

## Won't refinance

# City to repay \$5.1 million on debenture due date

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Maintaining a policy of paying off debt as it comes due, city council April 1 approved the cash payment of \$5.1 million from its accumulated surplus rather than refinance a five-year term due in June on a 20-year bond of close to \$10 million.

Another \$1 million related to interest charges is expected to be paid this year to bring the total payoff in 2019 to \$6.1 million, in accordance with the operating bud-

get, Councillor Kathleen Kez, finance commissioner, explained.

This amount plus the use of another \$3.1 million for pay-as-you-go and \$500,000 for "special projects" would reduce the accumulated surplus this year by close to \$10 million.

The exact amount of the accumulated surplus going into 2019 from which the \$10 million will come, is to be confirmed in the pending 2018 audited statement whose results are expected soon, Kez told the *Independent*. The year's audit has been under way.

The required amount for cash payment of the bond is available, states the resolution moved by Kez. "Additional revenues could be generated by the end of the fiscal year," it adds.

### Letters to the editor, p. 6

Commercial rents • Park maintenance • Bill 21 • Spring clean-up • Paris' Notre Dame

## Vendôme/MUHC tunnel hits milestone



By April 20 at 2:30 pm, a large concrete section of the tunnel from the Vendôme Metro station to the MUHC's Glen hospital had been slid into place under the CP train tracks and the railway base was being reinstated. The site is just west of the Westmount-NDG border. The hospital is to the south, at the top of the picture. See p. 8 for story.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

## Interested party missed it; uninterested one went

# Two residents misled by brevity of council meeting agenda

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Architect Ken London of Prince Albert asked city council April 1 to add more detail to the advance agendas of upcoming meetings.

Two separate items at that meeting, he pointed out, were worded identically as "Urban Planning – By-law 1489 – adoption of a first draft resolution." This led him to

believe they referred to a recently announced strategic plan for the Urban Planning department, he said.

It had brought him out to the meeting only to discover they dealt with something totally different, for which he would not have otherwise attended.

One related to the 500 Claremont project, the other to 4160 Sherbrooke, but he was not *continued on p. 8*

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– Robert Walsh, founder of Forensic Technology and longtime client



Bruce Kent (left) congratulated by Dave McKay, President and CEO of RBC

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**No basement/no rental revenue**

# Ascension of Our Lord sets \$1-million fundraising target

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

If what they say holds true that with age comes challenges, Ascension of Our Lord Parish is entitled to some TLC, after more than 90 years of service to the English-speaking Catholic residents of Westmount.

The neo-Gothic church has been a landmark at the corner of Sherbrooke St. and Clarke Ave. since 1928 when the first mass was celebrated.

And yet, in spite of consistent efforts by many generations of parishioners to keep up and care for the building, the parish has launched a \$1-million capital campaign to raise funds for necessary repairs, preservation and polish.

While parishioners at Ascension of Our Lord talked for years about undertaking improvements, the church's pastor, Father Lawrence MacEachen, took the initiative and urged them to move forward with the program. According to Don Taddeo, one of the church wardens, the most pressing issue is the building's tower.

## Water and rust

An architectural firm specialized in religious heritage buildings that was hired to conduct an assessment found the tower's metal structure had rusted badly from water infiltration. The firm's report concluded that, if not dealt with, deterioration will accelerate and cause the tower to degenerate to the point of becoming a safety problem.

The church's exterior façade and masonry must also be repointed, stonework needs to be replaced, the stained glass windows require attention, pews should be refurbished, and linoleum flooring beneath the pews needs replacing.

In addition to these issues involving the building's structure, the Casavant Frères Opus 1344 organ, dating from 1928, is also

said to need urgent attention.

The instrument's console as well as numerous contacts and components are estimated to be beyond repair, and the blower and bellows are also at the end of their lifespans. The organ is considered to be central to a musical tradition at Ascension of Our Lord that goes back to the church's founding.

"The Schulich School of Music at McGill University has expressed interest in having its students access our organ," Taddeo said, noting that the school has an organ program considered one of the best in North America.

He said organizers of the Canadian International Organ Competition, which will be taking place in Montreal in 2020, have also expressed interest in using Ascension of Our Lord's organ for practice, rehearsals and perhaps even recitals.

"So we basically are going to share this instrument or make it accessible to people in the greater Montreal community, to music lovers and to people who delight in organ music," Taddeo said.

## \$385,000 grant

For the restoration of the tower, estimated to cost \$750,000, the wardens succeeded in obtaining a \$385,000 grant from the Quebec Religious Heritage Council, on the condition the work is carried out within two years. In the meantime, \$365,000 more is needed from private donations to get on with that work.

The other church refurbishments have been estimated at \$325,000, while repair and restoration of the Casavant organ is estimated at \$310,000.

While some churches in Westmount with maintenance and restoration issues of their own are trying to increase their funding by renting out space to community groups more often, Ascension of Our Lord is unable to follow this course because of the church's physical limitations.

"We don't have a basement in this church," said Fr. MacEachen, noting that a meeting room on the ground floor of the Ascension presbytery building is the only public space the parish has, apart from the church itself.

"When the church was built, it was decided for various reasons not to make a basement," he said. "So we're kind of confined. We can't rent out because we don't have the space." As a result, he acknowledged, the church has no additional sources of income.



Seen here on April 16, Ascension of Our Lord pastor Rev. Lawrence MacEachen (left) and church warden Don Taddeo are helping to lead a fundraising campaign that seeks \$1 million for restoration purposes.

PHOTO: MARTIN C. BARRY.

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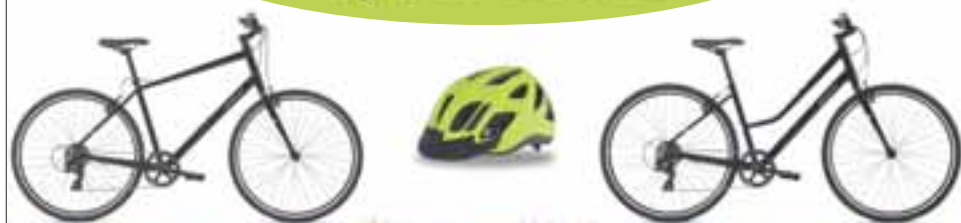
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**Letters to the Editor**, p. 6**Social Calendar**,  
part 2b, p. 20**9 Lives**, p. 15**Classifieds**, p. 20**Social Notes (Mayor  
Smith/Sacred Heart)** p. 14**Social Notes  
(Bethune at MUHC)**, p. 23**Comin' Up**, p. 22

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## Wild West-(mount)



This southbound driver of this car on Clarke at de Maisonneuve did a U-turn mid-intersection April 3 to find a stopping spot on the northbound/east side (inset) – in front of a fire hydrant. The driver remained in the car. Did this constitute “parking” or not?.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT

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Left-hand photo: looking east toward Lewis April 25: some of the strip of St. Catherine (south side), now rezoned. Right-hand photo: looking east from Blenheim Place April 25: some of the strip of St. Catherine (south side), now rezoned.

## St. Catherine from Abbott to Blenheim

# By-law adopted to allow office use in residential strip

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council at its mid-month meeting April 15 adopted the by-law to allow office-type occupancies on the strip of St. Cather-

ine from Abbott to just west of Blenheim Place (zone R9-32-01). No valid petitions had been received to hold a referendum register.

“Considering it was not a contentious item” and had not generated any opposition, the item had been put on the agenda for the mid-month meeting, Mayor Christina Smith said. This meeting is typically held to approve the latest batch of building permits.

Under the new By-law 1535, there are only a handful of properties eligible to avail themselves of the new office use since none of the mainly other residential properties are allowed to convert to offices under the by-law. It is only those that hold vested rights for medical-office or clinical use (see story March 5, p. 18).

The by-law had been spearheaded by Councillor Cynthia Lulham, Urban Planning commissioner for zoning, economic

development and parks, who also represents the district. It was moved without comment by Councillor Conrad Peart, urban planning commissioner for permits and architecture.



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**PROPERTY TAXES DRIVE  
(HIGH AND LOW) RENTS**

Having owned several commercial properties in Victoria village over 40 years, I can say that the problem with vacancies is not the high rent presumably gouged by greedy landlords – nobody wins with vacancies – but the excessively high commercial tax rates assessed by the aggro. This issue has never been revisited since they removed the business tax and started taxing the owners of commercial buildings. I had to incrementally inch my rents up so as not to put my commercial tenants out of business.

(Residential is another story. They benefit from ridiculously low assessments. You will not see too many vacancies there.)

This is not a healthy way of doing business because inevitably you will have a glaring group of commercial vacancies as we now see in the village.

I suggest one of our eminent councillors look into this imbalance.

LETIZIA RAY, VICTORIA AVE.

**TAKE CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE**

[Like Denis Biro in his letter of April 23, p. 6], I too have witnessed an obvious and disappointing decline in the maintenance of our parks over the last 20 years of walking my dogs. I have wondered at the rationale of creating new projects, such as Prince Albert square, while simultaneously neglecting public spaces that already exist. It would seem illogical to add more work to a list of projects that is already left unattended.

\$200,000 for a feasibility study for what? Westmount Park was originally a good design and I see little need for sufficient change to warrant a study *per se*. How about finding some knowledgeable and reliable gardeners and horticulturists to repair and then take care of the gardens we have? Spend that \$200,000 on actual work on the park. And while I'm at it, please plant some colourful annuals in the flower beds and keep the kale and cabbages for the vegetable gardens.

LYNDA TAYLOR, STRATHCONA AVE.

**BILL 21 WOULD MAKE PUBLIC  
SPACE NEUTRAL, LIKE THE  
RÉVOLUTION TRANQUILLE**

As a Westmount resident for the last four years, I am surprised that only news from Bill 21 critics was presented in the *Independent*.\*

I am originally from France where there has been a separation of the churches and the state since 1905. This law has been attacked recently by a fraction of the Muslim minority that conflates religion and political views, even though a large portion of the French Muslim population supports secular laws. The hijab and niqab are spreading in the lost territories of the French republic, exactly where franco-phobia and anti-Semitism are growing. It is the reason why my family left France and other French Jewish families are moving to Montreal.

Bill 21 demands that civil servants be politically neutral. Speaking about "racism" or "ethnic cleansing" is outrageous. In a public school, the teachers should not wear

ostentatious signs of their religion and political views. It's the same for judges, immigration and police officers.

What a strange anti-Bill 21 coalition exists, mixing mainstream liberals with leftists and Islamists! [In my opinion, at least one organizer] who was on the streets of Montreal a few weeks ago supports misogyny, homophobia and anti-Semitism, and threatens Muslims not following the Salafist version of Islam, in particular women who oppose wearing the hijab. Actually, such garments are not from the Maghreb (from where most of the Muslim Québécois come). They have been imported from Gulf monarchies and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.

Bill 21 would favour radicalization? What a strange form of infantilization! Indeed, how would we interpret that the Catholic Québécois were not radicalized after the *Révolution Tranquille*, when they were kicked out of the public sphere? Why do we have not the same expectations from the Muslims? Is it an unconscious post-colonial reflex? The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

DENIS COHEN-TANNOUJJI,  
GROSVENOR AVE.

\**Editor's reply:* Bill 21 is hot provincial-level news, as were its antecedents proposed by the Liberals and PQ when they were in power, but none of these proposals has been a news focus of the *Independent*. For this reason, we do not pretend to present a comprehensive coverage of the discussion, including a usual "both sides of an issue" balance. It is not that we think that the debate is unimportant. It is just that we focus on Westmount, especially its municipal government. This proposed law is a provincial one, and the provincial- and metropolitan-level media have covered it a lot, as they should. We don't want to duplicate that coverage, or the attendant columns and letters. When there is a Westmount angle to this debate (e.g. when the mayor said she would not implement Bill 21 and when there have been protests here), we will likely cover those local aspects. That being said, to the best of my knowledge, there have been no demonstrations by Bill 21 advocates in Westmount, nor comments by a local politician to that effect. If you organize a march or know of such a politician, tell us! – DP.

**THE SPRING OF  
OUR DISCONTENT**

Ah, spring has finally come to Westmount, my least favourite season. Westmount is the ultimate place for snow fences in Montreal, and when the snow fences come down, the ultimate place for

plastic zip ties littering the parks and sidewalks.

Every spring, it is the same thing. Hundreds of plastic zip ties are cut off the snow fences and left lying all over the place. Not very eco-friendly and not very pleasing to the eyes. And I am only referring to Westmount Park. I am sure it is the same in the other parks of our city. Public Works needs to up its game and help keep our parks and sidewalks clean.

BELINDA BOWES, ACADEMY RD.

**NOTRE DAME IS OUR PARENT**

My reaction to seeing Notre Dame Cathedral in flames surprised me. I was so moved. I am a British, now Canadian, Protestant minister. Why should I be so upset?

We live in times when church-going is marginal and yet my reaction was mirrored by millions of people who felt the tragedy of seeing this sacred place burn.

Days after, and I share the discomfort that so much money has come forward so quickly, in contrast to funds to combat unprecedented species extinction and climate change, or for people in abject poverty, disease and homelessness, and so much more. It appears to demonstrate that we put property before people.

Yet this is far too simplistic. Places can change people. My deep sadness at seeing the spire of Notre Dame fall is because of the human, cultural and spiritual role of that place; because it was a representative building, like parents to a child, that we presumed would always be there for us as refuge and reassurance.

The contribution of sacred places to our humanity cannot be overestimated. It is up to each of us to question whether we are true to this awareness of holiness and goodness: such places can ground us and give us an anchor-point to reach out from, to have courage and hope, to live for a better world.

Yes, make use of sacred space to re-source generous living.

REV. NEIL WHITEHOUSE,  
WESTMOUNT PARK UNITED CHURCH

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**Correction: Helaine Kliger**

In "Poetry month in Westmount" (April 23, p. 16), we misspelled Helaine Kliger's last name. We apologize for the error.

**WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT**

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# Existing retailers expand, new ones open



## Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

### U Chuu

Sherbrooke St. boasts a new fashion source. U Chuu just opened. A sister store to the Greene Ave. U Beautiful boutique, both owned by Suzanne Foucault, U Chuu offers an elegant European-style array of spring-summer choices.

On the fine day that I visited, the shop was full of sunshine, the rays bouncing off the marble floor, balanced by touches of natural wood. Annick Fracheboud showed me the stylish lines, their neutral shades balanced by the punch of spring-summer brights, such as orange handbags.

My favourite? The linen collection. And espadrilles. Classic, yes. But these carried a sequined message: “LOVE” spoke out with sole.

U Chuu, 4883 Sherbrooke St.  
Monday to Wednesday 10 am to 6 pm  
Thursday and Friday 10 am to 7 pm  
Saturday 10 am to 5 pm  
Sunday 11 am to 5 pm

### Vermeil antiques

Just on the edge of Westmount, Vermeil has opened its doors. And what a wondrous Aladdin's cave awaits! Although the boutique carries antiques, it is a far cry from a dusty shop. The splendid collection could be found in an upscale boutique in London or Milano. And, indeed, owner Diane Colucci is of Italian origin, which explains the many gorgeous items from that country. She travels there to pick up one-of-a-kind pieces from private collectors and “multiple sources I have developed over the years.”

In a world of laminated furniture with little soul, her refined eye has gathered the unique: old lithographs, Baccarat and Christofle glass and silverware, handsome Baroque gilt mirrors, English garden Wedgewood pieces made of black basalt, and fabulous large Georgian silver buckets ready to cool champagne: 10-20 bottles at a time! Colucci's mission “is to bridge 18th century decorative items to today's time and taste.” To that end, she also carries contemporary Quebec artists such as Claude-Philippe Benoît. His large photographs sit coolly beside a zinc table from Belgium.

Vermeil's beautiful curated assortment

adds an elegance – not to mention the exceptional – to every type of environment. Her *objets d'art* bring a piece of history to a bored room.

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### SNS shipping

As sadly some stores close in Westmount – others expand. SNS (SaveNShip) has done just that. The firm moved from a small office into a large sun-filled space. They must be doing something right. That “something” is handling all shipping needs, offering mail boxes, pick-up, packing supplies and service, international and maritime transport, made-to-measure packaging and telephone follow-up. Their card carries the logos of FedEx, DHL, Puro-lator, Canada Post, UPS and United States Postal Service. A barbershop is booked to move into one side of the large area, but for now only gold gilt mirrors attest to the future.

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*continued on p. 20*

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WESTMOUNT SQUARE

'On track' for mid-2020 completion

# Major portion of Vendôme tunnel to MUHC now in place



On April 20, the railway track sections, temporarily removed, were ready to be reinstalled, inspected and operational again before the start of the next work week begins. The hospital is to the south, at the top of the picture.

BY RALPH THOMPSON

A milestone was reached on the Vendôme Project Easter weekend when a large concrete tunnel section of the MUHC accessway under the Canadian Pacific Railway's train tracks was slipped into place.

The reinforced concrete tunnel section was constructed on the work site next to the tracks. A "first in Canada" technique called ripage par Autofonçage, de Freys-

sinet was used to slide the section into place along metal rails.

The operation started on the evening of April 18, just west of Westmount. The railway was closed, the tracks were removed and the ground dug away where the tunnel section would be placed. Then the technique was used to slowly pull the tunnel section into its final resting place. The whole operation was captured using time lapse photography, which will be available

online shortly.

This was a complex operation according to Maha Clour, the project manager. The purpose was to complete the task quickly to minimize the disruptions to the railway operations. The railway was scheduled to be running again as soon as April 22 or 23. The remaining part of the tunnel under the third section of the rail lines will not require any interruptions in rail service. The new railway station, Metro and

bus terminal complex will not be completed until mid-summer or latest fall 2020, but an important element of the project is to allow easy and direct access to the MUHC for everyone.

The new complex will include five elevators and the number of people passing through the facilities is forecast to rise from 9 million today to over 18 million a year by 2021.

## Agenda, cont'd. from p. 1

aware of this until arriving at city hall and reading the full agenda. Both items were being dealt with under the city's SCAOPI By-law 1489 regarding development projects that do not conform to current zoning.

This was an item he was waiting to come up at a meeting related to the strategic plan.

Interestingly, the same wording had kept an opponent of the 500 Claremont project away from the meeting. "I didn't see 500 Claremont listed on the agenda," Frank Philpott told the *Independent* after the meeting (see story April 9, p. 1 and 19).

## A model from last year

A random search of previous agendas by the *Independent* revealed a similar item from the agenda of January 15, 2018, which read: "Adoption of a resolution - SCAOPI 500 Claremont project."

This is exactly what would have kept London away but would have brought Philpott out to the meeting.

To London's question for more advance information, Mayor Christina Smith said "It's something I'll talk about with the director general."

He said last week that immediately after the meeting he had followed up his question with an email to Smith and Councillor Conrad Peart, commissioner for permits and architecture, but so far had not had any reply.

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## The last Christmas tree?



This evergreen was photographed on April 19 on Kitchener Ave., near St. Leo's. In the *Independent's* experience, this disposal is the latest in the season, ever. And how is it still so green?!

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

## Spotlight on real estate



PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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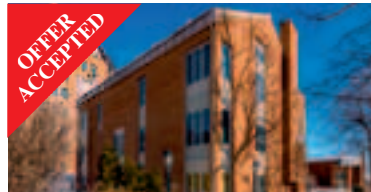
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# Maccarone addresses homelessness at Rotarians' gathering

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Although the riding of Westmount-St. Louis is often thought of as being relatively well off, it actually has one of the highest rates of homelessness in Quebec, Liberal provincial legislator Jennifer Maccarone told members of the Rotary Club of Westmount during their lunch-hour gathering at Victoria Hall on April 24.

While providing the Rotarians with an overview of her activities since assuming office following the provincial election last October, Maccarone touched on a number of issues, including homelessness.

One of the things she suggested many people don't understand about Westmount-St. Louis is that it is an area afflicted with an extremely high amount of homelessness.

"And this is shocking for people to hear that when I'm at the National Assembly and I'm explaining who we are, because all people ever hear is 'Westmount,'" she said. "They forget that we also have the downtown core, and that we have all of Chinatown and that we go into areas that can be impoverished. And that we have Cabot Square.

"We have the highest number of abo-



Westmount-St. Louis provincial legislator Jennifer Maccarone, seen here at Victoria Hall on April 24, raised the issue of homelessness in the riding while addressing the Rotary Club of Westmount.

original women that live on the street. Women that have had their children taken from them. Women, in many cases, who are just eager to get back to their reserve, to get back to their home but don't have the means to do it."

According to Maccarone, Westmount-St. Louis also has the highest number of homeless shelters in the province, as well as the highest number of day centres. While the average annual income in the Westmount portion of the riding is much

higher, the average income in the downtown sector is \$29,000, she said.

She commended the club for some of the fundraising work that the members have recently done to help deal with chronic homelessness.

According to an information sheet handed out at last week's Rotarians' meeting, the Rotary Club of Westmount recently presented a total of \$50,000 to five Montreal agencies that cater to the needs of the 3,000 to 5,000 homeless people living on the streets of Montreal.

The funds were raised at the Westmount Rotarians' first annual "Be the inspiration" cocktail dînatoire and auction held last October at the Canadian Centre for Architecture. Around 200 guests gathered at the event, whose goal was to put an end to chronic homelessness. The Rotarians' goal this year is to raise more than \$150,000 for the same five agencies plus two more.

"This is a big commitment for us," Rotary Club of Westmount President Peter Starr told the *Independent* afterwards. "There are 2,000 to 3,000 men, women and children that sleep out on the streets of Montreal every night. In a great country like this, this shouldn't happen."

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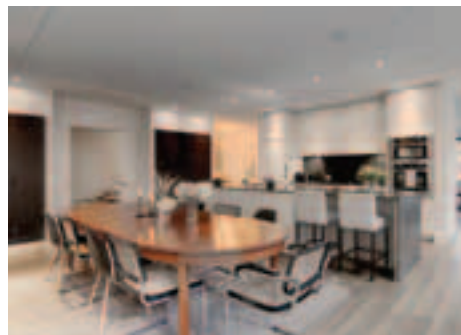
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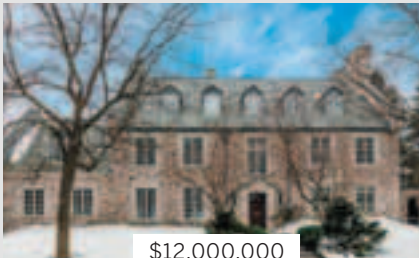
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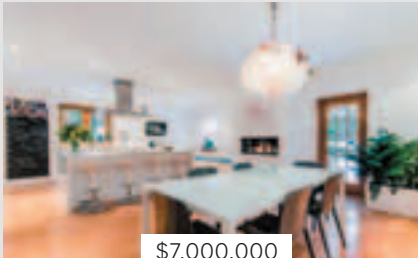
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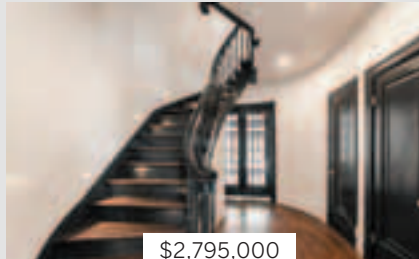
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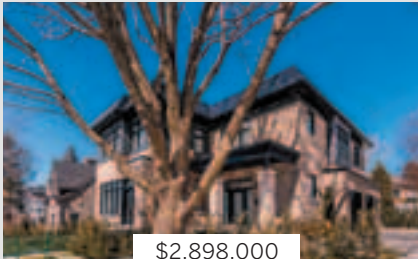
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Completely renovated Westmount home, 6+1 bedrooms, 2 garages & views. MLS 9850219



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**WESTMOUNT ADJ.**  
Stunning custom built detached home, 2 car integrated garage. MLS 22982114

## Investment advisor Bobkowicz finds article on financial holiday **Gazette from 1896 found in walls of house on Irvine**

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A copy of *The Gazette* dated April 3, 1896 was found recently inside a wall of a home on Irvine Ave. during the plastering of large cracks. The house was built in 1894, the same year the Town of Côte St. Antoine assumed the name Westmount.

The newspaper is brittle and crumbly but it has become somewhat of a treasure and a mystery to homeowner Andrea Bobkowicz, who has lived there for a decade.

“It’s a big find to those who are history buffs,” she said last week. “It was all folded up and is very fragile.”

“The cracks in the wall were enormous so the plasterer had to cut out a portion of the wall and that’s when he found the paper inside the slats,” she said. “It was 103 years ago, practically to the day. In his entire career,” she added, “he had never found anything this old.”

So how did it get there?

Bobkowicz, suggests a worker may have been reading it while having lunch and then stuffed it in the wall of the upstairs hall. But the timing two years after the house was recorded as built is part of the mystery, though it may not reflect the actual date of completion.

### News of the day

Bobkowicz, an investment advisor, was interested to note in a small visible portion of the found *Gazette* the following news



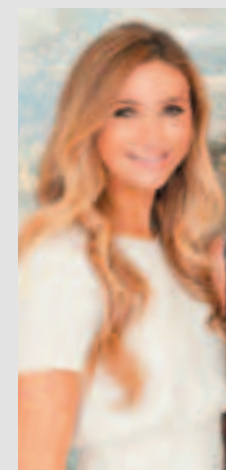
Photo of *The Gazette* dated April 3, 1896, Courtesy of Andrea Bobkowicz.

item bearing the dateline “New York, April 2 – Tomorrow being Good Friday, the Stock Exchange will be closed. The banks, Sub-Treasury and Custom House, however, will remain open as usual.”

Another report discusses a meeting of citizens at the Board of Trade to consider the question of holding “an International Exhibition in Montreal in 1897.” It was “well attended” followed by many names

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Andrea Bobkowitz, April 25, holds some of the pieces of the *Gazette* from 1896, still tightly folded and compacted, in front of her 1894 house under renovation at 136 Irvine Ave. (right) Some of the pieces of the newspaper that is now starting to come apart.

of those present, including Mayor Wilson-Smith, “who was called to the chair.”

To put the time into perspective, an internet listing of world events for the next day, April 4, 1896, reports “the announcement of gold discovery in the Yukon.”

And then on April 6 came the opening of the first modern Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, when American athlete James Connolly became the first modern Olympic champion to win the triple jump (then two hops and a jump). He later placed third in the long jump and

second in the high jump.

All this happened only 50 years after the burning of the Parliament Buildings in Montreal.

Now Bobkowitz hopes her found newspaper can be restored in some way so she can frame it.

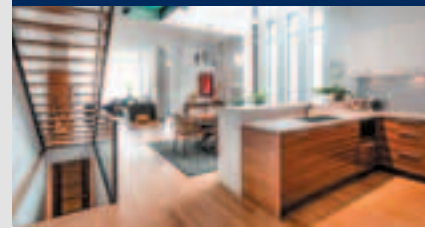
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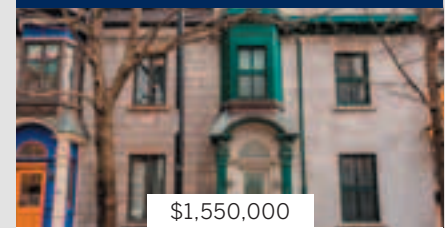
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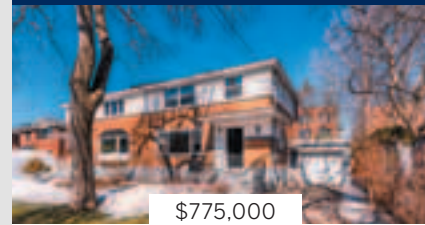


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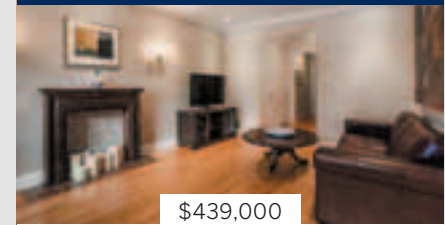


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#### NDG

Family home on a large lot.  
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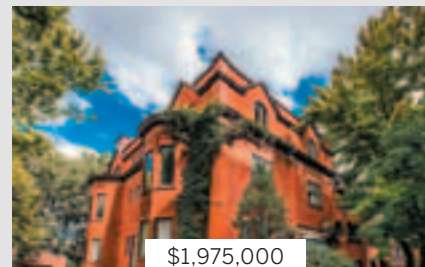
### INTRODUCING



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#### CDN

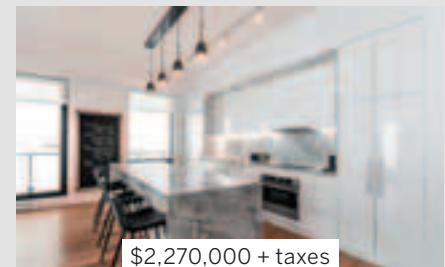
Penthouse with large terrace & views.  
MLS22673808



\$1,975,000

#### GOLDEN SQUARE MILE

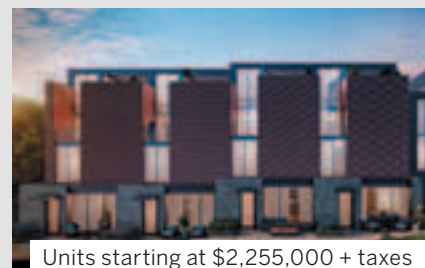
2-storey condo of approx. 4,000 ft<sup>2</sup>.  
MLS 12828223



\$2,270,000 + taxes

#### TOUR DES CANADIENS

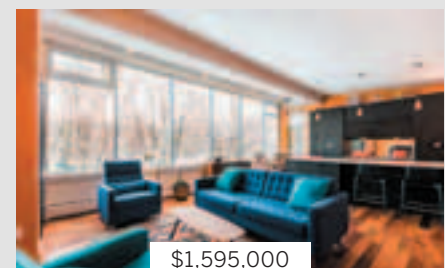
Double corner unit Penthouse with panoramic views. MLS 9852362



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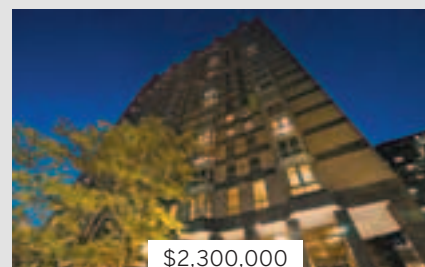
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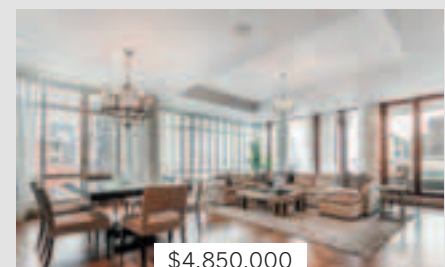
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*Social Notes*

VERONICA REDGRAVE

# Westmount mayor honoured by alma mater

Held at Le Mount Stephen hotel, the benefit event supported the school's \$5-million capital campaign, which includes the building of an auditorium and a wellness centre.

Westmount residents in attendance included school board president and capital campaign chair, **Roberto Di Giorgio**, and his wife **Marie Di Maso**; city councillor

**Philip Cutler**; president of the Montreal St. Patrick's Foundation **Umberto Delucilla** and his wife **Anna Badia**; **William Tretiak** and **Alwynn Gillett**; **Robert Emblem** and **Christine Cardinal**; **Lambros Piscopos** and **Joelle Azouz**; **Paul Kruszewski** and **Melanie Dirks**; and **Margaret (Peggy) McGrath** and her daughter **Thea Koper**.

The evening began with a cocktail,

The ground-breaking for the school's new auditorium will take place in June at the school on Atwater Ave.

The event was sponsored by ALRE Properties Inc.; First Immigration Law Firm; Groupe Montoni; IFC Seafood; Borden Gervais and Ladner LLC; and JCB General Contractors.



Christine Cardinal, Mayor Christina Smith, Thea Koper and Margaret (Peggy) McGrath.



Father Francesco Giordano, Monsignor Francis Coyle and Roberto Di Giorgio.

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followed by a sit-down dinner: carrot and ginger soup with coriander chantilly and pumpkin seed gremolata; herb-marinated oniglet, with truffle aioli, catered by Oliver and Bonacini at Le Mount Stephen hotel. Entertainment included student performances by **Jacqueline Van Aelst** (grade 9) and a quartet composed of alumnae **Nadia Floriani**, **Amanda Forgione**, **Alexandra Gagliano**, and **Gurleen Padda**, along with **Aran Waldbrook**, the school's head of fine arts, and former *La Voix* contestant, alumna **Deidra Chois Robertson**. **Monsignor Francis Coyle** CSS, pastor of St. Patrick's Basilica, led the room in prayer before dinner.



Philip Cutler and Katelyn Abbey.

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## Baig wins slot at international Milset fair

# Hason, Waschke, Liang, Liu, Felcarek-Hope excel at provincial science fair

The Super Expo-Sciences Hydro-Québec, Finale Québécoise – effectively the provincial science-fair championships – was held at Collège Charles Lemoyne April 11 to 14. Westmounters and Westmount schools won big.

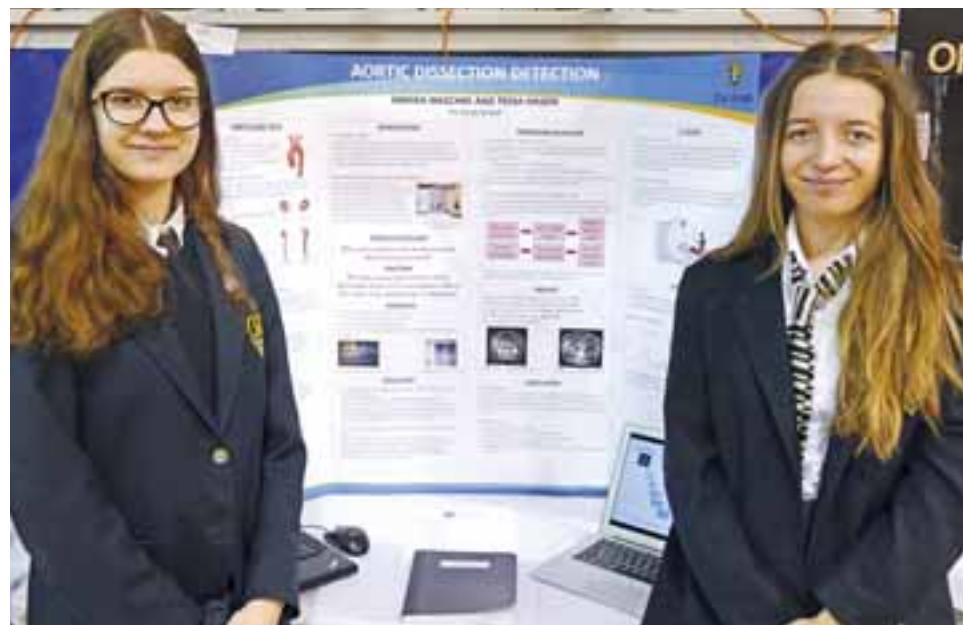
Shaan Baig of Dawson College won the Or Collégial of the Médaille du Réseau Technoscience (\$500) and the Francis Boulva prize with “Lighting Up the Brain,” as well as advancing to the international Milset fair in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (\$2,500) – the “greatest honour” at the competition, according to publicist Andrée Peltier.

### Bronze

Marianopolis’ Marlene Liang and Jessica Liu won the Bronze Collégial of the Médaille du Réseau Technoscience (\$200) and advanced to the Canada-Wide Science Fair in Fredericton, New Brunswick (\$1,000) with “Spill Your Guts!”

### Going to nationals

Westmounter Adelka Felcarek-Hope of Royal West Academy and her project part-



From left, Annika Waschke and Tessa Hason of The Study.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE STUDY.

ner Sofia McVetty advanced to the Canada-Wide Science Fair (\$1,000) with “The Poly-Phaeophyceae Method” (see also previous coverage April 16, p. 9).

Tessa Hason and Annika Waschke of The Study advanced to the Canada-Wide Science Fair with “Aortic Dissection Detection.”

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# March sales: Tailing off



## 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 March 2019. 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 March real estate market appeared to be tailing off not only in terms of prices but volume, as Westmount agents posted only six sales, a record low in a month that averages close to 20 and that leads into the spring season. In fact, March of 2018 tallied a record low (up to that point) of nine sales, but a busy January this year has meant the two years have the same volume for the first three months.

The average price of those six sales was \$1,939,167, with three sales less than \$1.5 million and the other three over \$2 million. By coincidence, the highest-priced sale, at \$2,950,000 for a semi-detached house on Clarke Ave., was also the only price in the month to be less than municipal evaluation, while the lowest-priced sale, at \$1,200,000 for a row-house on Somerville Ave., had the highest price-valuation ratio, selling for 60 percent more than valuation. The average mark-up among the six sales was 18.3 percent, down slightly from February's average mark-up of 20 percent and well below the average mark-up for all of last year of 28.6 percent.

The trend reflects the moods of Toronto and Vancouver, where higher borrowing costs and a tightening of regulations, among other things, were slowing the markets, though in greater Montreal the spring months have been positive. A dipping mar-

ket this year could bring confusion among some Westmount homeowners next year, when the new valuation roll will be based on the market of mid-2018, and many frustrated homeowners may be forced to pay taxes on something more than they can get for their houses.

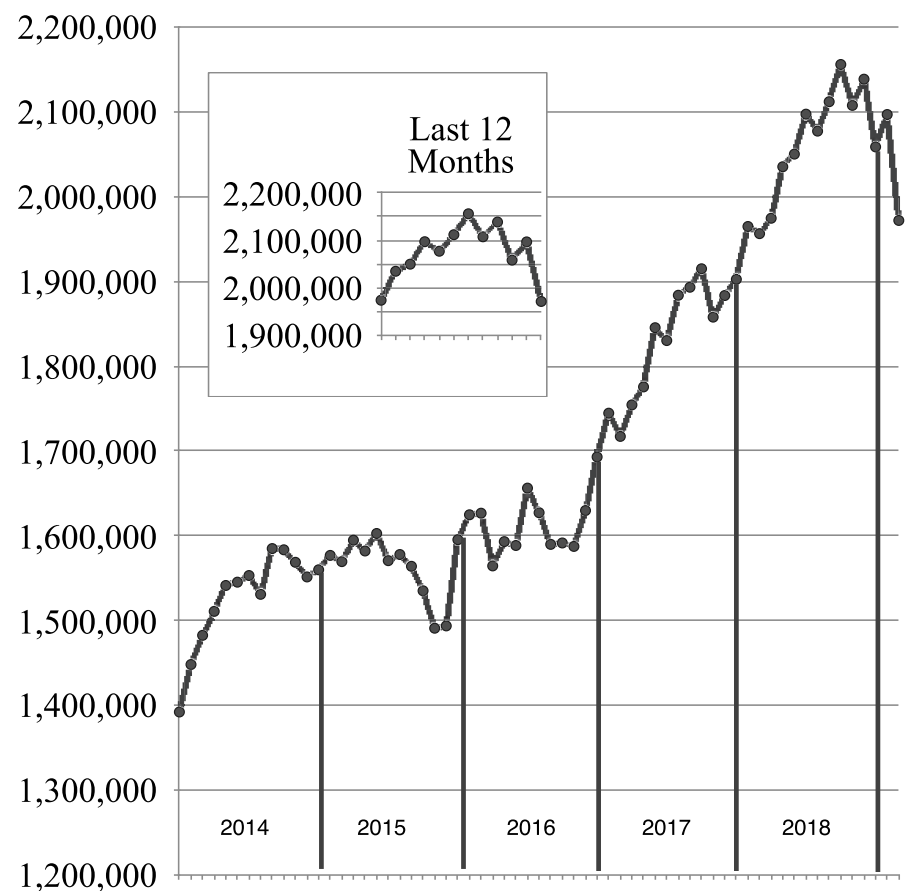
## Condos

March completed the sales statistics for the first-quarter condominium sales in Westmount; volume was up slightly from the previous two quarters, but again, prices were down, and the average mark-up over evaluation, at 17.5 percent, was almost exactly the same as in the fourth quarter of 2018. The average price of 10 sales in the quarter was only \$635,100, and only one sale was over \$1 million, at \$1,035,000, hardly typical of some of the luxury condo prices Westmount saw in 2018.

Four new sales were posted for Marlowe and Vendôme avenues, showing a stirred-up interest in eastern NDG, but there is apparently little action in the southern Côte des Neiges district, where only two sales have been reported for all of 2019. In both districts the prices are generally over \$1 million; unfortunately for other areas of adjacent-Westmount there are not enough sales to report the results statistically. On the other hand, that may be the news, that sales volume has fallen off badly in the first three months of the year.

Perhaps because of the slow market, the number of Westmount houses listed by mid-April had jumped from 90 to 100, including five asking less than \$1 million, the same number as in mid-March. Every other price category had an increase in numbers, including the \$10-million-plus category, which went from four to six. The number of houses for rent in Westmount dropped from 24 to 22, with 10 asking between \$10,000 and \$27,000 per month, even though no rentals have been reported for more than \$9,000 in either 2018 or 2019.

Average adjusted price for 'typical' Westmount house, by month, January 2014 to March 2019, based on accepted offer dates



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**Westmount Historical Association lecture****The Montreal Bicycle Club re-founded by Westmounters, 139 years later**

BY RALPH THOMPSON

The Westmount Historical Association guest speaker Malcolm McRae gave an interesting and amusing presentation April 18 at 7 pm at the Westmount Public Library.

McRae is a co-founder of the new Montreal Bicycling Club, which has around 60 members. On March 21, 2017, McRae got together with Dan Lambert, Roger Jochym and Henry Nesvadba at his home on Upper Belmont to re-found the club. They established a set of by-laws for the new entity based on the original minute book from 1878, "to promote cycling on the island of Montreal."

The high-wheel bicycle era had begun in Europe by the time Montreal created its own cycling club on December 2, 1878. The by-laws required that the riders wear a uniform "Dark Blue Knicker-bocker Suit with a Fore & After Cap of the same colour" and the club recommended that cyclists rest their legs over the handlebars, in an incredibly precarious manner while free-wheeling.

By the early 1890s, a new "safety bicycle" emerged with two wheels of the same size but of smaller diameter and the clothing style of choice was black-and-white horizontal stripes including caps to match, prompting a cartoonist to show a prisoner escaping from jail and hopping on a bike, on which he looked just like all the other cyclists.

Details, including lots of historical aspects and photographs and how to join the new Montreal Bicycle Club, can be found at [www.montrealbicycleclub.com](http://www.montrealbicycleclub.com).

The next WHA lecture will be held on May 16 at 7 pm at the Westmount Public Library entitled "Westmount Park School: Moving On" with guest Speaker Paul Saunders, a former principal.



Speaker Malcolm McRae, clarifying that he is not shown in an original photograph, dated 1885, of the Montreal Bicycling Club. Note the uniform mandated by the original by-laws and the many medals worn by the club members for bicycle race victories.



Speaker Malcolm McRae and co-founder Roger Jochym showing off their club badge, the Winged Wheel, chosen on April 29, 1886.

**Another Akelius property, in sight of Westmount**

Last issue (p. 19), we ran a profile of apartment complex owner Akelius. The company has five properties in Westmount, but we have since noticed this one on the west side of Claremont north of de Maisonneuve, just west of the NDG-Westmount border. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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# Metaphor fills Henderson's Sir Gawain-inspired novel *Sasquatch and the Green Sash*



From left, Westmount resident Anne Fitzpatrick of the Thomas More Institute interviewed Keith Henderson about his latest book *Sasquatch and the Green Sash* on April 15.

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

While Keith Henderson is perhaps best remembered as former leader of the Equality Party, which focused on English rights, there's another side to him also involving the English language – although it's from a literary standpoint.

Over the years, the former Westmounter and longtime professor of English at Vanier College has authored several works of fiction, including *The Restoration* (1994), *The Roof Walkers* (2013) and his prize-winning volume of short stories from 2006, *The Pagan Nuptials of Julia*.

Henderson's latest, *Sasquatch and the Green Sash*, is a retelling of the 14th century Middle English chivalric romance "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," from a perspective that relocates the setting from

Camelot in King Arthur's England to the latter-day Canadian northwest.

On April 15, he launched the book at the Thomas More Institute on Atwater Ave., then sat down for an in-depth interview with longtime TMI contributor Anne Fitzpatrick, a Westmount resident who was associate dean at Marianopolis College.

In Henderson's retelling, Sir Gawain becomes Gavin McHenry, a lonely and restless man. Instead of being a knight, he is an RCMP constable. Sasquatch, the legendary and ape-like "bigfoot" that is the stuff of Canadian wilderness legends, becomes a stand-in for the Green Knight.

The literary concept of metaphor runs deeply through *Sasquatch and the Green Sash*. "Metaphor is the quantum mechanics of language," said Henderson. "It's scientific, logical and weird and wonderful all

at the same time.

"To this day, I am just blown away by the beauty and the profundity of metaphor. From a strictly logical standpoint, it makes no sense. But from that deeper meaning of metaphor, it makes a lot of sense because things can have two meanings at once, if not three and four simultaneously.

"The green sash is a hybrid kind of symbol," he continued. "It shares, in my view, both worlds. It's partly civilized and Christian and moral and beautiful. And partly, because of its greenness, associated with this really powerful and primitive knight."

He compared the green sash's underlying meaning to the symbolism found in American author Nathaniel Hawthorne's 19th century romantic work of fiction *The Scarlet Letter*. "This is symbolic logic at work," he said.

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# Remembering Sunny Savage, artist

BY GUEST CONTRIBUTOR KATE SHECKLER

“Why ‘Sunny Savage?’” I once asked my good friend, who had started out life as Cynthia Anne Copping, but used Sunny S. throughout most of her adult life. She grinned at me in response and then laughed, saying “Because it’s me. All of me.” Of course, it’s true, the artist, writer, poet, mother, Westmount girl and woman that was Sunny Savage had both sparkle and ferocity. A multifaceted artist who had published fiction and won the grand prize in

the North American Open Poetry Contest, Sunny’s career in the arts was invested first and foremost in painting – and according to her, that career was sparked in the economically diverse and vivid world that was the Westmount of her childhood.

“I was a rich Westmount girl, and then I was a poor Westmount girl,” she told me with her customary laugh. According to Sunny, the Westmount of her childhood was an interconnected yet diverse community in which she and her friends had free rein, and one where she discovered

that her life would be spent in the arts. The discovery came one hot summer’s day when “the gang” decided they needed funds and mounted a show that they performed door to door. “It was fun, but most important it helped me know what I wanted to do.” That realization was surrounded by ideas of spectacle, beauty, and, of course, communication – because Sunny was all about connection. That ability to connect included her ability to create art from everything around her, innovating as she went. She took everything she experienced – from an evening of wonder at the northern lights in Westmount Park to her years in the far north of Alberta – and turned it into art.

That need to connect pulled Sunny to far off places, as her life and career took her across Canada, where she studied fine arts at Lethbridge University and had her first solo exhibition in Edmonton. However, she returned to Westmount time and

time again to live and mount exhibitions in diverse venues like 1 Westmount Square (2010) and Duc de Lorraine (2018), as well as to teach seminars and workshops. Wherever she ended up, it was always about connection.

Sunny passed away on March 25, 2019, and on her last day, as we made our way through Montreal General’s corridors buying presents for the nurses of the ward in which she had spent her last few months and visiting favourite spots, person after person stopped us to hug her goodbye and tell her how much she had meant to them. Walking beside her, that last trip through those institutional halls seemed to me to be a summation of her life reflecting the fact that wherever she went, wherever her art went, there was always a reaction, there was always meaning.

Sunny is survived by her husband, Michel Gagnon, and her two children, Tristan Liteplo and Shevaun Liteplo.

*Retail review, cont’d. from p. 7*

## Simplango language school

Simplango Language School offers classes in English, French and Spanish. Owner Catalina Reid explained that she is also proposing private tutoring (\$45 an hour). Her services are all online and can be reached at her website.

Simplango.com

## Saint Sushi

A Plateau go-to-darling dining destination has expanded into Westmount. The first clue to the vibe of Saint Sushi is the sharp business card: it is black and gold, as is the décor of the new Greene Ave. hot spot – unlike any other sushi bar in town. Next one feels the music: it’s disco time!

The innovative – and delicious – maki are inspired by rock stars such as Michael Jackson, James Brown and Madonna. Ideally, one orders a selection to share. Discussing the best choice is a challenge, not only because the fabulous menu is extensive, but also as the decibel level requires

a strong voice. But that’s part of the hip ambience. People watching completes the fun mood.

Owner Saengphet Outhipvongxay explained that the original Saint Sushi is on Duluth. Westmounters will no doubt find the local location a tad easier for parking.

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## The Westmount Independent’s Spring Social Calendar, part 2b



### Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

field Golf Club, 49 Golf Ave., Pointe Claire. Information 514.695.8335 x 207. gmarion@novawi.org. crcinfo.ca/events

**Annual Y Golf Tournament** in support of the Sylvan Adams YM-YMHA Financial Assistance Program. Buffet lunch, gifts, competitions and prizes. Hillsdale Golf and Country Club, 9850 Montée Sainte Marianne, Mirabel. Information Sarah Malka 514.737.6551 x 568. smalk@ymywha.com

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 14**

**Congregation Beth Ora Raffle** supporting The Montreal Children’s Hospital Foundation. 6:30 pm. 2600 Badaux. Information Mireille Alvo 514.748.6559 x 106. mireille@bethora.org.

See April 9, p. 20 and April 16, p. 20 for part 1, and April 23, p. 20 for part 2a.

**MONDAY AUGUST 12**

**Nova Charity Golf Tournament**, supporting palliative home nursing care for individuals living with cancer/ALS, bereavement support (youth and adults), day centres for seniors with cognitive defects and support groups for caregivers (ALS/Alzheimer). 10:30 am. – 9 pm. Beacons-



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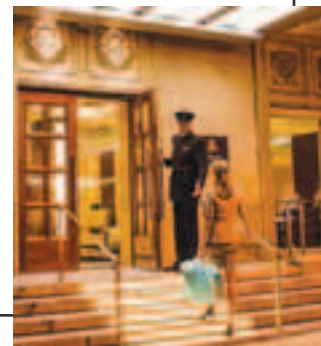
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# MUHC honours Dr. Norman Bethune



Maria Arvantis and Pierrette Wong.



Dr. Jonathan Meakins, Yin Ling, Chen Xueming and Dr. Dominique Shum-Tim.



## Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

In the massively massive MUHC, there is now a little corner of history.



Mark Chau and Michel Wong Kee Song.

The heritage of Dr. Norman Bethune enjoys a place of pride in the gleaming spacious building. Born in Ontario, Bethune was a thoracic surgeon at the Montreal Royal Victoria Hospital (Royal Vic) from 1928 to 1936. Travelling to China in 1938, he joined the Chinese Communist Party led by Mao Zedong, and served with the Communist Eighth Route Army during the second Sino-Japanese war.

Mao's essay "In Memory of Norman Bethune" became required reading in Chinese elementary schools during the 1960s.

Bethune is renowned for bringing modern medicine to rural China and today is much esteemed by the Chinese community. The display features historical medical items about Dr. Bethune.

"I discovered them in a closet when we were clearing out the Royal Vic," explained Dr. Jonathan Meakins, former chief surgeon at the Vic and currently RBC Art and Heritage Centre director.

One important item is an instrument for TB specifically designed by Bethune, who had suffered from the disease. Informative plaques relate his lasting legacy. The crowning centrepiece of the exhibit is a stately sculpture bust of Dr. Bethune donated by MUHC board member Pierrette Wong.

Along with Meakins, speakers were the Chinese consul general for the People's Re-

public of China, **Chen Xueming**, and the recipient of the Contemporary Norman Bethune Fellowship, **Dr. Dominique Shum-Tim**, MUHC cardiothoracic surgeon.

The unveiling ceremony was hosted by the MUHC's art and heritage department, whose curator **Alexandra Kirsh** assembled

the tribute for permanent display in that department. Noted during the reception were **Yin Ling**, president of Sept Days; **Mark Chau**, **Michel Wong Kee Song**, MUHC Foundation board member **Eddie Leschiutta** and events manager **Maria Arvantis**.

## Comin' Up

### TUESDAY, APRIL 30

Public consultation on 500 Clarendon (see story April 9, p. 1). City hall. 7 pm.

### SATURDAY, MAY 4

► Community Garage Sale, including kids' activities, for sending needy kids to summer camp. Table rental: \$25. Centre Greene. 10 am to 4 pm.

► Spring Rummage Sale. St. Matthias' Anglican Church Lower Hall, entrance on Côte St. Antoine Rd. (corner Church Hill). 514.933.4295 www.st-matthias.ca. 10 am to 1 pm.

### MONDAY, MAY 6

City council meeting. City Hall. 7:30 pm.

### TUESDAY, MAY 7

Public PAC meeting on St. Léon school extension. City hall. 8:30 am.

### SATURDAY MAY 11

The Krishnamurti Information Centre of Montreal is presenting two videos in English with French subtitles, on the subjects of "The Violent Self, Death" and "Leaving the Stream," at the Atwater Library, 2nd fl, 1200 Atwater Ave., \$7. Info – 514.937.8869. 2 to 4 pm.

### THURSDAY, MAY 16

Westmount Historical Association presents former principal Paul Saunders on "Westmount Park School: Moving On" and the evolution of this building from 1914. \$5. Westmount Room, Westmount Public Library. 7 to 9 pm.

### SUNDAY, MAY 19

Lionel Perez, lawyer, entrepreneur and member of the Montreal city council. Lecture followed by lunch. \$5, reservation appreciated: 514.937.9474 x 139. Shaar Hashomayim, 425 Metcalfe Ave. 12 noon.



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**07. 257 Crystal Falls, Arundel**  
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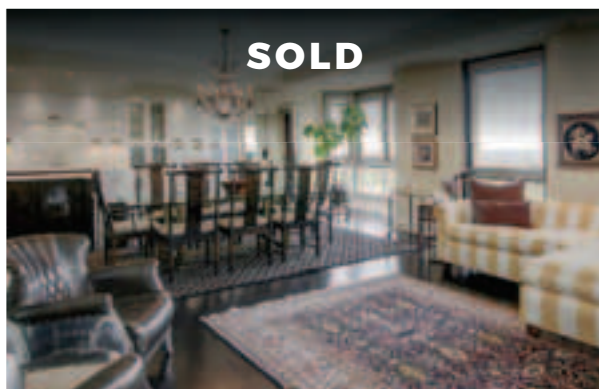
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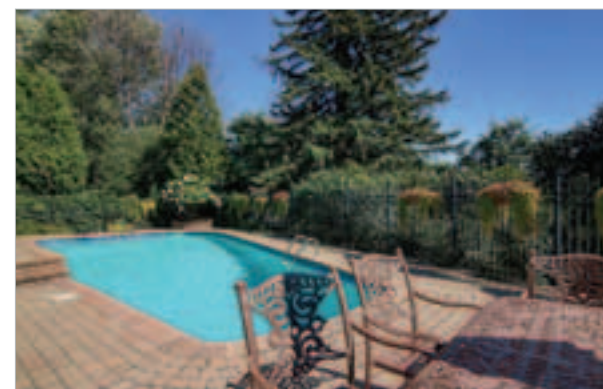
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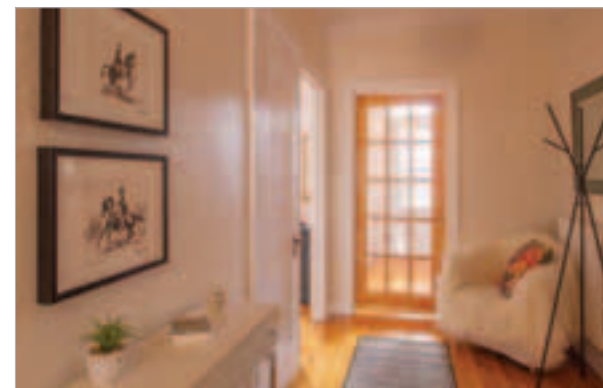
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