Professionals' Quebec chapter awarded its "Outstanding Volunteer" award to Westmounter Harvey Levenson on November 14, National Philanthropy Day. He was recognized for his 20-year service on the board of the Jewish General Hospital Foundation and, "in particular, his chairmanship of the most recent Power to Heal campaign," said a press release. From left, Jonathan Wener, Levenson and Luce Moreau, CFRE, president of the board of directors of Quebec chapter.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MÉLISSA VINCELLI.

Christmas isn't always easy



This photo of a crane putting the Prince Albert square Christmas tree into place was taken on November 15.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TOM FORESTELL.

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August transfers: volume, prices way up



Real Estate

ANDY DODGE,
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Note: The following article relates to the registration of deeds of sale for Westmount property in August 2018, gleaned from non-city sources. A list of sales can be found on p. 21.

Nineteen single-family dwellings and one duplex changed hands in August this year, the highest monthly volume since October last year and way up from the 12 that sold in July. In actual fact, the number is about average for August closings in Westmount, but this year almost every other month is well below average, thanks mainly to the incredibly high price of property here.

All of the single-family dwellings sold above \$1 million, while the only duplex transferred in the month – 115-17 Irvine Ave. – went for much less, a mere \$785,000, though this was well above its municipal evaluation of \$579,000. The highest price in August was in fact the highest price this year, as 29 Ramezay Rd. sold for \$5,500,000, though in fact this was almost 20 percent less than its municipal valuation, the only mark-down of the month. At least four houses sold in 2017 for more than \$5,500,000, but this was the first one to reach that mark in 2018.

The average price of one- and two-family sales in August was \$2,320,000, the second-highest monthly average price in Westmount's history. In February 2016, the average price was \$2,726,000, when three of the five registered prices were more than \$3,000,000. This time, five of the 20 sales were registered above \$3 million.

Highest mark-up in August came in the sale of 577 Grosvenor Ave. at 79.3 percent above valuation, one of six sales on Grosvenor in the month. That mark-up is the highest this year, and the 71.9 percent at 557 Grosvenor – in the same block – is second-highest for the year.

Condos

August was a busy month for condominiums, as well, with eight sales, including one townhouse, one duplex-type condo and six apartments. Coupled with seven condo registrations in July, that makes 15 so far in the third quarter of 2018, with September still to come. The high price for August – \$1,150,000 for a ground-floor apartment at 215 Redfern Ave. – was easily cleared by three sales in July, and the two lowest prices in August were lower than anything in July by about \$100,000. The average price so far in the third quarter is \$988,633 and the average mark-up over valuation is almost 19 percent, lower than the monthly average mark-ups for any of the last five months in the one- and two-family dwellings category.

Also in August, two commercial condominium sales were registered, one on the south side of St. Catherine St. opposite Alexis Nihon Plaza, the other involving two commercial units in the lower level of 1 Wood Ave., which sold for only \$110,000. The latter are part of a sprawling commercial floor that had anticipated a connection with the Westmount Square-Alexis Nihon commercial complex, but when the tunnel was vetoed by the condo owners' association at 1 Wood, the whole floor fell into disuse (with some exceptions) and much of it was seized for taxes. Over the past decade, there has been some effort to revive the area, with some units selling at bargain prices.



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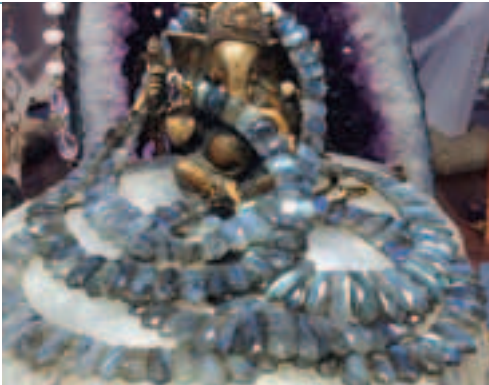
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Bought & Sold – real estate transfers in August 2018, and others

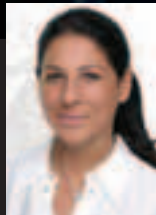
| ADDRESS | PRICE | 2017 VAL | RATIO (%) | ADDRESS | PRICE | 2017 VAL | RATIO (%) |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 116 Aberdeen | \$4,150,000 | \$3,600,000 | 15.28% | DUPLEXES | | | |
| 3241 Cedar | \$1,888,000 | \$1,411,800 | 33.73% | | | | |
| 22 de Casson | \$1,475,000 | \$1,181,800 | 24.81% | 115-17 Irvine | \$785,000 | \$579,000 | 35.58% |
| 334 Grosvenor | \$1,789,000 | \$1,115,000 | 60.45% | CONDOMINIUMS | | | |
| 345 Grosvenor | \$1,575,000 | \$1,003,100 | 57.01% | | | | |
| 349 Grosvenor | \$1,325,000 | \$1,003,000 | 32.10% | | | | |
| 557 Grosvenor | \$2,950,000 | \$1,716,100 | 71.90% | | | | |
| 577 Grosvenor | \$2,275,000 | \$1,268,800 | 79.30% | | | | |
| 669 Grosvenor | \$1,400,000 | \$1,218,700 | 14.88% | | | | |
| 14 Hudson | \$1,500,000 | \$1,191,900 | 25.85% | | | | |
| 4449 Montrose | \$3,800,000 | \$2,846,000 | 33.52% | 399 Clarke #3E | \$670,000 | \$484,000 | 38.43% |
| 29 Ramezay | \$5,500,000 | \$6,791,800 | -19.02% | 4875 de Maisonneuve | \$1,060,000 | \$779,200 | 36.04% |
| 4547 Sherbrooke | \$1,620,000 | \$1,123,400 | 44.21% | 11 Hillside #101 | \$460,000 | \$289,600 | 58.84% |
| 9 Summit Circle | \$3,550,000 | \$3,011,200 | 17.89% | 215 Redfern #108 | \$1,150,000 | \$1,251,200 ¹ | -8.09% |
| 61 Summit Crescent | \$3,700,000 | \$3,580,700 | 3.33% | 4848 St. Catherine | \$819,000 | \$603,500 | 35.71% |
| 3220 The Boulevard | \$2,258,000 | \$2,065,000 | 9.35% | 295 Victoria #101 | \$455,000 | \$403,300 ² | 12.82% |
| 3641 The Boulevard | \$1,820,000 | \$1,262,400 | 44.17% | 1 Wood # 407 | \$595,000 | \$796,800 ³ | -25.33% |
| 745 Upper Roslyn | \$1,380,000 | \$1,162,000 | 18.76% | 1 Wood # 511 | \$925,000 | \$767,800 | 20.47% |
| 620 Victoria | \$1,660,000 | \$1,294,300 | 28.25% | COMMERCIAL CONDOS | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 4010 St. Catherine | \$786,000 | \$509,400 | 54.30% |
| | | | | 1 Wood # 180 | \$110,000 | \$152,300 | -27.77% |

¹Valuation is a combination of \$1,085,000 for the apartment, \$83,100 for each of two garage spaces.

²Valuation is a combination of \$369,900 for the apartment, \$33,400 for the garage space.

³Valuation is a combination of \$694,900 for the apartment, \$50.900 for one parking space, \$51,000 for the other.

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Real Estate

ANDY DODGE,
CRA (RET.)

Note: The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in October 2018. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph on at right offers a picture of these trends over time.

The Westmount real estate market appears to be reaching “bubble” status but there is no indication yet that the bubble is getting ready to pop.

The average mark-up over valuation in 11 home sales soared to almost 43 percent in October, with one property going for more than double its municipal valuation – something that has happened only two other times in the past two years – while none sold for less than valuation. That sale price was \$2,945,000, highest of the month and one of three sales that cleared the \$2-million mark. The lowest home sale price, for an attached house on Somerville Ave., was \$1,120,000. Volume is still slow, a factor which is more a result

October Sales: How high can we go?

of the high prices than lack of demand. For the year, 123 Westmount home sales have been reported, the same number year-to-date as 2013 and one more than 2010, but otherwise the lowest 10-month volume since 1994, just before the second referendum.

The 11 sales agreements in October had an average price of \$1,853,636, but if you apply the (adjusted) average mark-up to the average house valuation in Westmount, it suggests that the “typical” Westmount house would now have a value of about \$2,150,000, the sixth month in a row that that figure has surpassed \$2 million.

Average time on the market leapt to 160 days from 44 days in September, mainly because a few houses that had been on the market as much as two years finally sold. Two of the 11 October sales went for more than the asking price, and five were “double-ended” by agents who found buyers for their own listings.

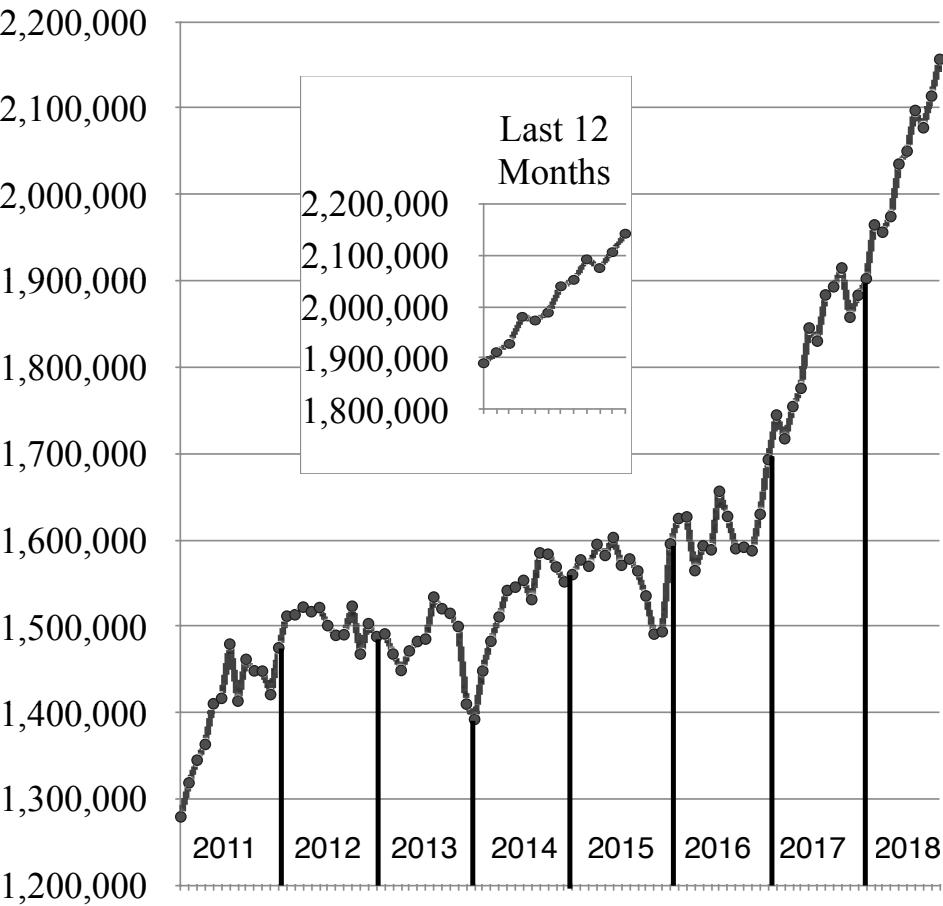
**Condos less bubbly
on very low volume**

The same fervour did not extend to the condo market, however. Only three sales were posted, though it is worth noting that one high-rise penthouse went for \$2,880,000, the third condo sale between \$2.8 and \$2.9 million this year. Another October condo sale went for 20 percent less than the municipal valuation, so with only three sales on the list the statistics become insignificant. Two other October sales were for co-op apartments, one at 300 Lansdowne Ave. and another for a share of a duplex on Wood Ave.

**Westmount adjacent average price
over \$1 million**

The adjacent-Westmount areas of NDG and Côte des Neiges showed strong interest, with eight sales ranging in price from \$959,000 to \$1,725,000, while only two home sales were reported east of West-

Average adjusted price for ‘typical’ Westmount house, by month, January 2011 to October 2018, based on accepted offer dates



mount, both in about the same price range. All of the adjacent-Westmount areas now have average sale prices this year over \$1 million; in the case of the Trafalgar-Daulac area, the average is over \$2 million.

As of mid-November, the number of total house listings in Westmount actually increased by three compared with a month earlier, to exactly 100 listings, of

which only two were asking less than \$1 million while 17 were asking \$5 million or more – as high as \$27,000,000 (so far this year we have heard of only one sale over \$5 million). Houses for rent increased by five to 26 in mid-November, of which 6 are asking more than \$10,000 per month, though of 41 houses rented this year, none have drawn rents higher than \$9,000 per month.

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www.aynotary.ca

New inclined walkway gives greater access to Centre Greene

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Access to Centre Greene became quite a bit easier recently for individuals with reduced mobility as well as parents with baby strollers following the completion of an inclined walkway leading to the front entrance.

Several elected officials, as well as a representative from Westmount's Public Works department and members of the Centre Greene board, were on hand at the community centre on Greene Ave. on November 14 for a ribbon cutting.

While the operation of Centre Greene is overseen by a non-profit community group, the building itself is owned by the city of Westmount. As such, the city agreed to undertake the task, along with the \$110,000 cost of building the new walkway while upgrading the outdoor front stairway at the same time.

"We were working for a long time to try and get this building more accessible for people with limited mobility," explained Centre Greene executive-director Beth Symansky, adding that the work took around two months.

"A lot of the parents come with strollers and it was also difficult for them to access



Seen here on November 14, Margaret Glassford, a Centre Greene bridge club organizer and regular Seniors' Lunch attendee, did the honours of cutting the ribbon for Centre Greene's new inclined walkway. Behind her, from left, are Centre Greene board member Erica Bloom, Councillor Marina Brzeski, Centre Greene executive-director Beth Symansky, Councillor Cynthia Lulham, Councillor Mary Gallery, Councillor Kathleen Kez, Centre Greene Board president Jane Wightman and Westmount Public Works technical officer for architecture Dario Morillo.

the building," she continued. "So the city took on the project around a year ago. They set aside money for it in the budget

and now it's done."

Previously, persons in wheelchairs or who otherwise had mobility issues that

made stair use difficult or impossible had to use a wooden ramp located at Centre Greene's rear entrance.

According to Councillor Cynthia Lulham, the cost of landscaping the grounds surrounding the new walkway and stairs came from a donation made by the city's Horticultural Advisory Committee, which had agreed to give funds raised this year and the year before from perennial plant exchanges.

Councillor Marina Brzeski, who is council's commissioner of sustainability and accessibility, advocated for the project. "This project had a history," she said, noting that the idea of developing the ramp started years ago. "This is kind of the culmination."

Lulham pointed out that former city councillor Theodora Samiotis also worked on the project while sitting on council up until last year.



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CAROLINE BRESLAW

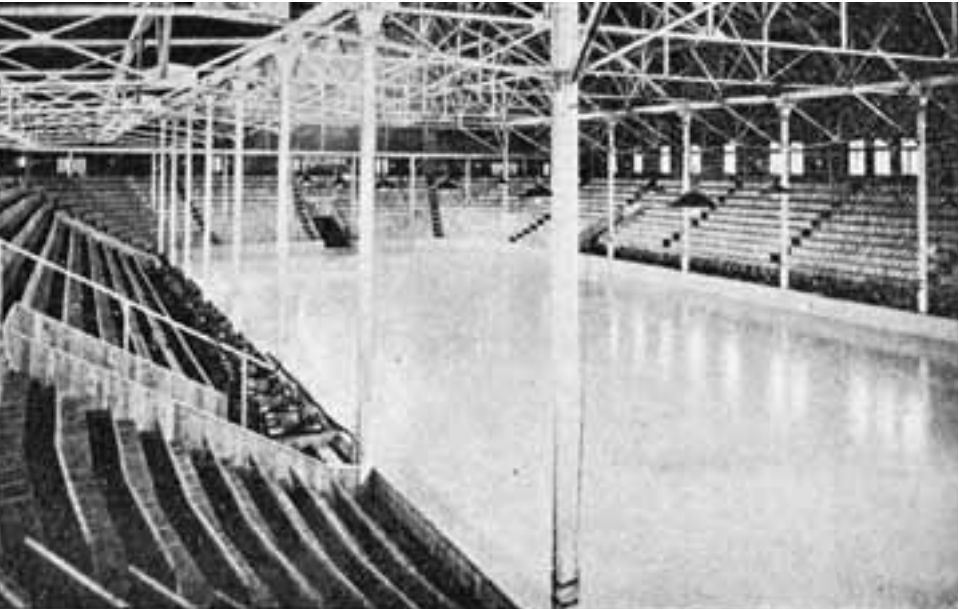
With hockey season here again, it's interesting to recall where the game was played locally before the old Montreal Forum was built. Until 1918, professional hockey was played on the site of today's condominium complex at 1 Wood Ave. The privately-owned Montreal Arena (often known then as the Westmount Arena) opened on St. Catherine St. at the northeast corner of Wood Ave. on New Year's Eve in 1898. This vast facility was the first-ever indoor rink in North America to be built specifically for hockey. It was the home of the Montreal Wanderers, and also later on of the Montreal Canadiens,

No. 1 Wood

who shared the premises. The Wanderers won the Stanley Cup in 1906, 1907, 1908 and 1910; the Canadiens won their first cup there in 1915. Westmounter Art Ross played with the Wanderers in that era. The Art Ross Trophy, presented to the NHL's top point's scorer at the end of the regular season, is named after him.

With seating for 4,300 spectators and standing room for 5,000 more, the arena initially had a natural ice surface, but in 1915 an artificial ice manufacturing plant was installed – the first in Canada. Other innovative features included rounded rink corners that facilitated play, and three-foot high boards to protect the public from errant pucks. Amenities included a smoking room and a buffet for refreshments.

The space was also rented for exhibi-



Interior of Montreal Arena, 1899.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WHA.



Exterior of Montreal Arena.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TORONTO STAR.



1 Wood Ave. in 2018.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PATRICK MARTIN.

tions, horse and car shows, motorboat displays, concerts and bazaars. To celebrate Westmount's official designation as a city, a ceremony was held in May 1908 featuring world-famous Italian tenor Enrico Caruso, who sang in front of nearly 4,000 people. Unfortunately, the arena was totally destroyed on January 2, 1918, by a spectacular fire of uncertain origins.

In 1942, the RCMP bought the large lot for its Quebec headquarters. It moved to a new building on Dorchester Blvd. between Greene and Clarke avenues in 1972. The

old site was purchased for 1 Wood, a luxury high-rise condominium complex built in 1985 and designed by Westmount architect Ray Affleck of Arcop. In the interim, the nearby Montreal Baseball Park at the corner of Atwater and St. Catherine Street, where the Montreal Royals once played, had also disappeared. Alexis Nihon Plaza now occupies the site.

More information about Westmount's heritage can be found on the Westmount Historical Association website www.wha.quebec.



Montreal Arena fire, 1918.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MCCORD MUSEUM.

Mitsou, Gambs visit Greene Ave.'s Emma



Mitsou Gélinais, Hervé Gambs and Nina Dyson of Boutique Emma.

Recently Westmount had not just one celebrity but two. Hervé Gambs, just arrived from Paris for the Canadian première of his scent collection and Quebec star Mitsou Gélinais were at Boutique Emma, Nina Dyson's couture shop celebrating 14 years on Greene Ave.

Gambs was launching his natural fragrances ranging from Parfums Prestige and Couture and Eaux de Parfums, to scented candles. But all with a difference: their source is natural. The pure and unique scents of nature are the basis of the "perfume notes," ranging from lemon

through vanilla, and roses to grass. Tapping into today's trend for personalized fragrances, the perfume designer composed "voyages" – each subtle characteristic changes with a person's skin, as well as altering during the day. For the past 20 years, he has obviously been doing this well. Hervé Gambs is sold throughout Europe and the Middle East. Guests discovering the collection of soft-but-intense scents at Emma's afternoon reception were offered the perfect chic confection: macarons recalling the famed Parisian Ladurée sweets. – VR

LOCAL CLASSIFIEDS

Cleaning/Housekeeping

Westmount/NDG area: Reliable & thorough, I am available for cleaning and/or housekeeping at your home or office. References available, please call Karen 438.939.4619.

Hair Studio

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If You Love Dogs

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www.westendclassifieds.com

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Please Help

Modern day Cinderella seeking chivalrous benefactor to save damsel in distress under the form of a single mom to a special needs child whose life circumstances put her in a precarious situation. Reach out at CinderellaAndHerSon@gmail.com.

Avis de dissolution

Avis de demande de dissolution : Avis est par les présentes donné que l'Association des Persanophones du Québec, constituée en vertu de la Loi sur les compagnies (Québec) et ayant son siège social au 133-4055 rue Sainte-Catherine O., Westmount (QC) H3Z 3J8, demandera au Registraire des entreprises du Québec la permission de se dissoudre. Signé à Montréal, Le 3 décembre 2018.

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VILLE DE | CITY OF
WESTMOUNT



Avis de réception d'une demande de projet particulier de construction, de modification ou d'occupation d'un immeuble (P.P.C.M.O.I.)

La Ville de Westmount désire informer toutes les personnes intéressées du dépôt d'une demande en vertu du Règlement 1489 « Règlement sur les projets particuliers de construction, de modification ou d'occupation d'un immeuble (P.P.C.M.O.I.) ». La demande vise l'obtention de dérogations pour permettre une hauteur maximale de l'immeuble d'environ 77 pieds et afin de permettre un usage résidentiel multifamilial.

Adresse de l'immeuble :

**500 avenue Claremont
Westmount, H3Z 1P4**

Demandeur :

9312-4816 Quebec Inc.
4120 Sainte-Catherine Ouest, 5e Étage
Westmount, H3Z 1P4

Toute personne peut consulter les documents fournis dans le cadre de la demande en utilisant le lien suivant : westmount.org/ppcmoi, ou au comptoir du Service de l'aménagement urbain à l'hôtel de ville, situé au 4333, rue Sherbrooke Ouest à Westmount pendant les heures d'ouverture, soit du lundi au vendredi de 8 h 30 à 16 h 30.

De plus, en vertu de l'article 2.7 du règlement 1489, le projet sera présenté au Comité consultatif d'urbanisme lors d'une réunion publique ayant lieu le mardi 11 décembre 2018 à l'hôtel de ville, situé au 4333, rue Sherbrooke Ouest à Westmount, à 8 h 30.

Des commentaires sur le projet peuvent être émis sous forme écrite en utilisant le lien suivant : westmount.org/ppcmoi. La date limite pour soumettre des commentaires écrits est le vendredi 18 janvier 2019. Veuillez noter que la Ville de Westmount ne répondra pas individuellement aux commentaires soumis.

Notice of receipt of an application for a Specific Construction, Alteration or Occupancy Proposal for an Immovable (S.C.A.O.P.I.)

The City of Westmount wishes to inform all interested persons of the reception of an application under By-law 1489 "By-law concerning Specific Construction, Alteration or Occupancy Proposals for an Immovable (S.C.A.O.P.I.)". The application requests variances to allow a maximum building height of approximately 77 feet and to allow a multifamily residential use.

Building Address:

**500 Claremont Avenue
Westmount, H3Z 1P4**

Applicant:

9312-4816 Quebec Inc.
4120 Sainte-Catherine Street West, 5th floor
Westmount, H3Z 1P4

Any person may consult the provided application documents on the city website under the following link: westmount.org/scaopi, or at the counter of the Urban Planning Department at City Hall, located at 4333 Sherbrooke Street West, in Westmount, during regular business hours, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Likewise, in accordance with Article 2.7 of By-law 1489, the proposal will be presented to the Planning Advisory Committee at a public meeting taking place at City Hall, located at 4333 Sherbrooke Street West in Westmount, on Tuesday December 11th, 2018 at 8:30 a.m.

Comments on the project can be made at the public meeting mentioned above, or in writing on the city website under the following link: westmount.org/scaopi. The deadline for the submission of written comments on the project is Friday January 18, 2019. Please note that the City of Westmount does not reply to individual comments.

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Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Miniso

If cuteness were a shop, it would be called Miniso. But there's nothing "mini" about this chain. By 2020, 6,000 stores ("lifestyle goods at a low price") are planned. Listed as a "Japanese Designer Brand," Miniso is headquartered in China. In 2016, the variety store did \$1.5 billion in revenue, according to Wikipedia. That's a lot of cute sales.

The newest location in Alexis Nihon Plaza was packed with students and millennials the day I popped by. The brightly-lit store carries, wait for it – everything. Well, almost.

Beauty products, brightly coloured markers, U-pillows, kitchen and household gadgets, electronic bits and pieces, sunglasses (hip, hot colours and shapes), make-up, baseball caps, Asian sweets and a wide range of cuddly toys are neatly displayed.

Work station a little boring? Rock your world with a pastel keyboard, colours to soothe during dreary winter months. My favourite? The Bottega Veneta look-alike black-woven rubber mini-tote (\$7.99!); neat chopsticks + spoon in a case for taking

your lunch to work; and the pinkest, longest-legged Pink Panthers you have ever seen.

A hot item the day I passed by were the Korean facial sheet masks. Keen fans were buying bunches.

Main floor, Alexis Nihon Plaza
Open every day

Repair911

We all seem to drop our phone sometime and somewhere. And now that our hands will be either swathed in gloves or freezing cold, that possibility grows exponentially. Luckily, there is a new store to assuage the fumlbers. Répare911 is located in the tunnel between Westmount Square and Alexis Nihon Plaza. As the name implies, they repair.

Shop director Joseph Saaba explained that they also unlock phones, correct water damage (or that spilled coffee!) and replace LCDs. The little space carries a range of accessories, including headphones.

Open every day 8:30 – 6. HINT: best to call first.

514.846.9110

Westmount Square tunnel

Kinton Ramen

How nice it is to have a choice! I have to take TV channels I never watch, so it was a really fun experience to try out the new Kinton Ramen: four delicious choices. First I chose a soup base: pork or chicken.

(The soups are home-made daily by the way). Second choice is the meat. Then, choose noodles: thick or thin. And finally, the "extra." There is also a veggie bowl that is "very popular in Westmount," explained manager Allen Choi.

The concept is authentic Japanese ramen from a bar. There are already sites in Japan and Korea. In Canada, the chain started in Toronto. Montreal has three as well as Westmount, and two more are already planned. Eight staff ensured quick service. A perfect comfort food while the flakes kept tumbling down. A slurpy-delicious lunch or dinner. Oh. And there is green matcha tea cheesecake. Yum.

4090 St. Catherine St.

Open every day.

Suetables

The newest local store is all about the personal touch. Not only did city councillor Mary Gallery encourage her friend Sue Henderson to open on Greene Ave., but the shop offers personalized hand-stamped names and messages; perfect timing for the holidays. It is called Suetables, pronounced "suitables." (Nothing to do with the TV show and its now celebrity princess – but I digress.) The boutique carries sterling silver, 14-carat gold-dipped and 10-carat gold items.

Delicate made-in-Mexico silver chains catch the eye. In addition, local res Christy Grant showed me perfect-for-winter warm wool sweaters – the Wooden Ship line,

hand knit in Bali. Still need a stocking stuffer? Bracelets made of lava rock that holds scent can be bought with an accompanying essential oil. "Many of my customers are men," said Henderson, a former Westmounter who manages her two other shops in Toronto. Most fun? The tiny anvil and stamping tools sit like a miniature dollhouse in the window, already attracting curious street strollers.

1314 Greene

Open every day

Estiatorio Kavos

Estiatorio Kavos is Westmount's latest culinary addition. The restaurant offers Greek food with a Mediterranean twist. And what's not to love about their perfectly grilled octopus? Main courses offer two of my favourites: lamb and swordfish. One can get to know Greek wines (for example Agioritikos, a white wine from Mount Athos) and beer (Volkan). Kavos' decor is in welcoming earth tones with brown leather benches and banquettes, wooden tables, and a fabulous "meet-and-greet" marble bar. Using market-fresh ingredients for his simple but delicious meals, with his expert culinary touch, executive chef Islam has ensured diners return. Kavos is only open for dinner. It is ideal for families as early dining starts at 5 pm. Later on, Sherbrooke St.'s newest neighbourhood is packed.

4922 Sherbrooke St.

514. 482.0707

Retail Watch

An assortment of news about retailers and retail spaces in Westmount. If you have retail news, please email us at david.price@westmountindependent.com before the 21st of each month. Major changes since the last coverage (November 6, p. 12) in bold.

GREENE AVE. AREA

New

Avenue G coffee bar, 1336 Greene Ave., former site of Second Cup
Daisy Gallery, Westmount Square, near St. Catherine St. **entrance**, former site of Galerie la manière noire
Suetables jewellery store, 1314 Greene Ave.
Saint Sushi, 1359 Greene.

Coming

Zar beauty bar is opening in Alexis Nihon Plaza (first floor).

Construction under way

1358-60 Greene Ave. Construction of building façade looks complete, but there was no signage on November 29.
206-208 Olivier Ave.

Re-opened

Fido store, 2nd floor of Alexis Nihon.

Not in retail use

1394 Greene Ave. (south of Sherbrooke), former site of Lululemon and, before that, the Bank of Nova Scotia
1362 Greene Ave., former site of Bistro on the Avenue.
1347 (approx.) Greene Ave.
1308 Greene Ave.
1215 Greene Ave. (south of de Maisonneuve), former site of Lou Goldberg Jeweller
1212 Greene Ave., former site of Marie Dumas, now open at 1234 Greene
4024A St. Catherine St. (east of Atwater), former site of Tutti Frutti
4026 St. Catherine St., former site of Morning Glory
4026A St. Catherine St., former site of Tia Maria prêt a porter
4028 St. Catherine St.
4146 St. Catherine St.
4267 St. Catherine St
One first-floor units in Alexis Nihon
Unit in Westmount Square near Greene Ave. entrance

VICTORIA VILLAGE

New

Simplango language school, 4573 Sherbrooke St.
Kombi outerwear store, 4890 Sherbrooke St., summer site of Dairy Queen
Evolve toy store, 4926 Sherbrooke St., former site of JoshuaDavid
Au Sommet outerwear store, 4927 Sherbrooke St. (upper)

Coming

Office of Joseph Montanaro, real estate broker, 4918 Sherbrooke St. (upper), former site of Made in Italy
Office of Christina Miller, real estate broker, 326 Victoria Ave.

Moving

Artgold's shop at 4937 Sherbrooke St. is for rent. Once it is rented, it plans to move, "probably downtown," said the store on June 27.

Not in retail use

4822 Sherbrooke St., former site of SunSource

4823 Sherbrooke St., former site of Pier 1
4825 Sherbrooke St., former site of Gascogne
4848 Sherbrooke, former site of Laurentian Bank
4909 Sherbrooke St.
4920 Sherbrooke St., former site of La Canadienne's Westmount location
4930 (basement) Sherbrooke St., former site of Sharyn Scott, now operating at 4916 Sherbrooke St.
4932 (upper) Sherbrooke St.
4932 (lower) Sherbrooke St., former site of Flore, now operating at 4818 Sherbrooke St.
4 Somerville, former site of Ceiba.
320A Victoria
344A Victoria, former site of Galerie Licorne/Oleg Dergachov, now operating by appointment only
345 Victoria (north unit)
397 Victoria, former site of Guy Lachance Pharmacien, now operating at 370 Victoria.

Enchantée an enchanting eve for MUHC Breast Clinic



Social Notes
VERONICA REDGRAVE

Le Mount Stephen Hotel, once the prestigious Mount Stephen Club, was the site of *Enchantée*, the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) Foundation's second annual fundraiser, held in collaboration with the Cedars Cancer Foundation. A national historic site, the historic property was once the home of Scottish-born titan George Stephen. It became an exclusive men's club in 1926, and fifty years later, women could also join. (No comment!) *continued on p. 29*



Anna Capobianco-Skipworth, Susan McPeak, JoAnne Kelly Rudy and Cynthia Price Verreault.

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Dr. David Fleiszer and Julie Quenneville.



Sue Khan and Shelly Kaulbach.



Judy Martin and Pam Price.

Completely renovated and restored by the Tidan Group, the magnificent building façade now fronts an über-modern boutique hotel. Here, over 200 guests arrived for the *Enchantée* cocktail-dîatoire.

Nuanced with pink lighting, the fun night was co-chaired by JoAnne Kelly Rudy, Anna Capobianco-Skipworth and Cynthia Price Verreault, whose mother Pam Price attended, classically elegant wearing an Hermès scarf and pearls.

Emcees were Westmounter Leslie Roberts (CJAD) and Brigitte Bédard (TVA/LCN). Other local res noted included

Westmount-St. Louis provincial legislator Jennifer Maccarone, MUHC breast surgeon Dr. David Fleiszer and his wife Dr. Ruth Russell; Sue Khan, Shelly Kaulbach, Donna Doherty and Ross Fraser, Karma and John Hallward, Catherine and George Lackenbauer, Margot MacFarlane and Peter Hall, and Judy Martin.

Also seen were the MUHC's Dr. Sarkis Meterissian, director Breast Clinic, and Julie Quenneville, Foundation president, and Susan McPeak, co-founder with her husband Charles Sirois of the McPeak-Sirois Group, which funds clinical re-

search in breast cancer.

Sponsors were Marie-Yvonne Paint, Novartis, Montclair-Constructeur, Burgundy Asset Management, Pfizer Canada Inc., Tidan Hospitality Group, Campbell and Cameron Volkswagen and Metro Grocery.

The proceeds of the event, together with recent pledges of support from the Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation and the CURE Foundation, totaled \$600,000.

The funds will support the MUHC Breast Clinic Wellness and Survivorship Programs.



Dr. Sarkis Meterissian.



Jennifer Maccarone.



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TRENDSETTERS

CAROLINE CODSI

By VERONICA REDGRAVE

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON

‘I love fashion, but I’m not a victim’

I was lucky to catch this Westmouter in town. As founder and president of Women in Governance, she is usually on an airplane. Invited to speak around the world – she emailed me from Bahrain – she is dedicated to all matters relating to the access of women to executive roles and board positions in the corporate world in Canada, as well as women’s equality rights everywhere in the world. Born in Beirut, and having lived on three

continents, she was recognized in 2015 as one of the “top 100 most powerful women in Canada” by Women’s Executive Network.

Meet Caroline Codsi.

STYLE

How would you describe your personal style?
I love fashion but I’m not a victim. I tend to wear a lot of bright colours. You could see me from head to toe in



Caroline Codsi
November 22 at her
office in Westmount
Square.

red, in purple, in bright yellow or in emerald green. I have a lot of classical clothes that never go out of fashion, including certain items I have had since before my children were born. My daughter is a lawyer and my son is a banker so it’s been a while but I’m fortunate enough to still wear the same size. My father always taught us that we were not rich enough to buy cheap and that quality is an investment.

I am an accessory fanatic: purses, necklaces, chandelier earrings. I am a big Winners and Marshalls fan. I avoid buying anything full price (the Lebanese in me!) but I own half a dozen Chanel bags as well as several Dior, Gucci, Fendi, Prada and YSL purses. The only purse I haven’t bought yet is a Hermès. I think that the day that I do, I will go for the very classical Kelly bag in camel or traditional Hermès orange. I have an entire closet dedicated to my designer bags and my fun jewellery. Even if I’m wearing a simple dress that didn’t cost me a fortune, the purse and earrings will give it a totally different flair.

On weekends what do you like to wear?
For the longest time, I used to wear formal wear even on weekends (again, the Lebanese in me....) but with age, I have realized that being comfortable doesn’t necessarily mean looking sloppy. I love to wear trendy clothes in comfortable spandex fabrics that still look smart. I wear tight pants with short jackets and I usually prefer funky flat boots to my usual high heels. Until a couple of years ago, I did not even own a pair of flats but now they’ve become my best friend. On weekends, I even trade my purses for nice backpacks I have in every colour. We have family reunions almost every Sunday and very often, my father will be wearing a suit and tie, and my mother a dress and pearl necklace. They are the cutest couple I know and a perfect match. They also expect us to show respect by dressing up, even if we’re only with each other.

Do you have favourite art (artists?)
I love Banksy. Not only because his drawings are beautiful but first and foremost because he is engaged in the cause of justice and peace. For the longest time nobody knew who he was, his goal was to have an impact, get people thinking and push them to action. Some people used to call him a vandal but he’s a huge artist and a political activist. I greatly respect people who use their voice to help people who don’t have one.

Do you have art in your home?
I have souvenirs from local artists that I have brought back from trips to

Morocco, India, Lebanon, Peru, Thailand, Russia, etc. They don’t have a huge monetary value but they make me travel every time I look at them and they make for a cozy and warm environment.

If you had a choice, where would you live in the world (money no object!)?
I can honestly say there is no better place in the world to raise a family than Westmount. Safe, clean, pretty, accessible, practical and with great parks and sports and recreation centres. Born and brought up for part of my childhood and teen years in Beirut, we didn’t even have sidewalks, let alone parks. I also lived in Paris for nearly a decade and I adored that city. I would only move back if money really was NO object at all! I visit a couple of times a year and the size of apartments that my friends live in would make me suffocate very fast. Even if I spend very little time at home, I like to have breathing space and comfortable living areas.

Who would you invite to a dinner party if you could have anyone in the world, and from any era?
Simone de Beauvoir, the French writer, intellectual, existentialist philosopher, political activist, feminist and social theorist, because she was a true pioneer and an amazing inspiration to all women fighting for gender equality. Though she did not consider herself a philosopher, she had a significant influence on both feminist existentialism and feminist theory. Her most famous quote in 1949 is still very accurate today! “N’oubliez jamais qu’il suffira d’une crise politique, économique ou religieuse pour que les droits des femmes soient remis en question. Ces droits ne sont jamais acquis. Vous devrez rester vigilantes votre vie durant. »

What do you think of today’s fashion?
I am always surprised at the price of torn jeans or hobo sweaters. And what people are prepared to pay for Balenciaga running shoes boggles my mind – but who am I to judge? There are also some absolutely phenomenal young designers, some that I discovered recently at a fashion show, namely a Latino designer based in Toronto, Antonio Chavez, whose creations are simply spectacular!

Do you have a favourite fashion designer?
Edward Achour is one of my favourite fashion designers. He knows how to take a very classical Chanel look and give it pizzazz. He makes small sizes that actually fit me and his fabrics are an unbelievable quality. My favourite part is the hidden little gems inside the jackets like the gold chain lining that you can only see when you remove the jacket. Parisian elegance at its best.



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WESTMOUNT ADJ. **\$2,049,000**
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MLS: 17338438
Gorgeous 4 Bdr house in ideal location! Close to best schools & downtown.



WESTMOUNT **\$1,895,000**
7 Av. Thornhill
MLS: 16729278
Stunning 3 bedrooms semi with beautiful garden & garage on quaint street.



WESTMOUNT **\$1,795,000**
561 Av. Grosvenor
MLS: 11245905
Magnificent little gem in prime location! Completely renovated with 5 Bdr.



TREMBLANT AREA **\$1,495,000**
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MLS: 22026727
Spacious 1350 SF condo w/ garage & balcony in the heart of Westmount.



WESTMOUNT ADJ. **\$535,000**
Le manoir de Belmont
MLS: 14454020
Magnificent ground floor condo w/ townhouse feel. 1034 SF, 2 BDR, garage.



GOLDEN SQUARE MILE **\$549,000**
3460 rue Simpson apt. 803
MLS: 13759530
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Through her deep knowledge of the local market and her extensive contacts, Bunny found us a wonderful home which really met all of our requirements and also had many other positive features. Throughout the entire negotiation process she was helpful and candid, making it all seamless and painless. She was always extremely professional, punctual and respectful; it was a pleasure to work with her.

— DV, MD

Bunny was reliable, responsible, knowledgeable and professional, and was always available to meet prospective purchasers and their agents, even when we were out of town. We sold our house in a relatively short time, and in fact received four different offers. She went above and beyond our level of expectations, and we would definitely recommend her services to anyone who is thinking of buying or selling a home.

— MV & RV

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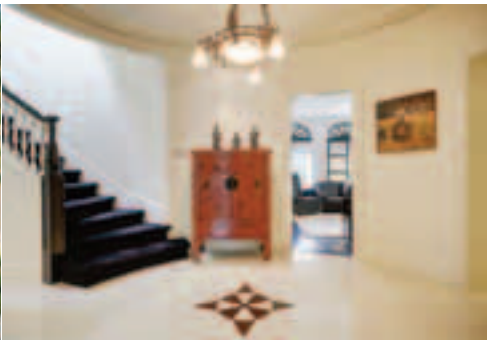
to all my clients, friends and family.

— *Bunny Berke*



WENTWORTH-NORD | RENÉ **\$2,495,000**

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