

# WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly, Vol. 14 No. 3d

We are Westmount

March 24, 2020

## City shuts all offices to public, staff rotated or sent home

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As the city moves to focus on maintaining essential services and protect its staff, the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic as

### Playgrounds, lookout closed

On March 20, all playgrounds in Westmount were closed, announced city director general Benoit Hurtubise. "Signs have been posted and we urge our population to practise social distancing measures." Summit lookout also was to be closed by Monday, March 23, at press time. "We have observed some gatherings there over the weekend."

a health crisis has presented a new type of emergency measures challenge, director general Benoit Hurtubise said March 18.

After shutting down all administrative offices to the public that day, he said that in order to reduce human contact as much as possible, some of the staff have been put on a rotating basis or sent home, some to be working from there.

"I have to be sure that services are provided and that our employees and residents are protected," he told the *Independent*.

This has presented a different scenario from other types of emergency such as the ice storm of 1998. "We're deploying a plan to minimize interaction rather than provide services to victims ..... such as the shelters *continued on p. 14*

## It's spring – skateboarding happens



Twelve-year-old Leo Ryan took advantage of the time off school and the low traffic levels on Arlington March 18 to work on his skateboarding skills. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON

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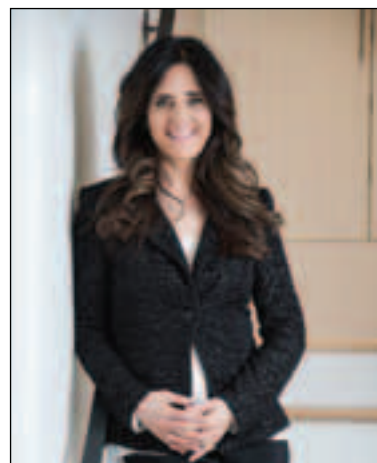
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# Public Security deemed essential service

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

At Westmount Public Security, deemed an essential service by the city, officers continue patrols and answering calls for assistance, but no additional auxiliaries or retirees are being used “at this point” to supplement the current numbers.

“The streets are quite quiet. Officers will be respecting a safe distance when interacting with citizens,” said Public Security director Greg McBain. “They will be making a special point of speaking with elderly persons they may see walking on the sidewalk to ask if they are alright.”

They’ll also be extra cautious when going into apartment buildings where they don’t know the condition of residents and some cases may be referred to police, which have a special unit dedicated to COVID-19, McBain said.

## Staff sent home to work March 18

# Sports & Rec was planning summer, winding up winter

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With the closure to the public March 13 of both the Westmount recreation centre (WRC) and Victoria Hall, where the city’s Sports and Recreation programs take place, most of the staff remained on site until March 18 when most of the municipal administrative offices were closed.

“All staff have been sent home and will be working from home,” director Dave Lapointe said at that time. “This includes the blue-collar arena maintenance staff once they have finished removing the [ice on the] Desmarais rink. They will also remain on call for replacing those in other departments.”

Before that, the two to three weeks of winter activities remaining were curtailed, and others were put on hold while the eight-member office staff at the WRC and one at Victoria Hall swung into planning the summer season.

At this time, the blue-collar arena maintenance staff remained on duty to clean the ice and began dismantling the Desmarais rink, as is usually done for the summer. At that time, part-time WRC auxiliary workers such as those on weekends were sent home, Lapointe said.

No one was on self-isolation absence, he said.

“It’s a day-to-day thing,” Lapointe had explained March 17.

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## New provincial directive makes it legal

# First (official) council in private held remotely

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

It was a precedent-setting council meeting March 16.

The mid-month session was closed to the public to observe the “social distancing” protocols of the COVID-19 health emergency. A Quebec directive allowed it to take place legally as long as council members were able to vote. Available means of communication included in person as well as online and by telephone.

(Council members regularly meet in private in “general committee” before or after the public session, but their discussions are not legally binding, unlike those made at the public meetings on such items as spending and by-laws.)

As a result, the council meeting can now be heard on the city’s website. Four council members and the mayor participated remotely. Mayor Christina Smith is in self-isolation after returning from the Caribbean after March break.

Calling the meeting to order as if she had been in the council chamber, she asked each of the eight councillors to call out their “aye” or “nay” vote or comment on each agenda item.

“Obviously, we are facing something we have never faced before, a global health

pandemic,” she said. The meeting was taking place because “it’s important that we pass certain measures to continue the business of the city.”

In the absence of an audience to participate in the two regular question periods, Mayor Smith invited residents to contact the council.

Councillors physically present in the council chamber were Anitra Bostock (acting mayor), Jeff Shamie, Cynthia Lulham and Kathleen Kez. Participating from outside city hall along with Mayor Smith were Philip Cutler, Marina Brzeski, Mary Gallery and Conrad Peart (whose baby daughter can be heard interjecting indiscernible comments to general amusement).

### Agenda items

Agenda items included final adoption of a resolution to approve the St. Léon project (see separate story p. RE-12), the approval of 14 building and renovation permits and the awarding of three contracts.

These were for the planting of 125 replacement trees between April and the end of June, the resurfacing of ice rinks at the arena and the purchase of primary switch-gear equipment for Hydro Westmount.

The city also renewed its agreement with Bixi for the coming season and adopted a by-law to grant discretionary power to the city for issuing operating permits for dockless self-serve electric vehicles such as bikes and scooters. The latter will not be operating in Westmount this year, as previously reported.

After the Quebec directive enabling the meeting to be closed to the public, the original agenda required updating. It had listed acting mayor Bostock as presiding when the legality of the meeting would have required a quorum from those in the council chamber.

“This was a good system that had been permitted,” Mayor Smith told the *Indepen-*

*dent*. “It worked well because we already had a recording system in place.”

According to city clerk Andrew Brownstein, who was also able to interject as required in reading a portion of a resolution, the system “allowed us to preserve our communications and democratic traditions.”

The council’s general committee meeting took place *in camera* as usual after the business session. “We mostly discussed COVID-19,” Smith said.

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Police Report, p. RE-14

Social Notes  
(Tuques Bleues), p. 13

Social Notes  
(O’Brien honoured), p. RE-8



City ads, p. 6-7

## City delays 2nd tax installment

The second installment of municipal taxes due May 25 will be delayed given the COVID-19 economic hardships faced by some, Mayor Christina Smith said March 19. The new date is to be determined. Reimbursements owing due to the closure of Sports and Recreation programs will also be made.

## HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

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Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep. #ViralKindness



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EDITORIAL

Local heroes: Metro grocery employees, many others

There are professions where people are paid to be brave. In those professions, members will usually apply voluntarily and then be chosen for this purpose, and then train for it, be equipped for it, drill regularly for emergencies, and then – usually – get some experience before their first major catastrophe.

Several professions spring to mind: the military, police, firefighters, EMTs, public security, doctors, nurses – to name a few. These people literally run towards disasters and we – rightly – praise them for it.

“Grocery store employee” is not a profession that springs to mind in this regard, but courage and steadfastness in the face of adversity is exactly what these workers have been showing across North America during the current COVID-19 era, including right here in Westmount. One store where I have seen it happening, and where reporter Ralph Thompson has chronicled it (see p. RE-16), is the Metro grocery store at Victoria and Sherbrooke.

I went by on March 13 following up on a tip that “all the shelves were bare.” (They weren’t.) What I did see was a vehicle line-up down Victoria Ave. such as I have never seen before, a hellish in-store line and employees under enormous stress.

You could see the fatigue in their faces. What did they do? They showed up and did their jobs despite the risks, restocking shelves at what was – I am guessing – a never-before-seen pace. There is no better

way to quell a panic, or a literal or metaphorical run on a bank, than to show that there is no scarcity, that there is no need to rush, and that things are more normal than they seem.

Mission accomplished, Metro employees and management.

Thrown into the front line of the current pandemic without warning or asking to be there, our local Metro employees shone – as I am sure many others did at other retail establishments across Montreal, including at pharmacies; in buses and on the Metro system; while making deliveries to all sorts of critical organizations and to all sorts of needy people (including – very importantly – the mail); at countless shops; and in many, many other places.

Our way of life relies on so many usually unnoticed relationships, many of which involve physical contact. Directly or indirectly, we all need – at a minimum – food, electricity, water, sewage and refuse service, natural gas/oil and gasoline/diesel – plus the machinery that makes those things happen. Also, although communication networks (phone, internet, cell phone) make so much “social distancing” (and other modern necessities and conveniences) possible, they also require maintenance, at least some of it in person. Maintaining as many of these relationships as possible is difficult at a time when we are being asked to limit physical contact.

As many of us limit in-person interactions (as per government requests and for everyone’s benefit), we should thank those of us who cannot, for any number of reasons.

Our local stories are some of many, and I also salute everyone else – locally and elsewhere – who is doing their job (or even

volunteering!) during this difficult time.

\* \* \*

And a special mention to anyone working in health care. We need you and appreciate you.

David Price is the editor of the Independent.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KUDOS HOGG HARDWARE

If the ice storm taught us anything, it’s that memories are long. The price gougers and profiteers are lucky if they’re still in business. The companies like Hogg Hardware in Westmount that stepped up still have the most loyal customers decades later – and Hogg is doing it again, with a new coronavirus-related Facebook page.

MATTHEW COPE, SOMERVILLE AVE.

THANKS FOR MAKING US FEEL THAT WE COUNT

My husband and I are seniors, both healthy and active. However, with all that is happening today we are considered to be at risk for the increasingly frightening spread of COVID-19. We are extremely grateful to some of our younger neighbours, who have spontaneously offered to assist us with shopping, collecting our necessary medications, just being available to chat and, most importantly, making us feel as though we count in our community.

Huge thanks to all of you who care and are willing and happy to help.

LYNN PECKNOLD, GROSVENOR AVE.

PLEASE POSTPONE WATER WORK

Open letter to city council

I am writing to ask city council and Public Works to have a moratorium on major public works over the summer. In particular the reconstruction of the water works on Claremont Ave., although the same would apply to other projects.

Due to the COVID-19 emergency measures, more residents – particularly older ones – are staying indoors in their homes. Imagine what this will be like with major construction activity going on in the street in front of your house. In a normal summer, residents might head over to the library for an air-conditioned break, go out for a lunch, possibly spend a night or two in a hotel, or head out of town to a vacation spot. This summer, these options are unlikely to be available. So the ground is vibrating, it’s hot, it’s noisy, it’s dusty, parking

is dislocated – all while residents are shut in and anxious about their own and other family members’ health.

Certainly the water works need renewing but one would imagine they can last through another summer. Postponing the work would be a boon to residents during these uncertain times. Please give the idea some serious consideration.

RICHARD AYLETT, CLAREMONT AVE.

SAVE ECONOMY, SUSTAINABLY

Open letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, MP Marc Garneau et al.

I write to you with an urgent message. The recovery monies for our economy coming out of the COVID-19 crisis in the coming year must be sustainable. Another crisis looms on the horizon. Climate heating has proceeded these past few decades at an unprecedented pace. The fires that burned the forests of Australia are our latest and most blatant warning.

The only blessing of COVID-19 is that it may have momentarily flattened the climate heating curve. We must not let it rebound upwards. Tipping points for our biosphere are on the horizon. We are morally bound not to invoke their nefarious, irreversible effects. The human suffering they would cause if set in motion would make COVID-19 seem juvenile.

Therefore, quite simply, monies spent to restart our economy must be sustainable. Judgement standards and ideas must be drawn up now with the help of experts in the field of sustainable transport, housing, manufacturing, agriculture, and all other major segments of our economy that at present contribute to climate heating.

On the international stage, the Canadian voice must be heard. It must call upon all governments to spend on sustainable recovery in an “informed by science” manner. This effort must be a much more coordinated one than the fractured effort we are witnessing with the COVID-19 virus. The type of Canadian intelligence that Lester Pear- .....

continued on p. 5

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

son exhibited for peacekeeping forces must come forward for sustainability developments. We want Canada to lead.

ROGER JOCHYM, LEWIS AVE.

## BEWARE OF WIDER PATHS

The *Westmount Independent* of March 10 (p. 1) contained an article on a [now cancelled] public meeting on March 18 about plans to refurbish Westmount Park.

Reading about a “widening of the path ways” in the park brought to mind three unpleasant thoughts.

1. More dead concrete.
2. An open invitation to speeding cyclists likely to cause serious accidents.
3. The constant presence of policing guards to ticket or arrest cyclists.

The extension of Westmount Park towards the open air swimming pool has paths covered with white gravel that give a country-like feel. They are relaxing and a real pleasure to stroll on and along. I wonder whether the proposed widening of the path ways could not be replaced by replacing the dead concrete with white gravel to give Westmount Park a more country feel with preservation of their present width? I think most if not all residents will agree to more trees in Westmount Park, particularly the gingko Biloba, whose

## Library staff kept working on site but are now home

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

At the Westmount public library, regular staff continued to work after the building was closed to the public on March 13 over the COVID-19 crisis. But on March 18, when most city offices were closed as well, the staff was preparing to take their files home “so we can work from there tomorrow,” said reference librarian Mai Jay.

The staff had been catching up on cataloguing, putting away books and reorganizing as well as ordering and receiving.

It was Jay who had been managing the library since the absence of director Julie-

graceful triangular leaves turn a brilliant lasting yellow-green in the fall.

Last and not least, a playing fountain in the large round flower plot near the gazebo surrounded by flowers and wooden benches could become the crown jewel of Westmount Park. The sight of a playing fountain is gladdening and recalls the tune of *Three Coins in the Fountain*. And very likely the submerged coins will amount to quite a lot of money Westmount could donate to a charity.

STEPHEN CHIN, SHERBROOKE ST.

Anne Cardella and assistant director Donna Lach, both on extended sick leave for different reasons. “Mai has done a wonderful job managing everything,” Cardella told the *Independent* last week.

“We’ve just been keeping it together,” Jay said.

After the building was closed to the public, remaining regular staff had been reduced to about eight from the regular 15, she said. Some were looking after their children when schools were closed.

Part-time jobs mostly involving students were suspended. “My heart goes out to them because many need the work.”

Jay said the staff had no warning the library would be closed to the public. “It was all very sudden. At first, we tried thinking of ways to get the books out to the people such as at arms-length or through our home service for shut-ins.

“But we realized we should stick to social distancing and avoid any chance of spreading the contagion and causing harm to any of our patrons in any way. It’s been a very anxious time for all of us.”

No fines will be charged while the library has been closed to the public.

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- Will the Covid-19 virus hinder the sale of my home?
- I am currently looking to rent/buy a property. Am I still allowed to visit properties?
- I am currently looking to list my property. Is it a good time to do so?
- Will housing prices go down, because of the Covid-19 virus?

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at <https://en.profusionimmo.ca/covid-19-virus> to view the answers or you can contact us at 514 935-3337.

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# COVID-19: MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR - MARCH 24, 2020

This is a challenging time for all of us as we struggle to cope with the impact of the COVID-19 virus on our families, friends, colleagues and ourselves.

The City of Westmount is continuing to work closely with *La Direction de la santé publique* and, as previously announced, has already made significant changes to our operations. We have closed the Westmount Public Library, Victoria Hall and Westmount Recreation Centre and cancelled all of our public meetings and events. In addition, all Westmount Sports & Recreation programmes and activities have been cancelled for the remainder of the Winter 2020 session.

Moving forward, City Council and I are balancing our commitment to protect the health and well-being of our employees with our need to provide Westmounters with essential services. This, in turn, has led to the following additional changes in our operations which are effective immediately.

- City Hall is now closed to the public, however citizens can still call the general number, **514-989-5200**, should they have any questions.
- The Urban Planning Department is not accepting new building permit and certificate applications. Please rest assured that once this policy changes, we will work diligently to process applications as quickly as possible.
- Applications for permits from Public Security can only be made online and not in person.
- In order to free up our Public Security staff, we have eliminated parking fees and are not enforcing parking restrictions. At the same time we are asking all residents to respect fire regulations, handicap parking restrictions, as well as signage for snow removal operations.
- Like many municipalities, we will extend the due date of the 2nd installment for the payment of municipal taxes until the end of June and temporarily suspend late charges on Hydro Westmount accounts.

I have received many emails underscoring the impact of the crisis on the personal finances of Westmounters and Westmount business owners. City Councillors and I are aware of the pressures many of you are facing, and we are committed to working with the City of Montreal, the province and the federal government to ensure that the necessary support programmes are not only in place but also accessible. Please rest assured that we are delivering this message to our colleagues in all governments on a regular basis.

**Social distancing** – the limiting of person-to-person interaction – is the best way to minimize the spread of the virus. I appreciate that this approach is upending the lives of many Westmounters, who are, for example, working remotely or homeschooling or in self-quarantine. We remain concerned about how seniors, the isolated and others with limited support networks are managing. Once again, we urge those who would benefit from having a city employee checking in on them by phone on a daily basis to sign up for this service by calling **514-989-5222**.

All playgrounds and basketball courts are now closed, as well as the Summit Lookout. The Government of Quebec has announced that schools will remain closed until May 1st. Everyone returning from vacation must put themselves in self-quarantine for 14 days.

Please continue to take all the necessary steps to help us minimize the spread of the virus. Also, consult [santemontreal.ca/coronavirus](https://santemontreal.ca/coronavirus) for the most up-to-date information, and call **1-877-644-4545** if you are concerned about COVID-19.

Thank you for your support and understanding, and on behalf of all of us, I wish to thank all of our City employees, particularly those providing essential services, for their professionalism and commitment to public service. And, most importantly, stay healthy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina M. Smith".

Mayor Christina M. Smith

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us

**Mayor Christina M. Smith | 514 989-5240 | [csmith@westmount.org](mailto:csmith@westmount.org)**

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## COVID-19 : MESSAGE DE LA MAIRESSE - LE 24 MARS 2020

La lutte contre la propagation du COVID-19 a un impact sur nos familles, nos amis, nos collègues et nous-mêmes. C'est toute la communauté qui vit des moments difficiles.

La Ville de Westmount continue de travailler en étroite collaboration avec la Direction de la santé publique. Comme nous l'avons annoncé précédemment, nous avons pris plusieurs mesures et décisions qui ont entraîné des changements importants dans nos opérations et nos activités. Nous avons notamment fermé la Bibliothèque publique de Westmount, le Victoria Hall et le Centre des loisirs de Westmount. Toutes nos réunions et manifestations publiques sont annulées. Les programmes et activités du Service des sports et de loisirs de la Ville ont également été annulés pour le reste de la saison d'hiver 2020.

Mon objectif, et celui du conseil municipal, est d'établir un équilibre entre notre engagement à protéger la santé et le bien-être de nos employés, et celui de fournir les services essentiels aux Westmountais. Cet objectif nous a conduits à procéder à des changements supplémentaires dans la poursuite de nos opérations. Ainsi, les mesures suivantes entrent en vigueur immédiatement et sont applicables jusqu'à nouvel ordre :

- L'hôtel de ville est maintenant fermé au public. Les citoyens qui ont des questions peuvent appeler le numéro général au **514-989-5200**.
- Le Service de l'aménagement urbain n'accepte plus les nouvelles demandes de permis et de certificats. Soyez assurés qu'une fois que cette mesure sera levée, nous travaillerons avec diligence pour traiter les demandes le plus rapidement possible.
- Les demandes de permis au Service de la Sécurité publique se feront exclusivement en ligne, et non plus en personne.
- Afin de rendre plus disponibles nos agents et employés du Service de la Sécurité publique, nous avons supprimé les frais de stationnement et n'appliquons plus les restrictions de stationnement. Nous exhortons toutefois les résidents à respecter les règlements en matière d'incendie, les restrictions de stationnement pour handicapés, ainsi que la signalisation lors des opérations de déneigement.
- À l'instar de plusieurs municipalités, nous allons reporter la date d'échéance du 2<sup>e</sup> versement pour le paiement des taxes municipales jusqu'à la fin du mois de juin et suspendre temporairement les frais de retard sur les comptes de Hydro Westmount.

De nombreux résidents et commerçants de Westmount m'ont écrit pour me faire part de l'impact de cette crise sur leur situation financière. Les conseillers municipaux et moi sommes conscients des difficultés auxquelles beaucoup d'entre vous sont confrontés. Nous nous engageons à travailler avec la Ville de Montréal, la province et le gouvernement fédéral pour que les programmes de soutien nécessaires soient, non seulement en place, mais aussi accessibles. Soyez assurés que nous transmettons régulièrement ce message à nos partenaires dans tous les paliers de gouvernement.

**L'éloignement social** - la limitation des interactions entre les personnes - est l'une des meilleures façons de limiter la propagation du virus. Je suis consciente que cette approche bouleverse la vie de nombreux habitants de Westmount qui, par exemple, doivent maintenant travailler à distance, étudier à domicile, ou se mettre en auto-isolement. Nous sommes particulièrement préoccupés par la situation des personnes âgées, des personnes isolées et des personnes ayant des réseaux de soutien limités. Encore une fois, nous invitons ceux qui pourraient bénéficier de la visite quotidienne d'un employé de la Ville à s'inscrire en composant le **514-989-5222**.

Tous les terrains de jeux et de basket-ball sont désormais fermés, ainsi que le belvédère du sommet. Le gouvernement du Québec a annoncé que les écoles resteront fermées jusqu'au 1<sup>er</sup> mai. Toute personne revenant de vacances doit se mettre en quarantaine pendant 14 jours.

Veuillez continuer à prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires pour nous aider à limiter la propagation du virus. Consultez également le site **santemontreal.ca/coronavirus** pour obtenir les informations les plus récentes, et composez le **1-877-644-4545** si vous êtes préoccupé par le COVID-19.

Je vous remercie de votre soutien et de votre compréhension, et au nom tous les membres du Conseil, je tiens à remercier tous les employés de la Ville, en particulier ceux qui fournissent des services essentiels, pour leur professionnalisme et leur engagement pour le service public.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina M. Smith".

La mairesse Christina M. Smith

Si vous avez des questions, n'hésitez pas à nous contacter

**La mairesse Christina M. Smith | 514 989-5240 | csmith@westmount.org**

Anitra Bostock - District 1 | 514 989-5081 | ambostock@westmount.org  
 Philip A. Cutler - District 2 | 514 989-5082 | pcutler@westmount.org  
 Jeff J. Shamie - District 3 | 514 989-5083 | jshamie@westmount.org  
 Conrad Peart - District 4 | 514 989-5080 | cpeart@westmount.org

Marina Brzeski - District 5 | 514 989-5079 | mbrzeski@westmount.org  
 Mary Gallery - District 6 | 514 989-5076 | mgallery@westmount.org  
 Cynthia Lulham - District 7 | 514 989-5077 | clulham@westmount.org  
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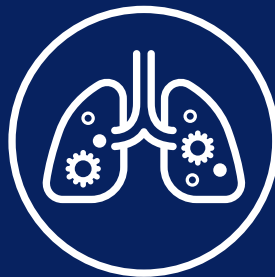
The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) causes a respiratory infection that can involve the following symptoms:



Fever



Cough



Trouble Breathing

# Protect Yourself!

**Wash your hands often** with lukewarm running water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based sanitizer if you do not have access to soap and water.

**Stay home:** do not go to school, child centres or daycares. Avoid public spaces and work from home, whenever possible.

**Protect those close to you,** particularly the elderly and those at greater risk for infection, by avoiding visiting them if you are feeling sick.

It is strongly recommended that all persons returning from abroad self-isolate themselves at home for a period of 14 days and to watch out for any symptoms.

[Quebec.ca/coronavirus](https://quebec.ca/coronavirus)

 1 877 644-4545



*Quiet streets, inspectors on stand-by*

# City lifts metered and overnight parking restrictions

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

People were still seen feeding West-

mount's parking meters last week despite the temporary suspension of many restric-

## *Last snowman of winter? City's smallest?*



This tiny snowman was photographed on March 19 on Lansdowne between Sherbrooke and de Maisonneuve.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

tions, owing mainly to reduced parking problems due to quieter streets in wake of COVID-19.

Along with the meters, there will be no enforcement of the overnight and other time-limited parking limitations, and parking fees have been suspended until further notice. Illegal parking and situations considered hazardous will still be ticketed. These include such offences as parking in front of hydrants, in handicap spots and in areas of no-parking as well as double-parking.

The Public Security parking office has been closed to the public.

A decision had not been made as of March 19 on how the parking inspectors might be deployed as a result, according to city director Benoit Hurtubise. He said the city had been in contact with the Metro grocery store concerning whether the inspectors might be used to help seniors with shopping but had been told there was no need at this time.

"They're on stand-by for now."

The Contactivity centre has since put out a call for volunteers to help with delivering groceries (see story, p. 14).

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*Karen Buzaglo MD, FRC(S)C  
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La Fondation du cancer des Cèdres remercie tous les professionnels de la santé, médecins, infirmières et professionnels paramédicaux qui prennent soin de nos patients atteints de cancer au Centre de cancer des Cèdres et à travers le CUSM pendant ces temps difficiles.

Cedars Cancer Foundation salutes and thanks all the healthcare providers, doctors, nurses and all allied health professionals caring for our cancer patients at the Cedars Cancer Centre and throughout the MUHC during these difficult times.

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# Gedalof, Roberts and Zhang: Vigour and verve



*Art Scene*  
HEATHER BLACK

Lively, local exhibitions put a spring in the step of many Westmount art lovers. The exhibition of work by Anna Gedalof and Bruce Roberts at The Art Gallery at Victoria Hall and Zhang He at Galerie de

Bellefeuille feature colourful, animated and vivacious paintings. In these works, the free flow of colour, line and texture recreate the energetic rhythm of their subjects and a delightful ambiguity for viewers to interpret.

### Life enthused

A strong colourist, Gedalof explores a variety of subjects from abstracts, to still-lives or figurative art. In the mixed-media painting “Lightscape I” a strong yellow

swathe dominates a more muted background of blue, grey and dusty rose. Similarly, a yellow background enlivens the four, small figures in the acrylic painting “Suite for Toy Piano.”

Yellow highlights also animate the elderly subject of “Being There,” while a woman and man in conversation is the theme of Gedalof’s dark – but arresting – “Soul Mates.” Two classic compositions – the still life “Sketches from ..... Spain” and the portrait *continued on p. 11*



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“Spiritual Warrior” by Bruce Roberts.



“Sketches from Spain” by Anna Gedalof.


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“Nobody Else but Me” – are energized by loose lines encircling the subject or drawn across the painting.

For this duo exhibition, Roberts’ oeuvre includes drawn or painted birds, tango dancers and his signature, spirited horses. For “King of Blue,” fluid blue, pink and green lines converge to create the flutter of avian wings. The free forms of a man and a red-robed woman captures the simmering heat – and musicality – of “Slow Dance.”

Black and ochre calligraphic lines invigorate mounted “Chinese Warriors” and the sole “Spiritual Warrior.”

Roberts’ “Fougue” captures the rhythmic gallop and restless energy of three wild horses while castanet-clicking bareback dancers enliven the almost abstract “Madrid.” Showcasing imagination and style, Gedalof’s and Roberts’ exhibition was to continue until March 28 at Victoria Hall, until its closure due to COVID-19.

#### Floral verve

Known for thick, impasto brushstrokes, Zhang’s exuberant and contemporary oil paintings hint at wildflowers, waterlilies and tabletop bouquets. Painted with rhythmic strokes, strong textures animate compositions of petals and foliage. In “Slow Dance,” dynamic pink and red brushstrokes – set against green and blue – evokes roses and romance.

In “Blue Anthems I,” dabs of pink and white against solid cyan conjure up waterlilies and reflected blue skies. In contrast, the airy composition, “Lingering II,” suggests a walk in the park. Abstract impres-



“Slow Dance” by Zhang He.

sionism merges with Chinese tradition in the pink and green brushstrokes of “Cherry Blossoms I.” Bold in texture and movement, Zhang’s work could be seen until March 17 at GdB3, 1455 Sherbrooke St., and now at 1367 Greene Ave. by appointment only.

#### Painted poetry

Vitality – and, at times, wild abandon – dominates the work of Gedalof, Roberts and Zhang. Painted with fluid brushstrokes, these artists capture the restless energy or movement of their respective subjects whether individuals, horses or flowers. Created with minimal detail, these compositions convey what artist James McNeill Whistler called “the poetry of sight.”

## Dorchester at Weredale City inspectors going to brick-shedding house

As previously reported, the western, entrance arm of Weredale Park road in south-east Westmount has been closed by the city since February 27 after bricks fell from the house at that corner, 4030 Dorchester.

On March 20, the city councillor for the district, Kathleen Kez, told the *Independent* by email that “the city will be sending some inspectors [this] week” to look “inside and out” for “what needs to be done to make the building safe.”



The *Independent* has previously reported how an entrance detour has been created to access Weredale Park via an alley from Clondeboye Ave. It had not noticed this synchronized set of traffic lights allowing vehicles to use the eastern, exit arm to get in too. These photos were taken March 18.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



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**9 Lives**  
LYSANNE FOWLER

Yes, these are difficult times when family, home and hearth are most important. Being homebound could be an opportunity to give a kitten a family as well.

Tiny Ruby kitten is a lovely white angora with cap and cape grey markings, huge green eyes and a most perfect pink nose. She needs to be adopted as soon as possible as she is very young and needs the opportunity to integrate and socialize.

Lovely Ruby is available for a family now from the Montreal SPCA cattery, where her identification number is 44011175.



**Westmount A-dog-tions**  
LYSANNE FOWLER

While I was walking my older dog on the Summit this week, I saw two young German shepherds running around and making everyone laugh with their antics.

This young Thunder has been tugging at my heartstrings, as I could imagine him enjoying the glorious paths with doggy friends as well. He is so handsome, with a perfect dark mask on his face, and soft brown eyes that focus to attention. Thunder is a growing two-year-old, all tall ears and long body that will start to fill out in the next year.

Thunder is at the Montreal SPCA kennel and is waiting for a family from our neighbourhood to give him the great life that dogs have in our area. He is very healthy, up to date with his inoculations and treatments, neutered and micro-

Tiny Ruby kitten



She is eight months old, up to date with her inoculations and treatments for her age, spayed and on track for her updates as she grows.

You can reach the SPCA adoption group at adoption@spca.com or call them at 514.735.2711 to find out more about Ruby kitten and arrange a visit.

The SPCA shelter is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West, and its regular visiting hours are 12 noon to 7 pm from Monday to Friday, and 11 am to 5 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Just to be up to date, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.spca.com for its adoption visit schedule this week.

Your neighbour,  
Lysanne

Young Thunder



chipped.

Please refer to Thunder's identification number 43824894 for more information on him when you reach out to the SPCA adoption group at adoption@spca.com or call them at 514.735.2711 to arrange a visit.

The SPCA shelter is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West, and its regular visiting hours are 12 noon to 7 pm from Monday to Friday, and 11 am to 5 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Just to be up to date, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.spca.com for its adoption visit schedule this week.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

**We welcome your letters**

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week.

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## Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

# Tuques Bleues a snowy success



"Dashing through the snow..."

Montrealers are renowned for not only making the best of winter's icy moments, but actually revelling in them. No one does this better than Tuques Bleues. Their annual fundraiser February 13 on Mount Royal united nature-lovers for all sorts of heart-warming reasons, not the least of which was to raise funds and awareness for Les amis de la montagne.

Founded by Westmounter **Peter Howlett**, the non-profit organization is acclaimed for its mission to protect and improve the sustainability of our marvelous mount, its restorative canopy rising above the urban concrete.

The 23rd Tuques Bleues eve attracted over 400 parka-clad guests, as well as black beauties: gorgeous long-lashed horses with their mounted police riders.

For the 10th consecutive year, the event's honorary president was **Michel Leblanc**, CEO Montreal Chamber of Commerce.

Noted amidst the gently-falling flakes were **Jeffrey Drummond**, managing partner DNA Capital; **Sebastien Perron Carle**, director Global Invest-  
ments, Scotia Capital Ca- *continued on p. 14*



Peter Howlett.



Michel Leblanc.



Robert Beaudry.



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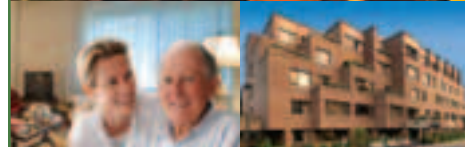


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# Contactivity aims to beef up outreach services, needs help

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The Contactivity seniors' centre at Westmount Park Church suspended its programs as of March 16 for its 800 members to prevent spreading contagion from the COVID-19 coronavirus, which has now become a global pandemic.

The closure is in effect until at least the end of March, when it will be reassessed, executive director Mary Stark said last week. Every other senior centre she knows of has also shut down its regular programs.

"The suspension was difficult, because we work to alleviate senior isolation, to provide a convivial hub for mutual support and engagement as well as learning opportunities, health promotion and prevention," Stark explained.

As a result, in keeping with the importance of "social distancing" and Quebec directives banning large groups of people, the move has become somewhat of a double-edged sword affecting persons over age 70 who are considered most vulnerable to the coronavirus.

While some of Contactivity's volunteers are in the vulnerable age bracket, they have

excluded themselves as drivers of others to and from medical appointments. This has reduced the number from six to three.

These include its regular services for 125 outreach clients, which includes some 30 daily TeleCheck phone calls in conjunction with Public Security's "Hello Westmount" program that has been evolving over the last couple of months.

"We will be providing gloves and sanitizer for those volunteers who need it, and we will be keeping a distance from seniors when groceries are dropped off."

She also said that staff have been in discussion with the city's Public Security Unit regarding other assistance, possibly from the parking inspectors who are now issuing tickets only for safety reasons (see separate story, p. 9).

Volunteers who might help with grocery shopping for seniors and possibly other "niches" also "would provide a bank of additional people upon whom we could call in case things ramp up," Stark said. "They can leave a phone message at Contactivity, where staff is working remotely, but efforts will be made to answer their call the same day." Call 514.932.2326 or 514.932.3433.



Felix Parent-Sirard, Steves Morin and Parker Donaldson.

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

nada; and local res **Eugene Riesman, Tom Velan, Morag Howlett** with her daughter **Jane Howlett**, and **Diana Ferrera Scalia** and **Sam Scalia**, president Samcon.

Inspired by the 19th-century tradition established by the Montreal Snowshoe Club, the Tuques sporting adventure offers races for the fleet, as well as more sedate strolls along well-lit snowy pathways.

This winter's Race to the Top was enhanced by a beautiful illuminated walk featuring historical highlights. Medals were bestowed by **Diana Ferrera Scalia** (women's medals) and **Robert Beaudry**, Ville de Mon-

tréal (men's). Ladies snowshoe winners were **Sarah Christiani** (gold); **Dominique Codere** (silver); and **Marie-Claude Genest** (bronze). Men's winners were **Steves Morin** (gold), **Félix Parent-Sirard** (silver) and **Parker Donaldson** (bronze).

Participants and supporters enjoyed a warming buffet by the always-delicious caterer **Java U**. Lead sponsors were **Manulife** and **Samcon**. Lantern sponsor was **Group Copley**.

The frigid but fun-filled night raised \$150,000 to support Les amis' conservation programs.

### COVID-19, cont'd. from p. 1

required at that time."

As of March 20, the following update on the status of various city operations "might change depending on new directives from Quebec," he said.

City hall, the Public Security office, Hydro Westmount and Public Works have been shut to the public in addition to the closure March 13 of the Westmount recreation centre, library and Victoria Hall.

Police station 12, located in the protective services building on Stanton St., is also closed to the public.

At city hall, "we have minimum staff in the place." Rotation allowed communication to residents, for the tender process to continue, he said, and for Urban Planning to inspect building and renovation work under way and handle permits already in process. These exclude those requiring review by the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), which will not be meeting. "No new files will be opened."

### Meetings continue by teleconference

Hurtubise said he was holding daily phone meetings with the council and de-

partment heads, who were to be following the same system with their teams.

At Public Security, officers continue patrols and answering calls for assistance, but no auxiliaries or retirees are being called "at this point" to supplement the current numbers. "The streets are quite quiet."

With the temporary suspension of parking restrictions such as overnight parking, the four-hour limit and metered parking (see separate story, p. 9), the parking office has been closed and parking inspectors could be moved to other duties, he said.

At Public Works, teams were also being rotated but ready to respond to any situation as needed. Garbage and recycling services, which are contracted out to private entities, will continue for now.

At Hydro Westmount, the four customer service agents are rotating while the operation and monitoring of the network was continuing and linesmen are on call in case of a power failure, such as occurred March 20.

For now, all upcoming council meetings are to be closed to the public, as occurred March 16 (see story, p. 3).



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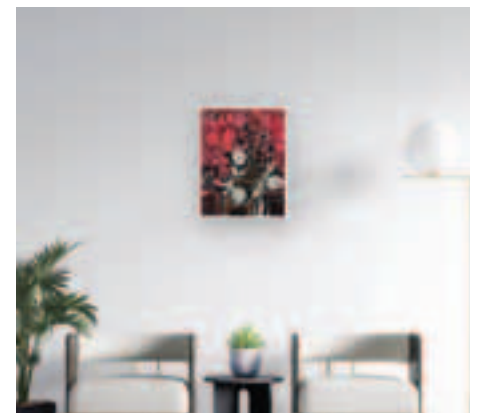
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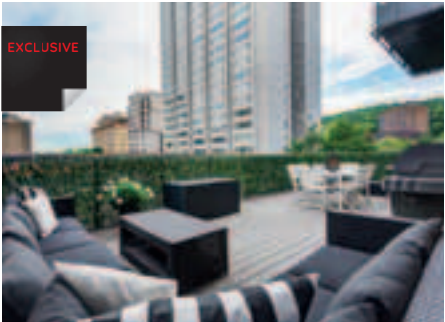
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