

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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We are Westmount

February 20, 2018

Indoor pool 'a council priority,' Mayor Smith tells meeting

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

How about a swim in February – inside in a new Westmount pool?

A statement by Mayor Christina Smith at the council meeting February 5 brought the issue of an indoor pool into the realm of possibility. "It's something that's very important to all of us on council," she said, adding: "It's a priority of this council."

She was replying to Maureen Kiely of The Boulevard who asked for an update on "the pool situation" based on a pool-needs survey of residents conducted last summer.

"We've just scratched the surface," Smith said of moving forward. "Give me two or three months for an update."

She rhymed off a wish list of items people had asked for on the survey including a diving end, splash pad and even a gym (see story August 8, 2017, p. 1).

She also related an experience she had had recently while swimming with her kids at an indoor pool up north

when "out jumps a resident of Westmount so excited" to have recognized the mayor using the pool, too.

While location had been one of the issues surrounding the possible construction of an indoor pool, Smith told the council meeting she already had a site "in mind." She later said she was not prepared to identify it at this time, pending further study.

Emphasizing the importance of an indoor pool, she made special reference to one of the councillors (Conrad Peart) being an architect.

A summary of the survey results prepared by the city showed 80 percent of respondents to the 1,300 returned surveys were generally in favour of a pool. A total of some 10,000 surveys had been distributed.

The city's next steps were to include examining what other indoor pools already exist in or around Westmount and possible partnership opportunities.

An indoor pool subsequently became an election issue for many candidates.



Boicel, Lord celebrate Black History Month at Vic Hall

At a special event held for Black History Month by the city of Westmount's Community Events division, former Westmounter Doudou Boicel, founder of Montreal's now defunct Rising Sun jazz club, recited his poetic work *Le Jardin de rêves*, while accompanied by a trio of jazz musicians, at Victoria Hall on the evening of February 10. It was part of a double-bill concert that also featured Haitian-born Canadian soprano Marie-Josée Lord.

Photo: Martin C. Barry.



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Aimed at increasing transparency Council starts listing building permit requests it refuses

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Along with the approval of building permit applications for exterior work, those that are refused – and the reasons – will also form part of the public record as a "standard procedure," according to Mayor Christina Smith.

She said it is important for people to

know why their permit requests have been refused.

This is a step toward greater "transparency" she told the *Independent* last week after announcing the change at the city council meeting February 5. It is effective immediately and applies only to exterior work since council approval is not required

continued on p. 3



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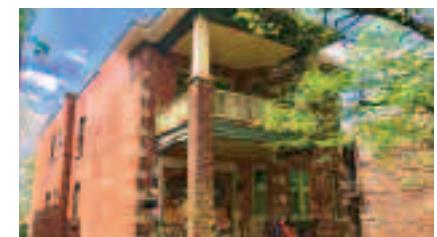
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Wurtele look back to Olympics '48



Former Westmounters and Trafalgar School for Girls graduates Rhoda and Rhona Wurtele, centre left and right, cut an Olympic anniversary cake, baked by a Trafalgar mother, to share with visiting students from the school. Seventy years ago, the Wurtele twins were the only women on Canada's Olympic alpine team in St. Moritz, Switzerland. They went on to found the Twinski Club for female skiers. From left, Leah Bernstein, Marianna Cardin, Westmounters Gabby Reim and Sarah Graham and Olivia Wood, and future Traf student Camryn Knowlton. The Wurtelles now live in Pointe Claire, where the event took place February 8.

Photo courtesy of Trafalgar.

Permits, cont'd. from p. 1

for interior renovations.

While the public listing of permit refusals is a practice that has been used by some other municipalities, Westmount has historically listed only projects approved by the council based on a favourable recommendation from the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC).

On occasion, however, the city has listed a separate resolution of refusal for a project described by Smith as particularly "sensitive."

One such project involved the design for a new house on an empty lot next to 482 Mount Pleasant (see story February 21, 2017, p. 1). The owner has since launched legal action over the rejection.

This was described at the time as "an unusual case" where the council turned

down a favourable recommendation from the PAC for the issuance of a permit.

With the launch of the new procedure February 5, the council approved the PAC's recommendation to reject a revised plan for 1235 Greene due to the thickness of masonry (see list of permits, p. 13).

This is the building formerly occupied by the Double Hook and Babar-en-Ville bookstores.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLLR. BOSTOCK RESPONDS: SURVIVAL OF RETAIL IS TOP OF MIND FOR COUNCIL

In response to "Parking key to retail survival" by Andrew Grove of Belmont Ave. (February 21, p. 6), I write to say that the decision to harmonize the parking fees in all zones was made to create fairness in all areas, not to penalize shoppers. We went from a technology that dates back decades to something innovative. Had we elected to go with a pay-by-space system like that in Montreal, the costs would have been higher as the pay stations would be the same, but we would have had to install/replace a post at every space. Our rates are now standard across the city of Westmount but also in line with the parking fees across the island of Montreal.

We (council) are very much aware that turnover is the key to retail survival, it is something that we are discussing regularly to try to help find solutions. The decision to allow Car2Go and other car sharing services (CommunAuto) free access to retail-designated parking areas is a way to help create more turnover. A reminder that this is not a drop-off spot where cars will be left until the next person borrows the car. It is for people who want to shop at stores on Greene Ave. or in the Victoria village, which will ultimately bring more people to the retail areas of Westmount.

Westmount is not the only city moving forward with this trend. Several cities across the country have initiated incentives for car sharing and, as this grows, we will revisit and adapt parking initiatives as needed. Car2Go has more than 500 mem-

bers in Westmount and thousands of members across the island of Montreal. This is a trend that will only increase with time.

ANITRA BOSTOCK, CITY COUNCILLOR
(DISTRICT 1)

THANK YOU, JOE

I wanted to give a huge shout-out and thank-you to "Joe" for shovelling – without payment – the sloppy and slushy street corners of Prince Albert and Sherbrooke, as well as Victoria and Sherbrooke last week, making it easier for the elderly and mothers with strollers to cross from one end to the other. "Joe" has been a fixture in front of the former Gascogne in Victoria village for the past 10 years. He always has a kind word to say and is an extra pair of eyes in case something isn't right.

For example, he is the person who called Public Security a few weeks ago to notify them of the falling ice and snow coming down from the roof of the Royal Bank on Victoria (February 13, p. 7).

He deserves a word of recognition from the city of Westmount for his initiative and for being a decent human being.

NATHALIE ALLARD, PRINCE ALBERT AVE.

TURN OFF LIGHTS, PLEASE

It is indeed a wasteful shame that close to seven weeks after Christmas season has passed, some of our friends and neighbours insist on still illuminating their Christmas lights. This practice is wasteful and entirely selfish. It needlessly consumes electricity, which, in the long run, costs us all.

Drive up Edgehill Rd. and see the dis-

play.... house after house still has their Christmas decorations on. Not fair! Not right!

JOE RUSSO, LEXINGTON AVE.

MERCI AND THANK YOU FOR PUBLICITY RE: FURNITURE DONATIONS

Je voudrais vous remercier sincèrement, au nom de tous les bénéficiaires, d'avoir envoyé votre reporter Martin Barry chez moi et d'avoir publié l'article sur l'aide aux nouveaux arrivants au Canada, dans le numéro du 29 janvier (p. 8).

I am very happy to report that, as a result of coverage in the *Independent*, I have received many calls from people wanting to donate all kinds of furniture.

Before we become overwhelmed by way of this letter, we are asking for anyone who might be able to help with the loading of furniture into the truck being provided by Westmount Rotary. Furniture only needs to be loaded at our end as the receivers take care of unloading at their end. Anyone willing to volunteer can contact me at agia@videotron.ca.

This is turning out to be a very positive and successful community-oriented initiative. Your publication has certainly contributed to make it happen. I thank you kindly.

VIVIANE AGIA, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

PARKING APP IS FREE AND \$1 ISN'T THAT MUCH

Indie reader Tim Carsley revisits the Westmount parking meter debate with some familiar complaints (February 13, p. 6). It's true that using the pay stations seems complicated, especially to first-time users.

However, I would hazard a guess that the great majority of people parking in Westmount have a smartphone, and the parking app is a breeze to use. You don't even have to get out of the car, let alone wait in line in freezing temperatures while trying to remember your licence plate number, fumbling for change or a credit card and following hard-to-read instructions.

Still, as easy as the app is to install and use, many people are uncomfortable with technology and the city could no doubt do a better job of communicating that information, step by step, in plain English and French.

As for the [effect on retail of] increased cost [mentioned in Andrew Grove's letter on the same page], obviously no one likes it when prices go up, but I doubt if a one-dollar hike that brings it into line with Montreal will have much of an effect on

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DAVID STERN

Editor's note: Thank you. Every letter helps – DP.

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MATTHEW COPE, SOMERVILLE AVE.

OPEN LETTER TO MP MARC GARNEAU RE THE CURRENT, ISRAEL

You are my representative in parliament. I write to draw your attention to the hostility of CBC Radio's *The Current* to the state of Israel.

"Alarmingly, on February 7, CBC Radio's *The Current* news program aired a lengthy 40+ minute segment which fundamentally demonized Israel. The program interviewed four individuals, all of whom hold extreme anti-Israel positions and who effectively singled Israel out for opprobrium and exclusive censure."

- Honest Reporting Canada,
February 9, 2018

There is no pretense that this is balanced journalism.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is of course a legitimate topic for public affairs radio. On the other hand, the biased slant of *The Current's* approach to the topic is somewhat disturbing.

I can provide you with an exchange I had with *The Current's* producers a few years ago, which is to say the example cited above is representative of a long-running and determined *Current* anti-Israel campaign, not an isolated case. The corporation ombudsman is not of much help.

I would be grateful if you would take this matter up with corporation management. Many thanks.

DAVID LEVY, DE MAISONNEUVE AVE.

ANY TAX INCREASE IS UNACCEPTABLE

It's depressing that Westmount's new council didn't follow through with its desire to freeze property taxes for what would have *continued on p. 6*

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount

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

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Let's talk opera



Baritone Max van Wyck and mezzo-soprano Katie Miller sing a duet with host and musicologist Pierre Vachon (left), pianist Carol-Anne Fraser and tenor Sebastian Haboczki (seated).

BY RALPH THOMPSON

An audience of over 100 attended "Let's Talk Opera" January 21 at 10:30 am in Vic-

toria Hall. Musicologist Pierre Vachon hosted the event with interesting stories and background to the opera *JFK*, which recounts the night before American pres-

ident John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Interviews with Greg Robinson, professor of American History at UQAM, and accompanist Carol-Anne Fraser were fol-

lowed by short recitals by members of the Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal, mezzo-soprano Katie Miller, baritone Max van Wyck and tenor Sebastian Haboczki.

Former councillor, Finance commissioner returns

Drury to continue input on pension committees

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

He may have left city council after two terms as commissioner of Finance, but the experience and information Victor Drury gleaned is being put to continued use.

Drury, who did not run in the November election, was appointed by city council February 5 to continue in his previous role as one of the city's four designated members on the committees for each of the city's two pension plans. One is for "the officers and employees of the city;" the other is a supplemental pension plan for former "police and firemen of the city."

"He's very well versed in these matters and is carrying on," Mayor Christina Smith told the council meeting.

In October, the outgoing council, of which Drury was a member, ratified a negotiated agreement on the controversial issue of allocating defined pension plan deficits between the city and its employees as required by Quebec Bill 15 (see story October 10, 2017, p. 10).

By virtue of the fact that Drury was commissioner of Finance over that period, he brings to the table "a resource very few other elected officials have," he acknowledged last week.

As a result he continues on the committees as one of the city's four appointees along with city director general Benoit Hurtubise, Human Resources director Jocelyne Dragon and city treasurer Julie Mandeville. Other committee members represent the various labour groups.

Deficit set at \$21.9M

At the time the pension deficits were renegotiated, the actuarial deficit was set at \$21.9 million, the level as at December 31, 2013 and on which the agreements

were based. "This amount is locked in and won't change," Drury explained last week.

Of the total \$21.9 million, \$8.3 million is attributable to active members, who will bear some \$3.7 million while the city assumes a share of \$4.6 million. The remaining \$13.6 million is attributable to retirees, for which the city has complete responsibility.

In total, this amounts to a city share of \$18 million, which the city has 15 years to "pay off" and for which the city has already set aside \$2 million from surplus, Drury

confirmed last week.

There are two separate components to the city's pension expenses, he pointed out. One is "paying off" this deficit, likely from accumulated surplus. The other is the amount budgeted annually in the city operating budget for its pension contributions to meet future considerations.

This amount in the 2018 budget is \$2,107,800 (excluding Hydro Westmount), according to the Finance department. It is included in an overall budget line listed as "remuneration."



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Hidden Talents: Artistic photo project Looking north



Nania Sergi of Metcalfe Ave. wrote to say, "I took this photo on January 16. It was a clear and beautiful day out and it pleased me that it appeared as if I could touch the cross from the roof of my apartment building! When asked about the finger in the lens, she wrote again, "Yes, artistic choice."

Looking south



Cary Kitner of Forden Ave. wrote, "Sunrise, January 26, from King George Park after the freezing rain, and taking our dear Mady for a walk. Nature's Blaze of Glory."

Please submit your artistic photos to indie@westmountindependent.com, including what struck you about the scene, the date you took the photo and your street name. We'll run the best ones. We hope you've been enjoying the series so far.

'Minority' report cites missing data, 'backward' timing Demerged cities vote against aggro's capital budget

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Mayor Christina Smith and the other mayors of the 15 demerged municipalities voted against the \$6.4-billion three-year capital works budget presented February 14 by the Montreal agglomeration for 2018-2020.

The main reasons, she told the *Independent*, were "excessive" increases, adoption of the capital works program after the operating one, a lack of completion rates for many projects or their rates of return on investment, and a failure to fund any of the five priority projects requested by suburbs. Four of these, including an extension to Cavendish Blvd., date back to 2008.

These are among details provided in a minority report by Smith and Beaconsfield mayor Georges Bourelle. Both represent the Association of Suburban Municipalities (ASM) on the aggro's Finance and Administration (F&A) committee.

"Yes, the suburban city mayors are committed to be Montreal partners," the report states, "but it's very difficult to build a partnership where we are seen but not

Letters, cont'd. from p. 4

been – miracles of miracles! – the third year in a row. Now, of course, freezing property taxes became a bother when big, spend-crazy Montreal slammed everyone with increases not seen for 20 years.

But isn't it funny – okay, not funny, but certainly interesting – how after crying foul, many demerged cities went into their budgets, shuffled things about (maybe cut some fluff, too), and absorbed most of the increases dumped on them by Montreal, and kudos to our council for doing some of the same.

However, being able to do that is a clear indication (at least to me) that there's too much money in all these municipal budgets already, and that's why most of the horrible increases of 9.8, or 7, or 6.7, or 5 percent that were announced were made to go "pftt" and shrink.

Well, I bet there's even more budget shrinking that can occur so that we in Westmount stop paying among the highest property taxes in North America, because, really, with the amount we already pay, any increase is unacceptable.

When I bought my house in 1994, there was always talk of how "efficiencies" should, could and would absorb inflation.

heard when it comes to preparation of aggro budgets."

The minority report was compiled after Smith and Bourelle spent many days at meetings of the F&A committee in a line-by-line review of the budget.

14% hike over 3 years

The 2018 capital works projects are to cost \$2 billion (divided into some Montreal expenses and some aggro ones). The total three-year program is projected to increase some 14 percent over 2017, according to an accompanying table.

The suburban mayors call this increase "excessive" and the long-term impact on the projected new debt "difficult to accept." (By comparison, Westmount's \$16 million capital program is being funded without the need to borrow and incur debt, as reported January 16, p. 13.)

Despite the lack of support from the demerged municipalities, the capital works budget was approved overwhelmingly at the aggro meeting because the demerged municipalities have only 13 percent of the vote.

We don't hear that anymore, *ever*. Now, all we hear, *always*, is that property tax increases are a *fait accompli*.

Anyway, thanks, Westmount, for the two-year break in gouging. Guess I'll be writing some more letters to the *Independent* – and Montreal mayor Plante – in the future.

Sincerely, and now a bit poorer (yet again).

THOMAS LAPIERRE,
CHESTERFIELD AVE.

Onion rings, explained

In the Overheard column of February 13 (p. 7), a Westmounter was heard to say that there were "not enough" onions in some offered onion rings, which seemed like a funny comment. The *Independent* caught up with him again on February 15 and he explained that better onion rings can be had by making the batter more viscous, which makes the coating less thick.

So was he really saying "too much batter" and not too little onion?

Both, it turns out. He would have preferred less batter and more onions per ring. "You can get a 50-lb bag of onions for very little," he concluded.

Let there be (less) light



Barrie Wilson of Lansdowne Ave. returned to the council chamber February 5 to report his year-long efforts to obtain an effective shield from Hydro Westmount on the street light shining into his bedroom had still not been effectively addressed (see original story January 29, p. 6). But then, last week, came his good news: "They installed a shield on February 13. It's a good big one. So the job is done!"

Photo courtesy of B. Wilson

Snow loaded up last week after storm #7, and counting

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city last week completed its seventh snow-loading operation of the winter, confirmed by Public Works director Robert Talarico as "very unusual" especially by this time of the year.

After two storms in December that required loading followed by five more in January and early February, the city had yet to receive tallies of all the costs incurred but "we have exceeded the budget for sure," he said.

Budget \$1.9M

The budget for the entire year of 2018 is \$1,939,800, according to the Finance department. In 2017, it was \$1,771,700. These amounts, however, have to be split between the winter months at both the start and end of the respective years. Another way of looking at the costs can be by snow-loading operation.

The city has previously used an estimate of \$500,000 per loading operation, city director general Benoit Hurtubise said last month (see story January 23, p. 1).

This calculation, he explained last

week, includes manpower costs (including overtime). In the case of this winter, he said, the city's blue collar workers have been putting in close to 70 hours a week instead of their usual 36-hour schedule. "They need a rest."

Dump full

The Montreal dump sites around LaSalle used by the city had become so dangerously high, "like mountains," that Westmount was now having to use the recently opened Hippodrome one, Talarico said. This is accessed off Decarie and Jean Talon.

"While it's actually closer than other dumps, traffic is still slow during the morning and afternoon rush hours and there's quite a line-up," he explained.

The city pays truckers by the hour and is billed by Montreal for dumping by the truckload.

With a long-range weather forecast indicating a string of good weather after February 14, however, "hopefully we're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel," Talarico said.

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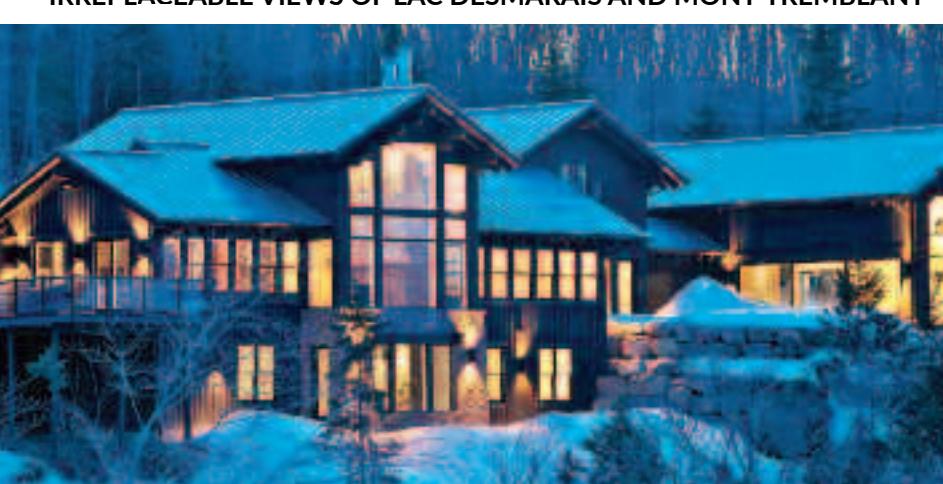
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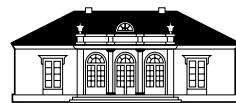
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January Sales: Volume even weaker

Real Estate

ANDY DODGE, CRA (RET.)

The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in January 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 at right offers a picture of these trends over time.

The low volume we reported in December was even lower in January, largely because of the lack of inventory now on the Westmount real estate market, though some agents suggest that we might have reached a saturation level, thus that prices are not going any higher in the coming sales season and may even come down a bit.

Only two single-family sales were posted as having been transacted in January, and one more sale in late December brings the total for that month to five. The average for the two-month period is \$1,877,286, and the total sale price is about 15 percent over valuation, down from the 20- to 22-percent average mark-ups recorded in each of the previous three months. None sold in either month for less than valuation, but mark-

ups ranged from 0.65 percent to 58.62 percent. Three of the seven sales involved prices over \$2 million, with only one – in December – under the \$1-million mark.

In fact, more condos sold in January than single-family dwellings, with three apartments going for prices between \$400,000 and \$840,000, and an average mark-up just under 11 percent. The final tally for last year was 56 Westmount condominium sales, which is the most since we started keeping records in 1999. Four more co-op apartments – including one flat in a triplex – also sold in January, for prices between \$392,000 and \$550,000, two of these actually selling above their asking prices.

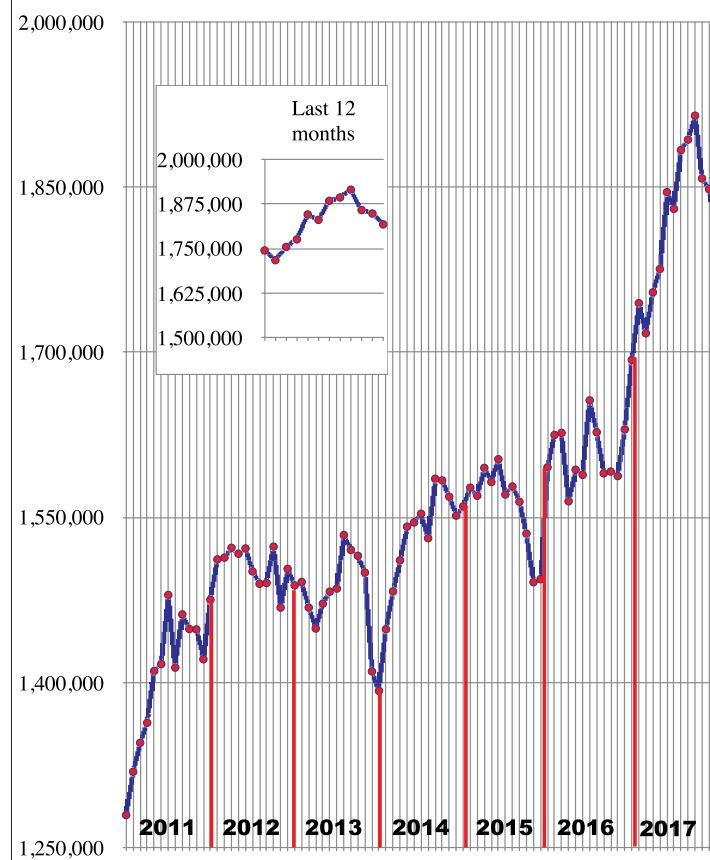
Adjacent-Westmount had more sales than Westmount proper, as well, with two sales in the Circle Rd. area, two on Northcliffe Ave. in eastern NDG, and one each in the Trafalgar-Daulac (Tradau) area and Square Mile downtown.

Four of the six sales went for more than \$1 million, but none above \$2 million.

Last year, those areas (including Shaughnessy village) reported 83 sales, down from 93 in 2016; similarly, Westmount proper logged 182 sales in 2017, compared to 198 in 2016; those two years were the highest sales volumes in the previous decade.

New listings are beginning to pick up for the coming season, but only 60 houses are on the market in Westmount as of mid-January, up 15 in the space of a month; there are only three asking less than \$1 million, compared to 17 asking more than \$4 million.

Average adjusted price for 'typical' Westmount house, by month, Jan 2011 to Jan 2018, based on accepted offer dates



Adventures in parking



One resident asked, "What does a yellow no-parking sign mean?" (They are more often orange.) Regardless, these cars seen on Sherbrooke at Grosvenor on February 13 at 9:30 am were not heeding it.



This car (or car-like snowbank) was spotted in a driveway off Côte St. Antoine February 15.

Photos: Ralph Thompson.

Roper retires as founding president of Westmount Soccer



At the annual general meeting of the Westmount Soccer Club on February 15, Mark Roper, right, stepped down as its founding president and was presented with an engraved tankard by Alex Leslie, its incoming one. Roper had the idea of starting a competitive soccer club in 2010. In 2012, after two seasons playing exhibition games, the club was incorporated and admitted to the Lac St. Louis league. Roper commented at the meeting, "Everyone told me at the time that the idea was crazy. The myth was that Westmount kids all went off to the cottage or camp for the summer and had no interest in competing in a soccer league after St. Jean Baptiste. This has proven not to be the case." The club now has 11 teams and 230 players.

Photo courtesy of Doug Hamilton.



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Vendôme/MUHC tunnel work: dig, cut, dig



Workers were cutting through the concrete median at York St. and St. Catherine February 15 at 8:30 am. The work on Westmount's western border was to aid access to the entrance to the work site, just west of the border, for McGill University Health Centre's new pedestrian tunnel from de Maisonneuve to its super-hospital.



On February 16, the work seemed complete and the concrete barriers seemed loose from each other and the road surface.

Photos: Independent.

Sound barrier decision could come in March

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's court case against Transport Quebec and the KPH-Turcot construction consortium wrapped up February 14 on the third day in Quebec Superior Court, according to Martin St-Jean, city clerk and director of Legal Services. "We should expect a decision at some point in March," he said.

The lead lawyer for Westmount,

Raphaël Lescop, was accompanied by Edward Bechard-Torres, both of the law firm IMK (formerly Irving Mitchell Kalichman), St-Jean said.

The city launched its legal action last May seeking construction of a sound barrier at the government's expense along a westbound portion of the new Highway 136.

It argued the government failed to lower the new span as much as previously indicated resulting in sound projections at or exceeding environmental levels. These would contravene a government decree in 2010 to protect Westmount residents from sound pollution (see story February 13, p. 1).

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Too cute, this kitty!



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER



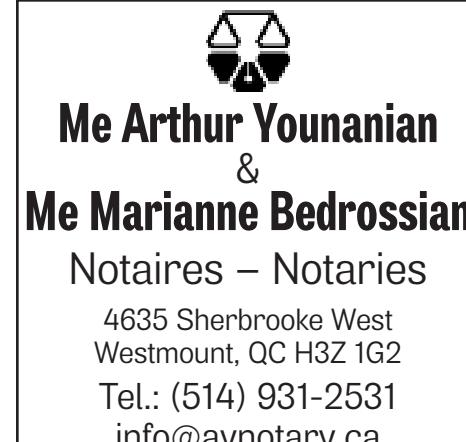
I had planned to present another photograph of Kitty, a beautiful portrait of his sweet face, then I saw this informal one, with the funny pose, and I laughed at him and with him for being so cute and chubby.

Yes, Kitty is a delightful fellow that any family would be lucky to have join them. A true character, he has a great disposition, always social and affectionate. He loves attention and greets everyone with interest. Kitty has recently been taken in by Gerdy's

Rescues and Adoptions as his owners had to move to a nursing home. He is an orange and white tabby domestic short hair, with exquisite green eyes and a precious pink nose to go with his pink toes. He is four years old, a very healthy big-boned fellow. He is neutered and up to date with his inoculations.

If you would like more information on Kitty, please contact Gerdy at Gerdy's Rescue and Adoptions on her pager at 514.203.9180 or email them at info@gerdysrescue.org. You can also find out more about this grass-roots volunteer animal rescue group at their website www.gerdysrescue.org (where Kitty has his page and you can see the other portrait pic of him!).

Your neighbour,
Lysanne



New council approves 18 permit requests, refuses one

The following permits for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved at the city council meeting January 15.

3193 The Boulevard: to replace two windows, provided the divisions are SDL type; **76 Arlington:** to install a storage space underneath the rear deck provided it is located fully beneath and that the footprint of the privacy screen to hide the underneath of the deck does not extend beyond the deck posts;

4872 St. Catherine: at a Category I house, to replace doors and windows on condition the windows are wood on both the exterior and interior and are guillotine type; and that the front door is wood. It is noted that only the basement windows may be of aluminum-clad wood;

422 Mount Stephen: to replace windows and a rear door;

603 Lansdowne: to replace two windows;

77 Holton: to build a rear deck, modify some windows and doors and install a privacy screen.

* * *

The following permits for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved or refused at the city council meeting February 5 (see separate story p.1).

Approved

466 Mount Stephen: to replace two

kitchen windows and a patio door; **135 Clandeboye:** at a Category I house, to replace two windows on condition they are wood on the interior and exterior;

4895 de Maisonneuve: to modify the second floor bay window on the Prince-Albert façade, on condition the metal panels above and below the small adjacent window are preserved;

634 Murray Hill: to replace five windows and a rear door;

4951 de Maisonneuve: to replace windows; **72 Summit Circle:** at a Category I house, to replace the doors and windows;

53 Belvedere Rd.: to replace the front door; **67 Clandeboye:** at a Category I house, to replace a basement window;

50 de Lavigne: to replace windows provided the SDLs include spacer bars within the thermal glass.

4874 Westmount: to replace windows and doors;

334 Olivier: to modify the front porch, to close the side entrance and modify the back veranda;

4258 Dorchester: at a Category I house, to replace windows.

Refused

1235 Greene: at a Category 1 building, to revise the project approved by city council November 21, 2016 in order to make changes to the front façade veneer.

The Planning Advisory Committee rec-

ommended that the council give the revision unfavourable consideration. The proposed atypically half-inch thick masonry unit, in the context of this Category I building of important heritage value, does not provide appropriate authenticity and offers unproven longevity, which are characteristics incompatible with the Westmount approach to conservation of buildings. As stated in the PIIA Guideline #5 (5.4.1), if brick or stone is proposed, it must be "of standard or traditional dimensions."

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Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE



Allyson Kassie Goldberg and Arabella Decker.



Joseph Montanaro and his mum Anne.



Yves Jean Lacasse and Jessie Mineau.

One had to pity the Bob Perras valet team at Le Windsor for The Just for Kids (JFK) Foundation's 12th annual Dancing with the Stars. Commuters honked impatiently as guests waited for the parkers, whose sprinting was positively Olympian as they effortlessly whisked Mercs and Beamers away.

Arriving guests quickly stepped out of slush-soiled boots and into Cinderella slippers for the glamorous night. The theme, *Viva Las Vegas*, brought out the glitz: everyone sparkled, including gala co-chairs – both in jumpsuits – **Arabella Decker** very-Vegas in gold lamé and **Allyson Kassie Goldberg** in black.

Partygoers were greeted by an Elvis impersonator and sexy showgirls in sequins and feathers. The evening paired Montrealers with professionals. And boy, what dancing!

Emcees were **Lee Haberkorn** (who started on stage wearing a runway-ready camouflage blazer but changed to a pale blue jacket) and Goldberg (first in a trailing tartan skirt, then a shorter cocktail dress).

This year's event boasted 20 dancers including Westmounters **Joseph Montanaro** (with **Zachary Dopson**), **Elana Backler Minzberg** (dancing with **Mathieu Casavant**) and **Yves Jean Lacasse** (**Stephanie Tam**) as well as **Jeff Kovac** (**Jessie Mineau**), **Chris Papp** (**Maya Kolesnikova**), **Rabbi Reuben Poupko** (**Mindy Shear**), **Mark Capombassis** (**N'Gone Gueye**), and doctors **Polymnia Galatsatos** (**Pavel Lebedev**) and **Lianne Kopel** (**Zev Kopel** and **Alex Sharov**).

A teen performance with **Ryan Mendel**



Philip Hazan, Linda Smith,
Jean-Marc Généreux.



Chris Kalogeropoulos and
Nancy Rahal.



Hal Hannaford and
Susan Doherty.



Charles Robinson and
Martha Franco.

The large ballroom offered food for one and all. Hungry guests slurped the perfectly *al dente* pasta while others sampled the sushi. Along with the open bar a fun station suggested colourful cocktails served in Vegas-neon bright glasses.

A tall Jeff Koons-style balloon palm tree added to the cool factor. Noted amidst the chic crowd were Westmounters **Nancy Rahal** and **Chris Kalogeropoulos**, **Joey Butz**, **Lenore Harris**, **Susan Doherty** and **Hal Hannaford** (whose bright red shoes matched his jacket), **Etty** and **Ralph Bienstock**, **Philip Hazan**, **Martha Franco**, **Charles Robinson**, **Linda Smith**, **Rosalie Junkier** and **Lewis Dobrin**, **Lillian Simpson**, **Andrew Hops**, **Josée Kaine** and **Cynthia Télio**.

Other paragons of style included JFK Foundation pres **Rochelle Lerner Silver-**

man and v-p **Mara Greenstone Agulnik**. Money raised supports the purchase of life-saving medical equipment for neonatal units at the Montreal Children's Hospital.

The event raised \$239,000. Dance winners were Dr. **Lianne Kopel** and her dad **Zev Kopel**. Westmounter **Joseph Montanaro** won an award for raising the most funds.

Comin' Up

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Women's Canadian Club of Montreal presents Professor Alain Tapp of the University of Montreal on "The Revolution of Artificial Intelligence." Guests \$10. Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke St W. 12:30 pm. (11:15 am lunch).

The Atwater Library Alzheimer Café features occupational therapist Susan Sofer on driving and Alzheimer's disease. Free, donations requested. Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater Ave. 1 to 3 pm.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Atwater Library Lunchtime Series: historian Rod MacLeod discusses making a trilingual graphic novel on Montreal's 1913 Aberdeen School strike protesting anti-Semitism. Free, donations requested. At-

water Library, 1200 Atwater Ave. 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Demolition meeting, 2307 Dorchester (MCH), Westmount city hall, 5:05 pm.

THURSDAY, MARCH 1

Atwater Library Lunchtime Series: Academy Award-winning filmmaker Torill Kove presents her short, *Threads*. Free, donations requested. Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater Ave. 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13

Westmount Horticultural Society, Westmount Public Library, 7 pm. Guests \$5.

MONDAY, MARCH 19

City council meeting, Westmount city hall, 7:30 pm.

To BE LISTED IN Comin' Up

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FORMAT:

Day, Date, Event. Price. Place, address. Time of day.

Be sure to write by Friday at 10 am for inclusion the next week.

A murder of crows holds possible funeral



Residents of Prince Albert and York were awakened sometime in the last two weeks by a cacophony of crows at about 5 am. One resident's daughter told him it was likely a crow funeral. He thought nothing more about it until he noticed a dead crow in a tree on the southwest corner of the two streets, pictured here on February 16. One theory is that the group of crows, called a "murder," were warning each other that this location is dangerous.

Photo: Independent

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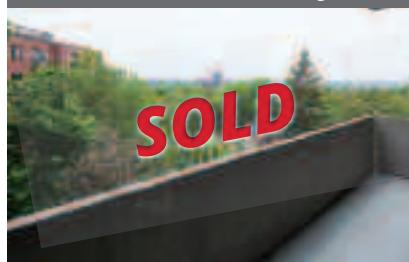
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