

\$1M contract awarded for masonry work at city hall

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Work on Westmount’s municipal buildings is expected to get under way this summer with \$1 million to be spent on the masonry of city hall. And this is only the first of three phases to restore the exterior envelope. The roof and windows are to follow next.

A contract for the first phase was awarded by city council June 3 for a total of \$991,085 to Maçonnerie Rainville et Frères to start what is expected to be a high-profile project.

“Obviously, we have a lot of work to do,” said Councillor Jeff Shamie in moving the resolution.

The \$1-million project, which had been delayed from last year, contributed to the city’s operating surplus of \$2.4 million reported for 2018.

Approval of the tender item was submitted as a new business item that did not appear on the published agenda.

City announces McEntyre winners



The city announced the winners of its McEntyre Writing Competition for Westmount students June 5 at Victoria Hall. See p. 18 and 19 for more coverage. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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HONESTY INTEGRITY RESULTS

Avakian, St-Jean leave city employ

Westmount won’t fill assistant DG post, but seeks a city clerk

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Two senior managers are gone from city hall. They are Martin St-Jean, city clerk and director of legal services, and Sandra Avakian, assistant director general for infrastructure.

The departure of St-Jean after four years with the city in the position was announced June 3 at the city council meeting when a resolution was approved stating he had submitted a letter of resignation May 27 after “an agreement reached” the same day.

The departure is effective August 23 but details of the agreement, including pay were not disclosed. The position is to be posted but is being filled in the interim by assistant .....

continued on p. 16

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## Mayor delivers financial highlights for 2018

# City's total surpluses of \$29M offset by debt of \$15M

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Mayor Christina Smith presented 2018 highlights of the city's financial report at the start of the council meeting June 3, saying the year ended with a total accumulated surplus of \$29 million, of which \$26 million been appropriated to various projects.

Of the city's outstanding debt of \$15.4 million, almost \$7 million is repayable by Quebec for its grant to build the Westmount recreation centre (WRC), while \$8.5 million is assumed by the city. \$4.1 million of this is the city's share of the WRC.

"The city intends to appropriate enough accumulated surplus to pay off the entire debt as it comes due," she said.

As a result, once again "the city remains in enviable financial health. Our city has been in a net financial assets position, meaning that our financial assets are high enough to cover our financial future obligations."

In 2018, the city invested \$14.8 million in infrastructure and other capital assets, she said.

These included spending \$6 million on roads and sidewalks, \$2.6 million on the electrical network and \$2.4 million on sewer and water rehabilitation as well as \$1.5 million on improvement to buildings and \$1.2 million on replacement of ve-



Mayor Christina Smith presents financial report.

hicles and machinery, among other items.

The city ended the year with an operating surplus of \$2.4 million when revenues of \$113.3 million exceeded expenditures of \$110.9, as already reported by the *Independent* when the city tabled its audited report and financial results (see page May 21, p. 1).

Some of the routine items the city spent less on than budgeted included the maintenance of trees (\$217,000) and buildings (\$148,000) as well as legal fees and insurance premiums (\$196,000).

Snow removal exceeded the budget by \$186,000 "mainly due to the higher cost for salt and for snow dumping operations," Mayor Smith said.

Final results compared to budget can be found on the city of Westmount website under Resident zone/taxation&valuation/financial reports.

Letters to the Editor, p. 6

Classifieds, p. 23

Social Notes  
(Ascension of Our Lord), p. 24

9 Lives, p. 22

## Brokers' Appreciation Day

In honour of National Brokers' Appreciation Day on Saturday June 15, I would like to tip my hat in gratitude and respect to all the real estate brokers I have had the chance to meet and work with over the past 35 years.

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make sure all your expectations are met. With a smile.

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Chartered real estate brokers 2,700

Mortgage brokers 803

Real estate agencies 984

Mortgage agencies 45

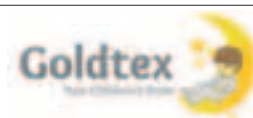
Total Province of Quebec 15,967

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## CONTESTING QUEBEC'S UNDEMOCRATIC ELECTORAL MAP

In 2017, Quebec's director general of elections reversed an earlier decision and suddenly removed one of the three provincial ridings in our part of Montreal.

The borough council of Côte des Neiges-NDG protested. Over 500 West End residents took part in a protest rally and a legal contestation was launched. With Bill 21 on the table, it is even more important that the island of Montreal carry its proper weight in the National Assembly.

While the ridings in our part of town now have an average of nearly 58,000 voters each, six ridings in the regions of Quebec have fewer than the minimum number of voters allowed by law.

One riding actually has just 28,000 voters. This is unfair and gives some rural areas twice the political weight of residents of our part of the province.

Minority communities in Quebec tend to be concentrated in some parts of the island of Montreal and the current electoral map particularly devalues their votes.

Recently, a date for when the case will be heard in court to contest the map was finally accorded. It has taken two years of legal procedures to obtain this hearing date. On December 3 and 4, the court will hear the complaint against the director general of elections.

However, the ability to see the case through resides on the continued support from ordinary citizens such as yourself.

I am seeking contributions from residents and supporters to help win this

struggle. Your contribution to help this cause can be made by making out your cheque to "Julius Grey in Trust."

Mail or drop off your cheque to my office at: 5160 Decarie #710 Montréal (Québec) H3X 2H9 – Attention: Marvin Rotrand

Thank you in advance for your continued devotion to this important cause.

MARVIN ROTRAND,  
MONTREAL CITY AND CDN-NDG  
BOROUGH COUNCILLOR – SNOWDON

## GARBAGE COLLECTION MUST BE RECTIFIED

The pictures [of uncollected garbage] published in the *Westmount Independent* (June 4, p. 7) do not do the problem justice. Since the change of contract [for garbage collection on May 2], I have phoned the city at least once a week for lack of pick-up. In my building, there are 13 apartments, a shop and a restaurant.

June 3, I called again. This time, our dumpster had been moved nearly into the driveway and the lid was not closed. Now, it's almost full and I can't open my windows because of the smell.

This must be rectified immediately.  
JUDITH LARIN, VICTORIA AVE.

## DUCKLINGS SUCKED DOWN DRAIN IN PARK (1)

On May 25, as I was taking a walk in Westmount Park and stopped to admire the ducks, including eight ducklings swimming behind their parents. It was a beautiful sight and there were many people including children enjoying the scene.

## SEEN ON VICTORIA

I saw this on Victoria Ave. I guess someone had an "interesting" shopping experience that day.

LYNN CAPLAN, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.



Then to my horror, one of the little ducklings got sucked down the drain, which is enclosed by a metal box with wiring that is so large that the duckling easily passed through.

The family of ducks continued to remain nearby and I ran to the library to ask someone to call the city. They handed me the phone and I reported the situation. They assured me that it would be taken care of.

Later that afternoon, nothing was done and all the remaining ducklings were sucked down!

Several people witnessed this in helpless horror. We would like to be assured that this never happens again.

SIMONA BUTH, NDG

## DUCKLINGS SUCKED DOWN DRAIN IN PARK (2)

I was soo happy to see the eight baby ducklings swimming in the Westmount Park pond with mom and dad two weeks ago. I walk my dog every day and the duck family was a joy to watch grow. But, this past Saturday morning, I was walking my dog as usual around the park and noticed two Westmount Public Security officers near the bank of the pond opposite the dog run. To my shock, the eight ducklings had

been sucked down the drain in the pond near the shore. Why was there not an orange protective cover around the drain as there is near the library?

I am saddened.  
DENNIS LAZANIS, ST. CATHERINE ST.

## BOURGEAU COMING TO WESTMOUNT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Re: "Hurtubises enjoy Lanken exhibit at Hurtubise house," (May 28, p. 7).

For those who read Shannon Hurtubise's letter and regretted that they missed the opportunity to see a wonderful homage to Victor Bourgeau's work at Hurtubise House, we are pleased to inform you that the Gallery at Victoria Hall will host, in collaboration with the Westmount Historical Association, a special exhibition entitled: "Victor Bourgeau, Architect 1809-1888." This exhibit will be on display at the Gallery from April 16 to May 8, 2020, and will explore in detail the works and vision of Victor Bourgeau, who designed numerous religious buildings in Quebec.

Architect Peter Lanken's drawings and photographs will explore Bourgeau's work in order to highlight the significant role and heritage of our houses of worship.

DONNA LACH, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR –  
WESTMOUNT PUBLIC LIBRARY

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### Editor

David Price: 514.935.4537  
david.price@westmountindependent.com

### Chief reporter

Laureen Sweeney

### Graphics

Ted Sancton

### Advertising sales

Arleen Candiotti: 514.223.3567  
advertising@westmountindependent.com

### Classified ads

www.westendclassifieds.com

### Accounting

Beth Hudson: 514.223.6138  
office@westmountindependent.com

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# Westmount in a very healthy financial position



## Councillor's column

KATHLEEN KEZ  
DISTRICT 8

As you may know, the city of Westmount recently had its 2018 financial statements audited. The independent audit was conducted by the firm Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton and a “clear opinion” was given, meaning there were no discrepancies found and that the financial results present an accurate picture of the city of Westmount’s financial position as at December 31, 2018. The firm evaluated fraud and risk, as well as reviewing internal controls in accordance with Public Sector Accounting Standards. The audit results confirmed that we are in a healthy financial position.

I am pleased to report that as at December 31, 2018, Westmount is in a net financial asset position, meaning its financial assets are higher than its financial liabilities by \$19 million. The total net worth of the city if we include non-financial assets (buildings, sewers, machinery, equipment etc.) is \$193 million.

The audited statements revealed an operating surplus of \$2,406,878 for 2018. This surplus is due to both higher revenues as well as an overall decrease of expenses when compared to the budgeted amounts.

Upon closer examination of the 2018 financial statements, the following are some of the revenue items that had significant variances from the budget and which contributed to the surplus.

Duties on transfers (welcome tax) came to a total of \$9.1 million, whereas the budgeted amount was \$6.6 million, resulting in a favorable variance of \$2.5 million.

The category titled “other revenues” had a significant increase over what was budgeted by an amount of \$888,064 be-

cause of various insurance settlements, one of which included a payment for a fire that took place at 21 Bethune back in 2015. Items in this category are budgeted on past actuals and are difficult to predict and therefore not necessarily budgeted for.

Government transfers came to a total of \$2.4 million versus \$1.9 million budgeted, due to past work done on Summit Circle in the amount of \$459,000 as well as \$44,000 received from Recycling Quebec.

“In lieu of taxes” [from higher levels of government] were \$468,000 higher than budgeted because of 2014 and 2017 adjustment refunds.

Interest revenues on deposits were higher than budgeted by \$338,145, mainly because at the time of the budgeting process interest rates were lower than when the investments were made in June 2018. Interest and penalties on tax arrears also saw an increase of \$120,480.

### Sports & Rec registrants up, revenue up too

Revenues from recreational activities increased to \$1.4 million from \$1.2 million budgeted largely, due to an increase in the number of residents registering for the hockey programs and day camp.

Recoverables was one of the few revenue items that saw a decrease of \$270,149. Of this amount, \$136,000 will be invoiced in 2019 and is simply a timing issue.

With regards to expenses, there was a slight increase in remuneration of \$168,285 over the budgeted amount and represents 0.73% of the total remuneration budget.

Total departmental expenses decreased by \$1,258,138 when compared to the budgeted amount. Some of the expense categories that contributed to this decrease include the following. Public Works & Engineering decreased by \$472,774. Though there was an increase in costs for snow removal operations (\$186,000), the increase was offset by a decrease in spending on

sewer repairs (\$103,000), building repairs (\$148,000) as well as a slowdown on tree maintenance (\$217,000) due to the departure of our city arborist. However, I am happy to report the tree maintenance program is now back on track due to a recent hire.

Urban Planning had a decrease in the amount of \$421,951 due to lower consulting fees, as well as a delay of various projects.

City Clerk & Legal Service expenses decrease by \$222,968 mainly because many files were processed internally rather than contracted out. Public Security expenses were also lower than anticipated by \$53,318 due to less spending on graffiti and repairs.

Regarding Hydro Westmount, there was a net favorable variance of \$521,216. One of the factors contributing to this was an increase in revenues due to a rise in residential consumption because of a hot summer and cold winter.

The municipal PAYG ([pay-as-you-go,] our method of funding capital works) was \$1,205,929 lower than budgeted mainly due to a delay in the city hall exterior restoration project, however there was an increase in investment of our roads.

The budget strategy ..... was to use \$15.1 million of *continued on p. 8*

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Isabella Walter  
Chengyue Wu  
Eliana-Ruobing Zhang



# Hillside medical gone



The former Hillside medical centre at Hillside and Metcalfe was gone when the Independent stopped by on June 4. Four new townhouses are being built there by Verterra. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

### Kez, cont'd. from p. 7

the accumulated surplus to pay for the debt expense but as additional revenues were generated, there was no need to use the entire amount and therefore only \$9.7 million of the surplus was used.

As at December 31, 2018, the total accumulated surplus was \$28.9 million, and of this amount 90 percent has been appropriated to various projects.

The outstanding debt as at December 31, 2018 was \$15.4 million. Of this amount \$8.5 million is assumed by the city and the remaining \$6.9 million by the Quebec gov-

ernment, which pays its grants over a 10 to 20-year period.

The financial report and the auditor's report have been tabled by the treasurer and have been forwarded to the Ministre des affaires municipales et de l'Habitation.

The 2018 financial statement is available on the city's website for consultation. The process of planning for the 2020 capital and operating budgets has begun and I look forward to sharing with you more information in the coming months.

Kathleen Kez is the city councillor for District 8 and the finance commissioner.



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# Jump bikes get 4 more 'parking' spots, now at mid-level

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

There's good news for cyclists hoping for electric assistance in pedalling up some of the city's inclines.

Four mid-level locations for dropping off and picking up Jump Bikes were added June 3 to the city's draft by-law concerning dockless e-bike sharing services before its adoption. This is in expectation that Jump Bikes could be rolled out this month in Westmount at the same time as Montreal.

The draft by-law of May 21 had designated 14 locations where the bikes or scooters could be left attached to public stands, but none were north of Sherbrooke.

The new mid-level spots are on the

bike paths along Côte St. Antoine and Westmount Ave. This is to address what has been described as a major benefit for introducing the new electric-assisted vehicles (see story May 21, p. 1).

The mid-level points are listed as:

- 310 Côte Rd. at Murray Park
- 459 Côte Rd. (Roslyn-Grosvenor)
- 574 Côte Rd. (Prince Albert) and
- 4892 Westmount Ave. (opposite Marianopolis at NDG Ave. just east of Claremont).

"We are hoping that the dockless e-bike sharing can be a viable and popular option for all Westmount residents to get around," said Councillor Philip Cutler, who has been spearheading the project.

## 12 new zones adopted for houses of worship 2 by-laws for added uses could lead to many petitions

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount's 12 houses of worship are now officially in their own zones following city council's adoption June 3 of an Urban Planning by-law to create the separate zones. It was approved by council with minor amendments that involved only changes in the numbering of three zones.

While this by-law is not subject to the referendum process, it paves the way for additional and conditional uses to be permitted for the institutions under two separate draft by-laws, which could face possible referendum registers (see story May 14, p. 1).

One is By-law 1540 listing the additional uses that would be permitted. It has the potential to trigger a city-wide referendum, according to the city clerk's office and Urban Planning.

The other is By-law 1541 listing conditional used that could also be permitted, but only after special council approval. This by-law has the potential to lead to a referendum involving 60 zones, the 12 new concerned zones and 49 contiguous ones.

Applicable zones and details on numbers of signatures that would be required in each case were not available Monday before press time.

## Deadline for valid petitions: June 19 500 Claremont heads into registry petition process

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With adoption by Westmount city council June 3 of a second draft reading of the resolution to approve an apartment development at 500 Claremont, the project is now headed into what could be the last step in its process to over-ride current zoning restrictions.

This is the step that provides an opportunity for residents in the concerned or contiguous zones to petition for a register to be opened in order to trigger the start of a potential zoning referendum.

Valid petitions need to come from either the concerned zone R3-16-01 and/or any of the contiguous zones: R2-15-01, R2-17-01, R9-21-01, C5-20-04, C5-20-03, C5-20-02 and C5-20-01.

While no mention was made of this at the meeting, it was later explained that opening a register would require signatures from at least 12 qualified voters from the concerned zone or one of the contiguous zones, except in the case of C5-20-03, which requires six.

These would have to be submitted to the city clerk's office by a deadline of June 19.

This is a repeat of what happened in 2017 when the project had originally been submitted to the registry process. The exercise is in its second "rendition" following requested changes from the developer, Gideon Pollack, who attended the recent council meeting.

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# Sun shines on Victoria Village Street Festival



Three young women from Akiva School, Bianca Martella (left), and Liv and Zoe Sufer, were selling lemonade and collecting money to send kids who are not well off to summer camp.



Irish musician Belfast Andi (left), singer, guitarist and bodhran player, and all-round guitarist and composer Patrick Hutchinson belting out some good old Irish favourites.



Hogg Hardware's selection of miscellanea attracted lots of attention.



Five-year-old Alex Vanier tried out some of the educational toys on Katherine Hope's Discovery Toys stand. He was learning how to use a screw driver to assemble a toy.



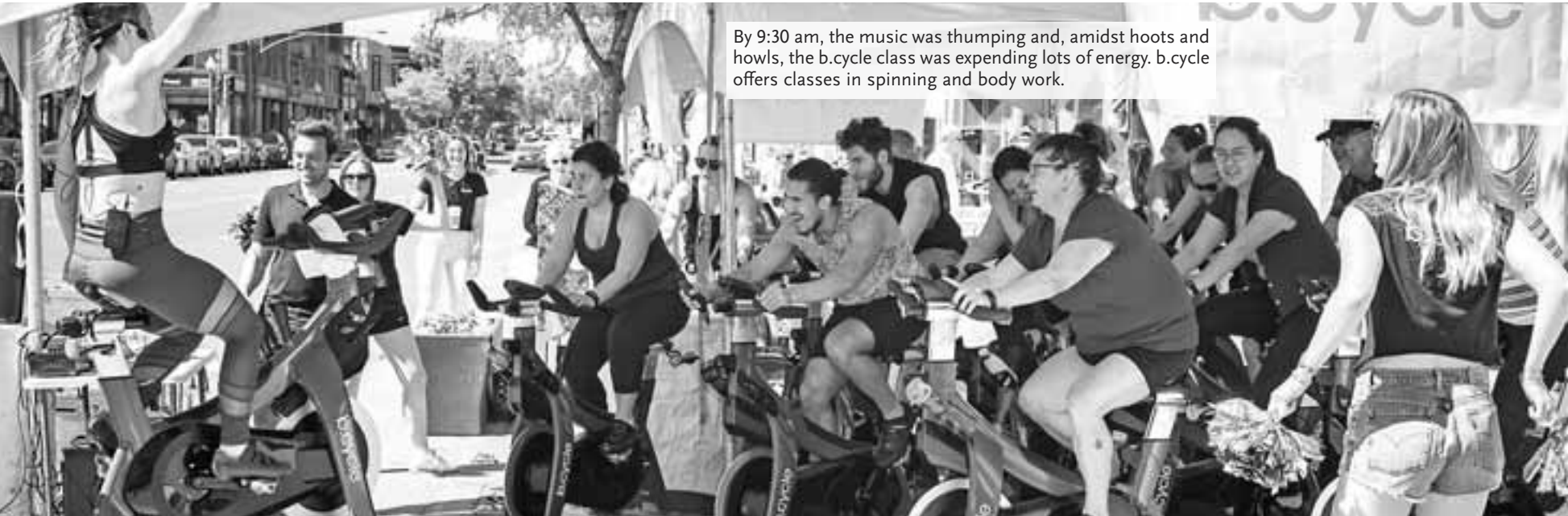
One-and-a-half-year-old Kenzo Fils was being kept very busy in Christina Miller's popular corner outside La Fougagerie. There was lots to captivate the kids, from cotton candy to face painting and Lego.

BY RALPH THOMPSON

On a busy weekend coinciding with the Grand Prix, the Victoria Village Street Festival was buzzing Saturday morning June 8 under blue skies and perfect temperatures, as well on as the previous two days. The event was not quite as crowded as some years, but there was lots of enthusiasm and loads of vendors and activities for the young and the old.



Four-year-old Shusha trying out her hand at playing the drum, jamming along with the Kosa musicians on the stage in Prince Albert square.



By 9:30 am, the music was thumping and, amidst hoots and howls, the b.cycle class was expending lots of energy. b.cycle offers classes in spinning and body work.





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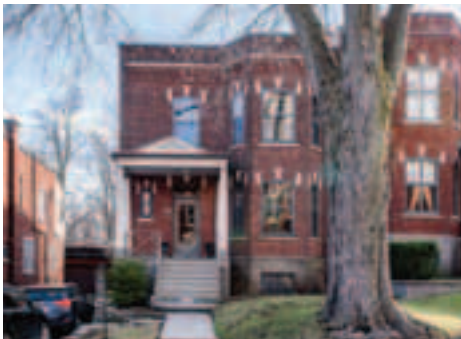


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## Adorning cars, Westmount-style



At left, this Westmount Public Works vehicle was festooned with “danger” tape on May 28 at Prince Albert and York. Was it an actual warning? A joke? Some other kind of message? No workers were on hand to ask. At right, “Queen Elizabeth” was seen in the back of a car parked May 26 at the 4300 de Maisonneuve apartment building. (Her image is actually on the glass of the window.) The motive of the owner was also unknown. A monarchist? Or a joker? Someone trying to use a car-pool lane? Or something else?

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

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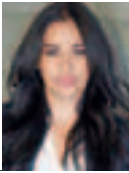
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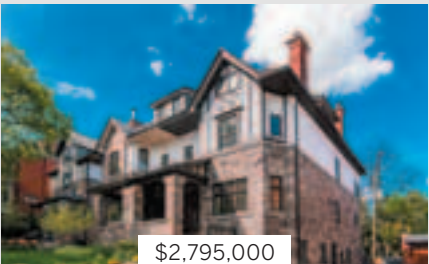
Sprawling 73 acre estate close to golf course & private airport. MLS 23644011



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**WESTMOUNT**

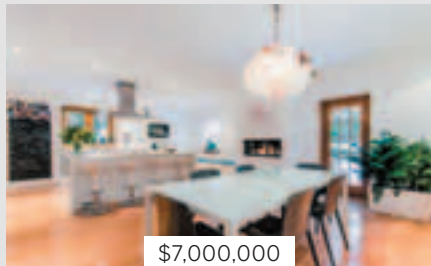
Bright and spacious residence perched in Upper Westmount. MLS 9515571



\$7,200,000

**WESTMOUNT**

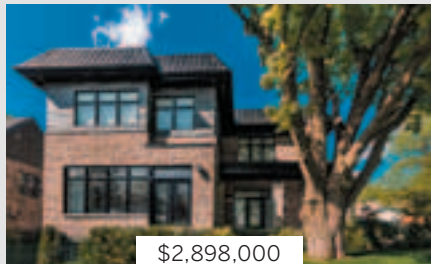
Villeneuve residence | State of the art residence with views MLS 27355301



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# On view until June 20

## Library’s StoryWalk panels show the way things were

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The latest StoryWalk panels along the park path outside Westmount Public Library depict a selection of century-old

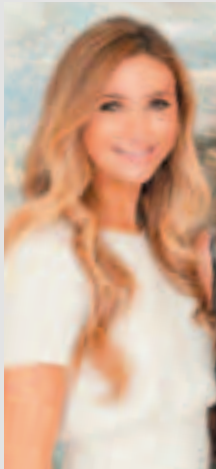
scenes, some showing the park in its original natural setting. The display is only up until June 20.

“The images are from our historical postcard collection and depict 100-year-old-



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plus snapshots of Westmount Park, the pond, the library, city hall, the lookout and more,” said Lora Baiocco, online services and archives librarian.

Interestingly, the landscaping of the park was raised June 3 at the city council meeting the same day the *Westmount Independent* photographed the StoryWalk display.

Patrick Barnard, of Melville Ave., ex-

pressed hope that in the park’s upcoming restoration project and public consultations it would remain “as natural as possible” in accordance with Olmsted-inspired landscaping principles used for the park’s original creation.

Renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted designed Mount Royal Park, New York’s Central Park and many others.



The panels and some readers on June 3.

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Art Scene

HEATHER BLACK

# Gasse, Goddard: Figuratively speaking!

the portrait “Véro, briefly.” Pastel colour – yellow, pink, and rust – adds interest to this contemporary composition.

*Painting with emotion*

In Goddard’s watercolour “Melancholia,” the fluid shape of an elderly woman dissolves into a grey background of despair. In contrast, the green-robed dancer of “Lift” floats exuberantly against a red ochre background. Painted in watercolour with charcoal, the dynamism of the dance – a hallmark of both modern and classic art – is celebrated.

Goddard’s skill with colour and form is also evident in a series of small oil paintings on linen. The more abstracted forms of “Study with antique table” are in contrast to the realistic red interior of “Study, reclining with red.” Gasse also paints in oil but her precise, figurative paintings are characterized by a romanticized, storybook style.

Painted in rich hues, “L’héritière” echoes a Renaissance scene. Here, the bejewelled heiress – rendered in a feathered cap – suggests opulent independence. Yet the painting’s absence of deep shadow and simplified rendition create an imaginary world. Courtly manners are also evoked – and questioned – in “Le bonjour était un adieu” where the young subject’s pleasant demeanor contradicts the image’s title.

This work – painted in vibrant orange, cyan, and green – illustrates Gasse’s mastery of colour. Five paintings of teddy bears are also bright and project a nostalgia for childhood or simpler times. In contrast, the artist’s use of a muted palette for the still-lives “Citron” at “Poire Bartlett” adds to their realism. Painted larger than life, delicate textures and sculptural forms draw attention to the beauty of these – once scarce but now commonplace – fruits.

*Message within style*

These works reflect

**City clerk, cont’d. from p. 1**  
city clerk and director of legal services Nicole Dobbie.

Avakian, who resigned at the end of April on returning from sick leave, has not been announced but she left to work as a real estate agent, Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent*. “We were sad to see her go,” she said. “There is no plan to replace her.” St-Jean, a lawyer, had join-



“Jérémie, wrapped” by Jennifer Goddard.

author Jerzy Kosinski’s view, “The principles of true art is not to portray, but to evoke.” From Gasse’s idealized subjects to

Goddard’s contemporary portraits, both artists create metaphors – and styles – that question the status quo.

ed the city in the position September 8, 2015 and served during the 2017 municipal election as the city’s returning officer. He had been a Montreal prosecutor for the Charbonneau inquiry into the awarding of public contracts in the construction industry (see story August 11, 2015, p. 2).

**First woman ADG**

Avakian began work with the city in November 2017 to fill the vacancy left by the promotion of Benoit Hurtubise to director general. She was the first woman to hold

Westmount’s position of assistant director general.

At the time of her appointment, she had been introduced as “an engineer with a wealth of experience” who would be overseeing the southeast development project among other major projects (see photo story October 10, 2017).

In her previous role in Boucherville, where she lives, she had been in charge of building an indoor municipal pool. A needs study for the possibility of one in Westmount is now under way.

Figurative art, in charcoal, watercolour, and oils, lined the walls of the Gallery at Victoria Hall until May 10. Created by Westmounters Ginette Gasse and Jennifer Goddard, many of these figures – and faces – reflect the promise and perils of life. As these works include both representative and abstract styles, this exhibition also showcased the expressive quality of each medium.

*Drawing on drama*

A young woman stares out at the viewer in Gasse’s untitled charcoal sketch. Here, the delicate lines of the face merge with bold strokes of shadow on grey, textured paper. Also rendered in charcoal, the sitter in Goddard’s “JP, light and dark” leans forward in a pensive pose. Behind him, reflected white light suggests contemplation and illumination.

The charcoal sketch, “Jérémie, wrapped,” also reveals Goddard’s skillful use of the medium. Here, the subject’s dark complexion is in contrast to the white of his turban and robe. In the arresting portrait of long-haired “Eduardo,” the artist’s use of charcoal is heightened by a background watercolour wash.

The expressive and timeless quality of charcoal is captured in bold strokes of Goddard’s small study “Stance (Habiba).” Rhythmic lines also creates movement in



“Le bonjour était un adieu” by Ginette Gasse.



# Ventrone on Ventrone

BY HEATHER BLACK

Miranda Ventrone, photographer, collaborator and wife of Italian hyperrealist painter Luciano Ventrone, spoke on his work to a rapt audience at Han Art on St. Catherine St. on June 1.

His exhibition, *The Limits of Truth*, included elegant and detailed floral and fruit still-lives as well as several large nudes. In these works, the artist combines intense colour or lighting to create art that is more beautiful than real.

As a photographer, Miranda Ventrone takes an active role in his artistic process. In her studio, she composes the still-lives and adjusts multiple lights, before adjusting her lens to the scene. Although both worked together to create early compositions, she said: "Now I create and take several images and he selects from them." She also described how each painting starts as an intricate sketch on canvas and is followed by the background colour,

before each detail is meticulously added.

The audience then watched a short video of the artist in conversation with art historian Edward Lucie-Smith. Entitled "Luciano Ventrone and the Eternal Present," the video included his early work and masterful portrait of art historian Frederico Zeri as well as explaining the influence of Italian Renaissance painter Caravaggio on him. Following the video, gallery representative Bruno Bertilotti B. helped to translate or answer questions posed by the audience to Miranda.

Ventrone's work is found in many international collections including the National Gallery of Art, Washington; and the Russian State Museum, St. Petersburg. Although recognized worldwide, this is the first exhibition of his work in Montreal. Presented in association with the Italian Culture Institute of Montreal, the exhibition continues until July 20 at Han Art, 3209 St. Catherine Street.



Miranda Ventrone with Han Art manager Chloe Ng in front of "Intrecci."

PHOTO COURTESY OF BRUNO BERTILOTTI B.

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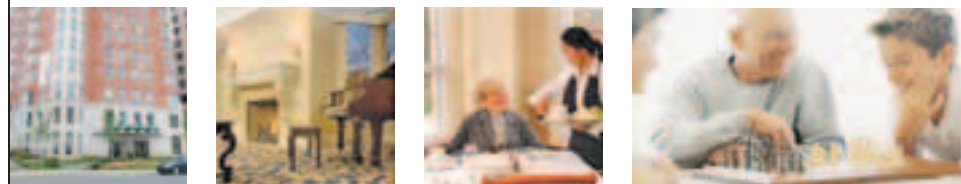
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From left, grade 1 winners Alexandre Maietta, Lang Hu, Anson Yan, Adam Chaban and Asha Ni Ógáin with Mayor Christina Smith, Councillor Mary Gallery at the podium, Councillor Anitra Bostock seated on left, and former councillor and chief judge Rosalind Davis in the background.



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# City awards McEntyre Writing Competition prizes

By RALPH THOMPSON

The annual McEntyre Writing Competition awards ceremony was held June 5 at Victoria Hall.

A total of 1,557 submissions were made to the competition by students, elementary or secondary, grades one to 11, who live, go to school or are members of a library in Westmount. Entries submitted under the theme “It’s OK to be Different” were reviewed by over 80 volunteer judges led by chief judge and former city councillor Ro-

salind Davis.

Julie-Anne Cardella, director of library and community events, calmed the excited chatter to open the ceremony.

**Thank-yous**

Mayor Christina Smith thanked all the staff who had contributed to the event, including organizer and children’s librarian Wendy Wayling. Davis thanked the judges for their contributions.

Smith handed out the awards with help from members of city council Anitra Bo-

stock, Philip Cutler, Jeff Shamie, Conrad Peart, Marina Brzeski and Mary Gallery.

In addition to cash prizes, each winner was credited with a designation inside a new book selected by the library and paid for by Friends of the Library. Wayling showed each of the books as the awards were presented.

A reception was held afterwards in the Gallery to view winning entries, the prize books and the Visual Art Centre’s community art project “It’s OK to be Different.”

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### McEntyre Writing Competition 2019 winners

#### Grade 1

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Asha Ní Ógáin     | Villa Sainte-Marcelline |
| 2. Alexandre Maietta | Selwyn House School     |
| 3. Adam Chaban       | Selwyn House School     |
| 3. Anson Yan         | Selwyn House School     |
| HM Lang Hu           | Selwyn House School     |

#### Grade 2

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Henrik Carricaburu-Saad | Westmount Park School |
| 2. Seongwoo Jeon           | Selwyn House School   |
| 3. Matej Blasch            | Selwyn House School   |
| HM Nadia Albakri           | École Saint-Léon      |

#### Grade 3

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Blake Isenberg  | Akiva School        |
| 2. Romi Sebag      | Akiva School        |
| 3. Alice Myers     | Akiva School        |
| HM Wolfgang Mondal | Selwyn House School |

#### Grade 4

- |               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| 1. Tanya Yong | The Study |
|---------------|-----------|

- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 2. Melanie Schwartz     | The Study           |
| 2. Georgia Clark        | St. George's School |
| 3. Samantha Karanofsky  | Akiva School        |
| HM Sarah-Raquel Leasure | The Study           |

#### Grade 5

- |                         |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Jacob Lubarsky       | Akiva School                       |
| 2. Noemi Fuden          | Akiva School                       |
| 3. Laaibah Ahmed        | Miss Edgar's & Miss Cramp's School |
| HM Gabriel Ince Cushman | École Saint-Léon                   |

#### Grade 6

- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Theodore Simons      | Selwyn House School |
| 1. Henri Stack-Lévesque | Selwyn House School |
| 2. Vicky Yu             | St. George's School |
| 3. Eve Bercuvitz        | Roslyn School       |
| HM Ryan Stollow         | Selwyn House School |

#### Grade 7

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Martin Barry           | Westmount High School   |
| Nina Rebellati-Mitnick | Westmount High School   |
| Radville Kragnyte      | Westmount High School   |
| HM Rose Côté           | Villa-Sainte-Marcelline |

#### Grade 8

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Emma Boucher   | St. George's School     |
| 2. Laïla Remmache | Villa-Sainte-Marcelline |
| 3. Ryan Clark     | Westmount High School   |
| HM Siena Webster  | St. George's School     |

#### Grade 9

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Dylan Lee      | Selwyn House School     |
| 2. Luiza Tatar    | Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf |
| 3. Rose Mintzberg | Westmount High School   |

#### Grade 10

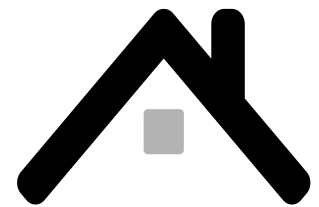
- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Curtis Rahman           | Westmount High School |
| 2. Erika Johnson           | St. George's School   |
| 3. Kennedy Lalonde         | Westmount High School |
| 3. Henry Rebellati-Mitnick | Westmount High School |

#### Grade 11

- |                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Arthur Moura Silva            | Westmount High School |
| 2. Rafael Stepenberg             | Westmount High School |
| 3. Justin Gandhi                 | Westmount High School |
| HM Rhéal Stéphan Blackier Mebane | Westmount High School |

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# Condos at 1111 Atwater 50-70% sold – champagne ‘included’

By DAVID PRICE

1111 Atwater developer Philip Kerub of High-Rise Montreal was pleased to report at a “site” tour June 4 that half of the development’s 23 luxury condos are firmly sold, with another 20 percent in serious negotiation. Delivery is forecast for the end of 2020. His presentation took place at the former nurses’ pavilion at 2307 Dorchester just south of the construction pit. The heritage building is now doing duty as the condominiums’ sales office, as well as housing offices for his firm.

As previously reported (May 14, p. 18), the city of Westmount issued a permit May 6 for the portion of the 38-storey tower that will lie in Westmount. Montreal’s had already been issued. Although the address of the condos will be in Westmount, they will be in Montreal.

Claridge, a Bronfman family investment vehicle, and builder EMD-Batimo are partners in 1111. High-Rise is also building a 22-storey building currently known as “Tower 6.” It will lie east of 2307 Dorchester in downtown Montreal. It could be more condos or a hotel.

Kerub is a hands-on businessman with plans to inspect all of 1111’s condominiums personally before handing them over to their owners, and he was the second person to greet the *Independent* for the tour. But he declined to be photographed.

### *Kerub’s personal link to Children’s*

Nevertheless, he explained many personal aspects of the development, including its history, which, it turns out, starts with him. His daughter, Olivia, was born prematurely at the Royal Victoria Hospital in 2013 and brought soon after to the Montreal Children’s Hospital, which was then located on the site.

“I saw tags of different colours on



Francis Charron of EMD-Batimo with a model of 1111 Atwater, located at 2307 Dorchester. Developer Philip Kerub declined to be photographed.

equipment based on where they were going during the move” to the MUHC’s Glen campus, he said. He became interested in the fate of the soon-to-be-empty city block. His company bought it from the provincial government, reselling parts to Devimco, which is developing four towers (all in downtown Montreal), including the EST-WEST condos and two other towers. Devimco did not respond to an email from *Independent* for details about the latter.

Since he was returning to Montreal after many years abroad, Kerub was also “looking for a place to live” and did not find anything to his taste, including the Ritz and Four Seasons. So he went to work to

create a development “on a different level,” or as the brochure puts it, “The exclusivity of life at the top, accessible to only 22 [sic] fortunate few.”

Many things will be included, such as complete kitchens and bathrooms. There are no upgrade options, explained Kerub, because the items are already all high-end, according to him.

### *Champagne for guests*

The sales office has a mock-up of what the building’s front door will look like, including a photo of a bucket of champagne bottles in the lobby.

“Will they be there all the time?” asked

the *Independent* in jest.

“Yes!” said Kerub in earnest, explaining the cost of maintaining a full bar for guests will not be material when split among the 23 eventual owners.

One thing not included is a tunnel from the tower to the Atwater Metro station, which is not currently planned. Apparently, the amount of infrastructure under Tupper Ave. would make it a major undertaking.

Kerub seems frustrated with the city of Westmount for a couple of reasons, including a failed attempt to use Hydro Westmount’s electrical lines that fed the hospital, but would have required transformers to be useable by the new buildings.

The city of Westmount refused to put the transformers under the street or on a corner above ground, according to him.

He also described a perennial urban-planning-in-Westmount discussion point: windows.

Indeed, at present, the Westmount portion of 2307 Dorchester does not have final windows because Westmount insists on guillotine windows with multiple, real panes. It’s been “a huge legal battle,” he summed up.

Kerub anticipates many Montreal-origin buyers, not foreign residents. “Families are coming back to Montreal.”

### *Chartwell to own, run seniors’ residence*

Underneath the nine floors of condos, there will be a seniors’ home with a full spectrum of options, from complete apartments to full care.

It will be partly in Westmount, with its address in Montreal on Tupper St. Those floors will be owned and operated by Chartwell, with members of the building group keeping a small equity stake.

Members are also maintaining full ownership of the building’s street-level retail space.



The upper windows in Westmount of 2307 Dorchester, which lies in both Westmount and Montreal, have not been installed due to a difference of views between the owner and the city. These photos were taken on June 6. Left-hand photo, the front of the building, with Westmount on the left; right-hand photo: the back with Westmount on the right.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



## From online to bricks-and-mortar

# 20 years for Sherbrooke St.'s Bead It Gemstones

By RALPH THOMPSON

How does a small family business survive in the tough retail business in Westmount's Victoria village? Steve Sigler, his two daughters, Jessica and Jaime, and wife Vivian have navigated their business, Bead It Gemstones, now located at 4930 Sherbrooke St. (between Prince Albert and Claremont), successfully for 20 years.

Low prices on the internet have pulled the rug out from under the feet of many merchants, while Bead It has survived and flourished. Ironically, their business started mainly as an online vendor of beads in a second-floor outlet close to their current location.

Jessica loved beads and it was her hobby as a youngster. Steve was involved with antiques. "...But you have to change and adapt," he said. "It's very hard to compete today with low-priced products sold online through Amazon. Our business evolved by finding rare, precious, quality and unusual beads from the Orient."

Steve and Jessica went on to explain that they provide a personal service, they share knowledge, do repairs and develop trusting relationships with clients, "We have reinvented ourselves several times," said Steve.



Jessica Sigler and her father Steve, June 4, in the Bead It store on Sherbrooke St. surrounded by more beads than you could ever imagine.

## Overheard

"You're hired!"

– Metro grocery store employee to elementary-school-age boy who was corraling and returning carts in its parking lot, May 29 around 5 pm

"If you don't quit my boy, I'm gonna take my gun out."

– One teenager relating someone else's previous conversation to an interlocutor  
St. Catherine St. near Metcalfe  
May 31 around 2 pm

"You are a weird *bébête* [bug/insect/ mosquito/blackfly]."

– Waitress to customer in the bar area of a St. Catherine St. restaurant  
June 3 at around 6:45 pm

Referring to the weather, "This summer is garbage."

– Woman to man, St. Catherine St.  
June 3 around 7 pm

Couple comes home and smells smoke. They ask their semi-detached neighbour, who is on his porch, if he is smoking. He is.

"Sorry to bother you. We were just worried that our house might be on fire."

"Not unless it's made of Cuban tobacco."

Prince Albert Ave. near York St.  
June 6 around 11 pm



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*The leaning utility pole of Westmount*



This utility pole in the north-south alley between Greene, Elm, de Maisonneuve and Sherbrooke seems to be falling down, slowly. From left, March 29, May 31 and June 6.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

**A family for Bili Bob**



*9 Lives*  
LYSANNE FOWLER

When I first saw Bili Bob's photograph amongst others, I was drawn to him immediately. Such a stunning fellow, this debonair black-and-white domestic long-haired cat, wearing a tuxedo and a white shirt with great dignity.

My heart breaks for him as he is 11 years young, as healthy as a can be. Yet, he was just left at the shelter after a long life with a family that could no longer give him the security and care of a home.

Please reach out to the SPCA to give Bili Bob a home as soon as possible, as adopters often look at kittens first and beyond loving senior pets.

Bili Bob's identification number is A41807803. You can call the cat adoption group at 514.735.2711 for more information on him and to drop by to visit weekdays from 12 noon to 7 pm and weekends from 11 am to 5 pm.



They are located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West. Their website is [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com) and their email is [spcapetfinderteam@gmail.com](mailto:spcapetfinderteam@gmail.com).

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## Manoir Westmount first stop for new programs

# Atwater Library's digital literacy program targets seniors, refugees

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Following a visit to Manoir Westmount on May 17 by federal Transport minister Marc Garneau to announce new funding for a program of digital literacy workshops, it's going to be harder getting the attention of an older generation of web surfers, whose faces will be as glued to mobile screens as their younger counterparts.

NDG-Westmount's member of parliament announced that the Atwater Library and Computer Centre's Connect Project is receiving \$236,000 from the federal Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development.

"In today's world, digital literacy is not a luxury – it's a necessity," Garneau told the gathering that included more than a dozen Manoir Westmount residents as well as board members, staff and volunteers from the Atwater Library.

"The connect program is designed to get more people using the internet and digital technology for personal and economic gain," said Atwater Library president John Aylen. He thanked Garneau and the federal government "for giving us the



Seen here with mobile devices during the announcement on May 17 at Manoir Westmount are (clockwise from centre) federal Transport minister and local MP Marc Garneau, Frank Greene, Shirley Gaventa, Simona Buth, Patricia Spensley, Atwater Library president John Aylen and board member Richard Conrad, Sherry Steinberg and John McGee.

funding, the ability to promote digital literacy."

Over the next three years, the Atwater Library will be using the funding to conduct a variety of digital literacy activities for residents of Westmount and Montreal, both in the Atwater Library building as well as at other locations.

In addition to sessions being given at Manoir Westmount, the program will be taking place at the St. Margaret Residential Centre on Westmount's Hillside Ave., social housing units (also on Hillside), the Contactivity Centre at Westmount Park United Church and at the Y Residence on Tupper St.

In all, 4,000 participants are expected to receive training in online fundamentals

such as secure web browsing, word processing and social media. The initiative targets senior citizens, low-income individuals, members of language minority groups, people with disabilities and those who haven't completed high school.

The program will include workshops offering two-hour sessions in computing basics; lectures and discussions on the impact of computing on everyday lives; 30-minute one-on-one question-and-answer sessions with instructors; "digital welcome cafés," aimed especially at refugee claimants living at the Y Residence; "internet peer cafés" to socialize and share knowledge; and a digital skills roadshow conducted at community centres and seniors' residences.



Garneau being watched, live and digitally.

On the day of the announcement, Manoir Westmount's residents were the first to benefit from the Digital Skills Roadshow. A skill that Manoir Westmount resident Shirley Gaventa discovered on her own was the ability to send text messages from her iPad to family members on their smartphones.

"They're often busy doing other things," she said, noting that they can't always immediately answer the phone.

Another resident, Poh Tan, also learned a lot by herself on the iPad she's owned for the past three years. Besides e-mail and web-browsing, she's also become proficient at using her tablet's image-capture features for taking still pictures as well as video.

*continued on p. 25*

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## Comin' Up

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

Atwater Library Lunchtime Series: "The Music of Mrs. Joyce: An Exploration of Nora Barnacle's Traditional Soundscape." With Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin (concertina and pipes), Kate Bevan-Baker (violin and vocals) and Martine Billette (keyboard). Free. 1200 Atwater Ave. 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

MONDAY, JUNE 17

Westmount city council mid-month meeting. City hall. 7:30 pm.

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Sundays at the Shaar. Mini-concert by Andrew Mangal, \$5 per person. Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, 425 Metcalfe Ave. Registration required 514.937.9474 x 139. 12 noon.

TUESDAY, JULY 2

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

### Library, cont'd. from p. 23

While the government's ultimate goal is to ensure no one gets left behind in an increasingly digital economy, Manoir Westmount's supervisor of leisure activities Simona Buth said there is still some apprehension among seniors with regard to certain more advanced online functions.

"They are a little bit nervous about online banking and fraud," she said, noting there have been some incidents of this sort at the residence, but that police community relations officers would be coming to give a presentation on how the seniors can safeguard themselves from online fraud.

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Pierre Chanzonkov, Bonnie Auger and Wilfrid De Freitas.

### Social notes, cont'd. from p. 24

of the building's Gothic feel. John Grew, from McGill University's Schulich School of Music, noted that the school could collaborate with the church once the organ is refurbished.

Father Lawrence MacEachen, the church's pastor, welcomed guests to the re-

ception, as did wardens Don Taddeo, Bonnie Auger, Andrea Bobkowicz and Pino Di Ioia (of Beavertails fame). On a rainy-sunny-rainy day, noted admiring the newly-planted garden and urns of rustling fern fronds were Martha and David Barrington, Michael Taub, Tina Serrao, and Janet and Dick Macklem.



Clarence Epstein and Louise MacLellan.



Don Taddeo.



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# The runes of Westmount



These chalk messages were photographed June 3 on de Maisonneuve near Metcalfe.



They appear to be a message using the runes from *The Hobbit*, although the *Independent's* in-house Tolkien expert found a



PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

few that were unfamiliar. The left-hand message is harder to decipher, due to deterioration of the chalk and the choice of runes. An earlier message in earlier dialect? Our best guess: "I am super grumpy today. My bestie tough. My sister."

The next two panels seem to say, "This language that she showed it [sic] to me. I know it better than her. I wrote a letter to them to show off. I only wrote this because you su[c]kers can't read it, so me and the sidewalk are laughing at you."

## What happened to Amanda Holmes?

#7 on *Globe and Mail* & *Toronto Star's* bestseller lists!

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### IMPORTANT NOTICE

**Application to open a registry in view of approval by way of referendum**

On Monday, June 3, 2019, the Municipal Council adopted the following:

1. The second draft resolution (No. 2019-06-133) concerning an application for the immovable bearing the civic address 500 Claremont Avenue located on lots 1 580 805 and 1 580 825 of the Quebec cadaster under *By-law concerning specific construction, alteration or occupancy proposals for an immovable (S.C.A.O.P.I.)*;
2. The second draft of By-law No. 1540 entitled *By-law to further amend Zoning By-law 1303 – Additional uses in houses of worship*;
3. The second draft of By-law No. 1541 entitled *By-law on conditional uses*.

all of which are subject to approval by way of referendum.

Interested persons may submit to the City Clerk's Office, no later than **Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.**, an application to open a registry in view of submitting a provision of the second draft resolution or one of the second draft by-laws to the approval of certain qualified voters.

The legal notices relating to the foregoing are available at: <https://westmount.org/en/resident-zone/legal-services-city-clerks-office/public-notice/>

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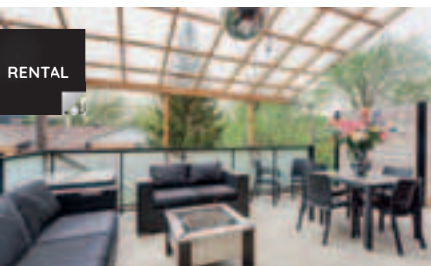
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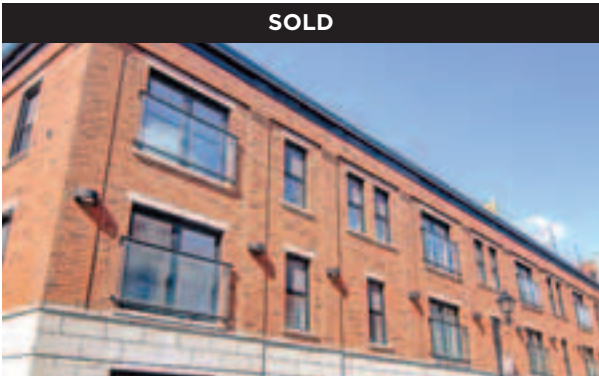
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