

21 COVID-19 cases reported at St. Margaret's at April 17

## Retirement, long-term care homes adapt to new challenges

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Twenty-one cases of COVID-19 were revealed last week at St. Margaret's Residence on Hillside Ave., the only public CHSLD long-term facility in Westmount. The cases began to come to light April 13 in a list from Quebec health and social services (the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, or MSSS) and represent 22 per cent of the residents.

There were related deaths, but the exact number attributed to COVID-19 was not available by press time from the MSSS as requested beginning April 15.

Reinforcements to staffing at St. Margaret's were being brought in from the Jewish General Hospital and other institutions, it was reported April 16 (see separate story, p. 8)

No coronavirus cases were listed at Château Westmount, the large private long-term care facility on de Maisonneuve at Victoria, or at either of the city's two retirement residences: Manoir Westmount (at Sherbrooke and Lansdowne) and Place Kensington (on St. Catherine at the foot of Kensington Ave.)

On the other hand, another 12 cases of the coronavirus pandemic were reported on Westmount's doorstep at an NDG retirement residence just west of the border called Westmount One. This is a 12-storey building on Côte St. Luc Rd. near Bonavista.

*For more on how the four seniors' residences in Westmount are coping with COVID-19, please see p. 8.*

## Nature's see-saw



Scarlett (left) and Qianhe Gao find an original way to use a broken tree branch as a see-saw April 16 in Westmount Park near the lagoon.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON

Start dates to be scheduled

## Contracts awarded for Springfield, St. Sulpice work

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

With the approach of the usual construction season, "we're moving into the busy time of year" for street and underground work, said Councillor Philip Cutler at the city council meeting April 6. He presented contracts for the reconstruction of Springfield Ave. and St. Sulpice Rd. that were both unanimously approved.

The two streets had their water mains replaced last year in anticipation of the street work to follow this summer. As a re-

sult, these have been identified as two priorities given the uncertainty of such work, which has been on hold by the Quebec government due to COVID-19, he explained.

Cutler said the city's projects had taken into consideration two different scenarios for the coming months, based on earlier and later starts. A number had already been deferred to May or June "or beyond, but we're hoping to accomplish as much as possible," he explained.

"A lot is unknown at this time. We are adapting to the new realities."

At this point, according to Engineering director Elisa Gaetano, "all public sector construction is closed by the provincial government and no start date has been announced, although the shutdown is slated to end on May 4. We will then schedule the work and a tentative start date as soon as we have more information."

The contract to also redo Sunnyside this summer has not yet been awarded "as we deferred the tender opening in light of the mandated shutdown of ..... non-essential businesses continued on p. 12



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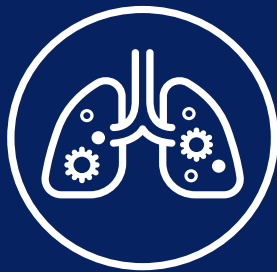
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# Miyamoto feeds COVID-19 ‘angels,’ ‘heroes’

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

It all began early in the month when a 20-year customer of Miyamoto, the Japanese grocery store and caterer on Victoria between Sherbrooke and Somerville, ordered 100 dinners to be sent anonymously to front-line workers at the Montreal General Hospital.

It was a gesture of thanks from the donor that triggered a chain reaction leading to meal donations to other “guardian angels” – and now to those working at some of the smaller but challenged long-term residences.

“The customer came into the store and said he’d like to send 100 meals to the hospital and did I have a way to help out?” owner Wesley Miyamoto explained last week. “What he gave me covered most of the cost, my overhead, and I spoke to a doctor who acted as a liaison,” though Miyamoto does not know which department the order went to.

“That was the seed that got me going,” he said.

Soon after, he heard on the radio about Merci Meals, a GoFundMe group formed by medical students whose classes were cancelled by the COVID-19 closures. Their aim was to help struggling restaurants by sending meals to hospitals during the global pandemic. And Miyamoto partnered with them to fill another 100-meal delivery to the MGH.

Since then, however, he’s been hearing of the challenges encountered by long-term care residences.

“I realized there were a lot of heroes there, too, like those at the home where my mother passed away in December.” So he sent 20 meals there as his personal thank-you but now he’s encouraging his customers to do the same. “For every meal donated, we will send two to a long-term residence.”

“I feel our food is a good treat and a good way for a nice group of people to

know they are appreciated.”

## Smaller orders better

Because he is a “smaller” company, he said, he would rather switch to smaller orders than 100 “so it won’t overburden my kitchen staff,” who now work two at a time, rather than four, to maintain physical distancing.

Miyamoto said his own business is doing well despite the pandemic. “Grocery is up but take-out’s slower because of the distancing, but we’re adapting.”



Miyamoto on Victoria Ave. on April 17.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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## COVID-19

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I wish you and your loved ones the best of health for the weeks to come.

A heartfelt thank-you to all those working to keep us safe during this unprecedented time.

*Susan Lloyd*





Signs of the times



Left-hand photo: the Summit lookout is closed due to the COVID 19 outbreak, as photographed on April 11, according to a large red sign and fencing, and Summit Circle is only open to local traffic; right-hand photo: new traffic calming measures on Lansdowne include temporary bollards, an electronic speed indicator and a reminder that the speed limit in that southbound block is 40 km/h. (It is 30 km/h northbound.)

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.



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**Police Report****Given focus on patrols, communications officers re-assigned**

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Community relations officials at the Montreal police department's Station 12 on Stanton St. have told the *Independent* they will be unable to provide crime incident information for now as they've been reassigned to patrol duties during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

According to Station 12 community relations officer Constable Stéphan Laperrière, the police department found it necessary, since the start of the crisis a month or so ago, to redeploy as many staff officers as possible to street-level patrol duties.

As a result, said Laperrière, he and fellow Station 12 community relations officer Constable Adalbert Pimentel have been temporarily reassigned to work in other areas of Montreal.

He said they will be unable to provide information on crime incidents in Westmount until further notice.

**No puddle too small**

A nice muddy puddle kept Alva (left) and Oskar Horstmann amused April 16 in Westmount Park. The Horstmann family are from Germany, and were working in Canada when the coronavirus struck. They were scheduled to stay until 2022 but Mum thinks they may now be here for a longer stay.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.



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The coming days and weeks will no doubt bring challenges, calling on us to be adaptable, patient and understanding.

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be attentive,  
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**— Bunny Berke**



**Bunny Berke**

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (COVID)

## GIVING HOPE

► We are pleased to send you, in an attachment, a mosaic of photographs taken on the territory of the city of Westmount. We wish to give hope to the citizens of our municipality.

BARTHA MARIA KNOPPERS &  
DANIEL TURP, SHERBROOKE ST.

## THANK YOU, PUBLIC WORKS

▼ After a weekend of social distancing garden clean-up, we collected 17 heavy bags full of leaves and placed them out front. Monday morning, April 13, in the pouring rain, to our surprise and delight, we could see from the comfort of our self-isolation that Public Works crews came by and took away the leaves.

Wow.

They really are keeping our city clean and lifting our morale. Bravo!

PATRICK MARTIN, THE BOULEVARD



## PM SHOULD LEAD BY EXAMPLE

I feel totally betrayed by our prime minister, Justin Trudeau. His complete lack of morals during the Easter break is absolutely shocking. Canadians have been urged repeatedly to heed the advice of the government and respect social distancing rules, cancel holidays with loved ones, avoid crossing borders for non-essential travel, have no gatherings with people outside of their household. Apparently this is for us people only and NOT for the prime

minister.

Companies are closing down daily with serious risks of going bankrupt, people are unemployed with no incomes, families are separated, the elderly are dying all alone, children are being deprived of a proper education and yet Justin Trudeau needs to spend a weekend with his wife and kids because... he wants to and feels he is privileged to do so. Is this leading by example? The arrogance!

A prime minister who sets Draconian rules for his country has a moral duty to follow the rules he imposes. How can Canadians respect his leadership in the weeks to come, which, by all accounts, will be the most difficult times this country has experienced since World War II?

My husband and I feel ashamed that we voted for a hypocrite. We have been cheated.

A. MINA, ANWOTH RD.

## PLEASE ADVOCATE FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT

Over the last 12 years, I have been a columnist guest in your home each week through my pet adoption columns in the *Indie*. Together, we have brought forth issues for pets, through adoptions, fosters, donations, fundraisings, searches, petitions, marches and outreach. I have also joined you in our park for Family Day numerous times over the years, to chat and catch up about you, your families and your pets.

I am not only one of the children who grew up loving animals and saving abandoned pets. I am my parents' daughter, and I am now standing up for my mother who has dementia and lives in a CHSLD. She moved from her house to Westmount One and enjoyed her retirement there for five years. As her needs grew, she moved to the CHSLD Yvon Brunet.

I remember when the first CHSLD room became available for her and I received the call. I knew it was her turn and went rushing from the office to the residence for my meeting with the admissions coordinator. They have been wonderful to my mother for over seven years now, with a medical, nursing, caregiving level of care that is beyond compare.

Unfortunately, with the COVID-19 crisis, our hospitals were ready but our care homes (private, public, subsidized) were not.

The transfers of patients from hospitals or intermediate establishments only made the transmissions worse. The lack of testing for weeks made it so difficult to separate residents and staff who needed care. The doctor at my mother's residence, which is very much in the news as families

denounced the situation, has been alone as the medical practitioner for 185 residents. This situation is mirrored across the province, the country and the world.

Please write your elected representatives at all levels to show your solidarity for our seniors in care homes, as they can no longer do this for themselves.

With my thoughts to all of you, my neighbours, as so many are away from school and work, with loved ones who need our support.

LYSANNE FOWLER, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

## CUT THE BUREAUCRACY, BOLSTER THE FRONT LINE

*An open letter to Premier Legault*

It has been clear to anyone who has had any contact with health care professionals, including those working in seniors' residences, that even before the COVID-19 crisis, government bureaucracy, inefficiency and plain incompetence causes needless suffering, diverts vital resources and, as we are now tragically witnessing, costs lives, especially in long-term care facilities.

The shameful dysfunction of the system that manages our health care system, especially that part of it which serves seniors, has been exposed on a tragic scale.

It has taken COVID-19 to reveal the horrendous consequences of the chronic under-funding of front-line care and the ballooning of the healthcare bureaucracy, both problems that existed before the pandemic, but that have been exacerbated by this crisis to an extent that no civilized society can tolerate any longer.

For too long, vital resources have been misdirected to pencil-pushing jobs rather than front-line care giving. Every day, red tape and out-of-touch and reality-defying decision-making slow down, even prevent, critical patient and seniors' care functions from being carried out effectively and efficiently.

It is time to abolish the CIUSSS system and reduce the wasteful and at times harmful red tape that hinders our society from properly caring for its elderly.

We must redirect our resources and invest them where they are most needed: front-line health care, not jobs in sprawling bureaucracies.

PETER F. HOFFMANN,  
DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

## Correction: Jason Yu co-organized donation

In the article "Local Chinese group raises \$40K for Jewish General, St. Justine" (April 14, p. 6), I incorrectly spelled the last name of co-organizer Jason Yu. I apologize for the error. – DP.



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (MUNICIPAL POLITICS)

### USE OF COVID ORDER FOR ST. LÉON UNDERMINES DEMOCRACY

Westmount city council, using its new powers under provincial Order 2020-008 regarding municipal operations in the current COVID-19 emergency, has elected to declare as a “priority” the zoning variances required to permit the erection of a new, three-storey school building in the school-yard of the École St. Léon.

Council, under the order, could have opted instead to simply suspend the normal registration process on those zoning variances until the present health crisis is over. That would have permitted qualified voters in the two zones who had applied in sufficient numbers for the opening of a registry regarding these variances to sign a register requesting that they be submitted to a referendum.

Denying those voters their right to register is serious, since the construction of the school extension, scheduled to begin in 2020 and to continue for nearly two years, threatens the quality of life in the

neighbourhood concerned, triggering noise, pollution, traffic congestion, parking problems and possible pile-driving damage to some older nearby residences.

The “priority” of this project is doubtful, especially in view of the current lockdown. The written consultation process (results of which are non-binding) is not a valid substitute for the normal procedure.

By refusing to suspend the registration as it could have done, council has arguably short-circuited the local democratic process, a decision that Westmounters should remember when the next municipal election rolls around.

MAURA McKEON, CLARKE AVE.

### USE OF COVID DECREE FOR ST. LÉON PRECLUDES RESIDENTS’ MEANINGFUL SAY

On April 6, Westmount city council used the [province’s] COVID-19 decree to deem the St. Léon extension “a priority” and, thereby suspended any possibility of a referendum on the zoning variances

Council’s decision means that those of

us in the affected zones will not be permitted to vote on whether or not we agree or disagree with the numerous zoning/variance changes required to construct a new three-storey building on the current playground of St. Léon School.

It is not clear to me how allowing citizens to send in non-binding “written comments” about the proposed building project is comparable to the democratic right to vote in a referendum.

This disappointing course of action by the council means that we will not really have a meaningful say about changes that will impact the quality of our life and our neighbourhood for years to come.

FRAN PONOMARENKO, CLARKE AVE.

### SOCCER NEEDS (REAL) TURF

Get real. No real soccer player wants to play on a plastic soccer field.

Someone may benefit from the transactions involved in the destructive cost of such an installation, but it sure won’t be the players, taxpayers, the community, the environment.

We need better *summer* programs for real turf time, not an extended season on a plastic playing field for the benefit of players in school.

If the soccer lobby were to recognize its own best interests lie in real turf and indeed in the common good of our community, the team spirit of the whole city would benefit.

‘TOR HAINES, DE MAISONNEUVE

### WHY ARE WE TICKETING CRIMINALS?

An article in your paper April 7 (p. 5) mentions a man who was attempting to break into cars on Melbourne Ave. and received a ticket for \$151 + \$39.

What kind of a justice system in Westmount does this, with a pat on the back when someone who is involved in a criminal act? Who is responsible for such a decision?

I only believe that we must excuse to some degree, a person who is mentally unbalanced.

VITTORIO TUCCI, SHERBROOKE ST.

### 90 city employees now working from home

## Landscapers out in force, city plans for end of restrictions

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

While private landscapers turned out all over Westmount last week as soon as restrictions against them were lifted April 15 and 90 city employees continued working from home using city-configured computer equipment, the city’s focus turned to preparing for the eventual re-opening of some municipal buildings and services.

“We have to be ready because we may find we’re to open up again without much notice,” director general Benoit Hurtubise said last week. “We don’t want to get caught.”

#### Changes required to offices

This means arranging office space to ensure physical distancing for the staff and for residents who arrive for service. It includes installing Plexiglas partitions and could also require rescheduling staff work and lunch hours. “It involves the public, too.”

Some employees might still work from home.

Effective April 20, government directives allow for certain residential construction to resume if it enables the delivery of projects by July 31.

This does not mean that someone can have renovations to their bathroom com-



From left, landscaper David Robertson and supervisor Michael Nudo were among the gardeners and outside workers getting started on spring clean-up last week. They are seen here on Prince Albert April 17.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

pleted, as an example, Hurtubise said, but rather that someone unable to live in their home could have major projects finished allowing them to return. As a result, a few city inspectors are back on the job.

The city still is not issuing new building

permits, however.

#### Summer camps?

Among many uncertainties being worked on is the potential opening of the city’s summer camp programs, in full or

in part. Could they be allowed for only a few children at a time? How feasible would various options or scenarios be? Again, the city has to be ready, Hurtubise said.

Among the 90 employees working from home are the entire city clerk’s office, engineering, administration, the library and some of finance. Also, all members of city council are working from home.

As a result, the IT department has had to reconfigure computer equipment, find ways to help install it in their homes, and help train some employees how to use it and access certain programs from there, as well as to work by conference “bridges” (calls) and various platforms.

#### Robocalls to residents 70+

As well, Westmount residents and all on the island of Montreal age 70 and over can expect to receive robocalls from the Montreal public health department to assess their needs and refer them to appropriate services, Hurtubise said.

While Westmount Public Security and the library have been calling residents of that age who are known to Westmount through various city activities, the Montreal health department has access to lists not available to Westmount.

Residents are advised to listen to the entire message.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WESTMOUNT'S SENIORS' RESIDENCES? (continued coverage from p. 1)

# At St. Margaret's CHSLD

*Hillside Ave.*



The entrance to St. Margaret's on Hillside Ave. near Westmount High on April 17.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Because St. Margaret's is a public residence, all inquiries last week by the *Independent* were referred to either the CIUSSS Centre-Ouest or the health and social service ministry itself (the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, or MSSS).

The *Independent* was told that many of the answers requested were not known by the health authority. These included how many residents and staff there were at St. Margaret's and, because the reporting system is complicated, how many related COVID-19 deaths had occurred at the centre.

It is well known that the centre's capacity is 96, of whom many are bedridden or in wheelchairs, while some are more autonomous and able to participate in activities of the day centre. This has now been closed for some six weeks at the same time that family members, visitors and volunteers had been barred from entering.

CIUSSS communications officer Lauren Schwartz said April 16 that "the vast majority" are not mobile.

In accordance with government policy, she said, only those with COVID-19 symptoms are tested and the results relayed to families. The residence "is in regular contact" with the families of those tested positive and "everyone" on the same floor is also tested.

While staffing at the centre generally operates on ratios set by the government, "staffing is not at the full complement but

adequate," she said. As a result, "reinforcements are being brought in from the Jewish General Hospital and other institutions. Recruitment has been an ongoing challenge for many years but enough to meet our needs."

All staff are now masked and gowned. Communications are "very difficult at this time because the information has to come from staff, who are very busy over the pandemic priorities."

While the residents' and users' committees are still functioning, Schwartz said, Claudette Cardinal, a retired nurse who is a non-resident volunteer member of the residents' committee, told the *Independent* last week that she laments not being informed of residents' current needs.

"We're volunteers who know all the residents and can provide a logical no-cost way to fill a communications gap between the isolated residents and their families. Let's hope it improves."

The wife of one longtime resident who needs special attention called the *Independent* April 16 to say she has grave concerns for him because he is on a medical care and food plan, has some dementia and depends on her evening visits to him. While her complaints go back several years leading to her having a camera installed in his room, she said, they are simply compounded by the current crisis.

"Most of the regular staff are wonderful," she said, "it's replacements, new people and some others who don't seem to understand his needs."

# Manoir Westmount residence

*Sherbrooke at Lansdowne*

"The challenge for us is that people are confined to their rooms," said Tom Thompson, manager of the 40-year-old retirement home adjacent to Victoria Hall where the 120 residents have various degrees of mobility. There is a staff of 55.

"We had practice serving all meals in the rooms during the ice storm of 1998 and the heavy rain that flooded the lower floor (in 1987)," he said, "but it was never this long." In addition to the regular meals, residents also receive rounds of coffee and a "happy-hour" trolley.

As a diversion, Simona Buth, the leisure department supervisor, takes some of the residents on walks in Westmount Park while others with more limited mobility

can sit out on the garden patio. Those who have very important medical appointments attend them.

Many have small fridges in their rooms and can order some groceries when one of the residents arranges an order from the Metro grocery store or the SAQ, which make frequent deliveries to the residence, Thompson said.

All have their own phones to keep in touch with family and friends, while those with computer savvy can use the internet and Skype. "Lots are on the phone every day with sons and daughters" and Thompson said he sends updates to families.

But the question on everybody's mind, he said, is "How long?"

# Place Kensington residence

*St. Catherine at Kensington*

The biggest challenges facing Place Kensington at this point is helping its 180 residents cope with the isolation of being confined to their apartments, serving meals individually to them and keeping COVID-19 from coming in, said executive director Sylvia Zagury. The residence has a staff of 100 to 110.

Despite prevention measures such as the wearing of masks and gloves, one of the biggest challenges is ensuring that COVID-19 is not brought in by the private outside caregivers required by about 20 percent of the residents who are bedridden or "really need" the supplemental care, she explained.

"If it comes in, it's going to come from

the outside."

There are also concerns about residents who have to go to outside medical treatments such as dialysis, blood transfusions, tests or cancer treatments. While they're already isolated in their apartments on their return, "you never know," she added. "It's luck. It's a war and hopefully we'll survive."

Those who are able to go on walks are taken around the block to keep them physically active, while others are taken onto the residence's patio. Efforts are also made through Zoom, FaceTime and Skype to keep residents in touch with their families.

"Can you imagine what it must be like for them morally, physically and socially to be isolated?" Zagury said.

# CHSLD Château Westmount

*Victoria and de Maisonneuve*

"We are a private nursing home," explained Zara Pilian, director general and nursing director at Château Westmount. Now at full capacity, it is caring for 112 persons for whom services are provided by a full staff of 184, she said.

These include cleaners, kitchen staff, orderlies, nurses, physio- and occupational therapists, receptionist and a communications person hired about a year ago. There is also a clinical advisor and two doctors available 24 hours to provide video conferencing.

To mitigate the COVID-19 contagion, Pilian said, staff wear masks, remove uniforms on leaving and use new ones the

next day. She views her own role as mobilizing the staff, training and being with them "so we are a team."

Residents are confined to their rooms and since the week of March 20 family members have been prohibited from visiting, in accordance with government measures. "At that time, we began providing Zoom and FaceTime video conferencing for residents and families," she said.

"The rest of the time, we have email contact with the families and today (April 14) we started a blog with information about all that's going on." It's accessible to all the families, she said.



# Alan Klinkhoff Gallery

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## GUIDE NO. 4

# COVID-19 affords you an opportunity to rethink your business

The COVID-19 pandemic is undoubtedly posing several challenges for your business, especially with respect to the measures to be implemented to comply with public health directives. This situation is certainly raising questions in your mind about its impact on your employees and your organization's resilience. Moreover, it is no doubt also encouraging you to review your ways of doing business and find solutions to mitigate the crisis' repercussions.

This forced pause can also be viewed as an opportunity to rethink certain aspects of your business and to prepare for its revival, since the current situation, while exceptional, is temporary. Here are some avenues for reflection and possible solutions.



### Do you have a business continuity plan?

Take advantage of this opportunity to implement or update your business continuity plan. The elaboration of such a plan affords an opportunity to reflect on the means of reducing the negative impact on your business of adverse events. Worst-case planning means that you can establish strategies and take precautions that will enable you to pursue your operations or resume them sooner, minimize losses, and protect your employees, assets and even your reputation.

The plan will provide responses. There is no need to be a large business to maintain a business continuity plan. Proven methodologies exist that are well adapted to SMEs. Moreover, the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation has prepared the ***Guide de gestion de la continuité des activités pour les petites et les moyennes entreprises québécoises*** to help you. Be sure to consult it.



### Adopt the digital conversion

The current crisis is upsetting consumers' buying habits and more and more of them risk resorting to the Internet. E-commerce is a worthwhile solution that is occasionally even essential to compete if you are a merchant, a retailer or even the owner of a tourism enterprise. This is indeed a good time to consolidate your online presence, which will enable you to better reach your customers and visitors and to more extensively promote your products and services.

Is your business experiencing a slowdown? This is the ideal time to review certain business practices, enhance or automate processes, or find innovative solutions.

The digital transformation offers a genuine development opportunity, especially in the manufacturing sector. The Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation is offering guidance to SMEs that wish to adopt the digital conversion or consolidate their approach. Find out more.





### Step back to improve your business

Take advantage of this pause to initiate the gradual adoption of management practices geared to enhancing your enterprise's financial, environmental, social, and administrative performance. It can also be worthwhile to review the supply chain and foster buying locally or proximity shopping. Lastly, a **sustainable development approach** could offer your business extensive benefits.

Since you are often contending with emergencies or engaging in a continuous improvement process, you rarely have time to step back and explore new options. This is the perfect time to rely on your employees to conduct research and development to improve your products, services, or processes. Reinventing a business also depends on innovation and the implementation of new projects. Do not hesitate to contact the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation or Investissement Québec to plan your projects.



### Take advantage of tailor-made advice

**L'Accompagnement-conseil stratégique<sup>MC</sup>** in the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation can be useful to find solutions, rethink action plans, and obtain tailor-made advice. Experts are present in all regions of Québec to help meet the challenges that you are facing and prepare for relaunching your business. To find out more, please contact the regional office of the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation.



### Develop your skills and those of your employees

The revival of your business will certainly rely on professional competencies development and work reorganization, which the **Programme actions concertées pour le maintien en emploi (PACME)** of the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, offered in collaboration with the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail, proposes. The program provides for direct assistance to businesses for human resources management activities or on-site, online or remote training. It seeks to maintain the employer-employee relationship, take advantage of the current pause to bolster skills development and thus prepare businesses for the economic recovery.

Other training is available, for example for corporate executives, strategic workers or workers in the Québec tourism sector, such as the **formation 100 % accueillant** program of the Ministère du Tourisme, offered by the Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec as individual online training.

### A final word

The current exceptional situation is temporary. In the meantime, it is important to maintain efforts and steer a steady course to restore Québec, whose residents are brimming with enthusiasm and vitality and which abounds in original, creative businesses.

## REMINDER OF THE MEASURES ADOPTED TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES

- Emergency assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises
- Flexibility measures respecting loans and existing loan guarantees
- Concerted temporary action program for businesses (PACTE)
- Support for the tourism industry

### To obtain additional information, please visit [Québec.ca/coronavirus](https://Quebec.ca/coronavirus).

- Investissement Québec (IQ) is offering a moratorium of up to six months on principal repayments. Visit the IQ website to obtain additional information.
- The Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec is providing \$4 billion to support Québec firms temporarily affected by COVID-19. Visit the CDPQ website to obtain additional information.

[economie.gouv.qc.ca](https://economie.gouv.qc.ca)



## Adjusting to new walking rules



On Westmount Ave. and Lansdowne April 12, most people seemed to be abiding by the request from the city to walk on the right-hand sidewalk (from the perspective of the pedestrian). PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

### Are you in a bookclub?

Local *Globe & Mail* bestselling author **Catherine McKenzie** is available to Skype, Facetime or Zoom with your bookclub to discuss her latest novel, *I'll Never Tell*, or any of her other works!

Contact:  
[catherinemckenzieauthor@gmail.com](mailto:catherinemckenzieauthor@gmail.com)  
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**Contracts, cont'd. from p. 1**  
and services,” she said.  
The contract to reconstruct Springfield was awarded for a maximum amount of \$887,133 to Les Entreprises Ventec, the lowest of eight bids. The highest came from Ramcor at \$1,128,282.

The project includes the reconstruction of the sidewalks and roadway, replacement of the lighting and of a portion of Hydro Westmount’s underground network.  
Springfield was first constructed in 1930 on a 150-mm concrete base. It was subsequently resurfaced with 40mm of asphalt in 1961, 1978, and 1991.

The reconstruction of St. Sulpice (Mount Pleasant to Ramezay) was also awarded to Ventec for a maximum of \$942,373, including taxes. This was the lowest of six bids with Ramco, once again, submitting the highest at \$1,299,855.

This section was originally constructed in 1927 on a 150-mm concrete base. It was reconstructed with a 200-mm concrete base and 75 mm of asphalt in 1981.  
The project involves the reconstruction of the sidewalks and roadway, replacement of the street lighting system, and reconstruction of the Hydro Westmount network in this section.

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# March sales: COVID-19 takes toll on volume, 'typical' house price up



## Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

*Note: The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in March 2019. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph at right offers a picture of these trends over time.*

The second half of March was virtually cancelled in the Westmount real estate industry, as the Quebec government declared brokerages and sales reps as a "non-essential industry," basically forbidding visits, meetings and negotiation of deals between buyers and sellers.

Open houses have been banned.

Notarial services were outlawed briefly but have now been deemed an essential service and can proceed using electronic signatures; the same, apparently, for building inspectors and surveyors, who just got their "essential" label. Appraisers have revised their methods and may rely on "virtual visits" to properties.

Westmount logged seven sales in March, only two of which were negotiated after March 15, probably based on earlier visits or ongoing discussions. Of the seven Westmount one- and two-family dwelling sales posted in March, the lowest price was \$1,500,000, the highest minimum monthly price in Westmount's history, and ranged up from there to \$2,965,000, hardly an indication of the pessimism some buyers might have been hoping for.

The average price rebounded to

\$2,075,714 and the adjusted average price – representing the "typical" Westmount house – climbed back to \$2,220,000 after dipping in February. Whether the struggling economy can hold this level remains to be seen, but certainly the distribution of economic factors is going to change.

### Condos, Westmount adj and rentals

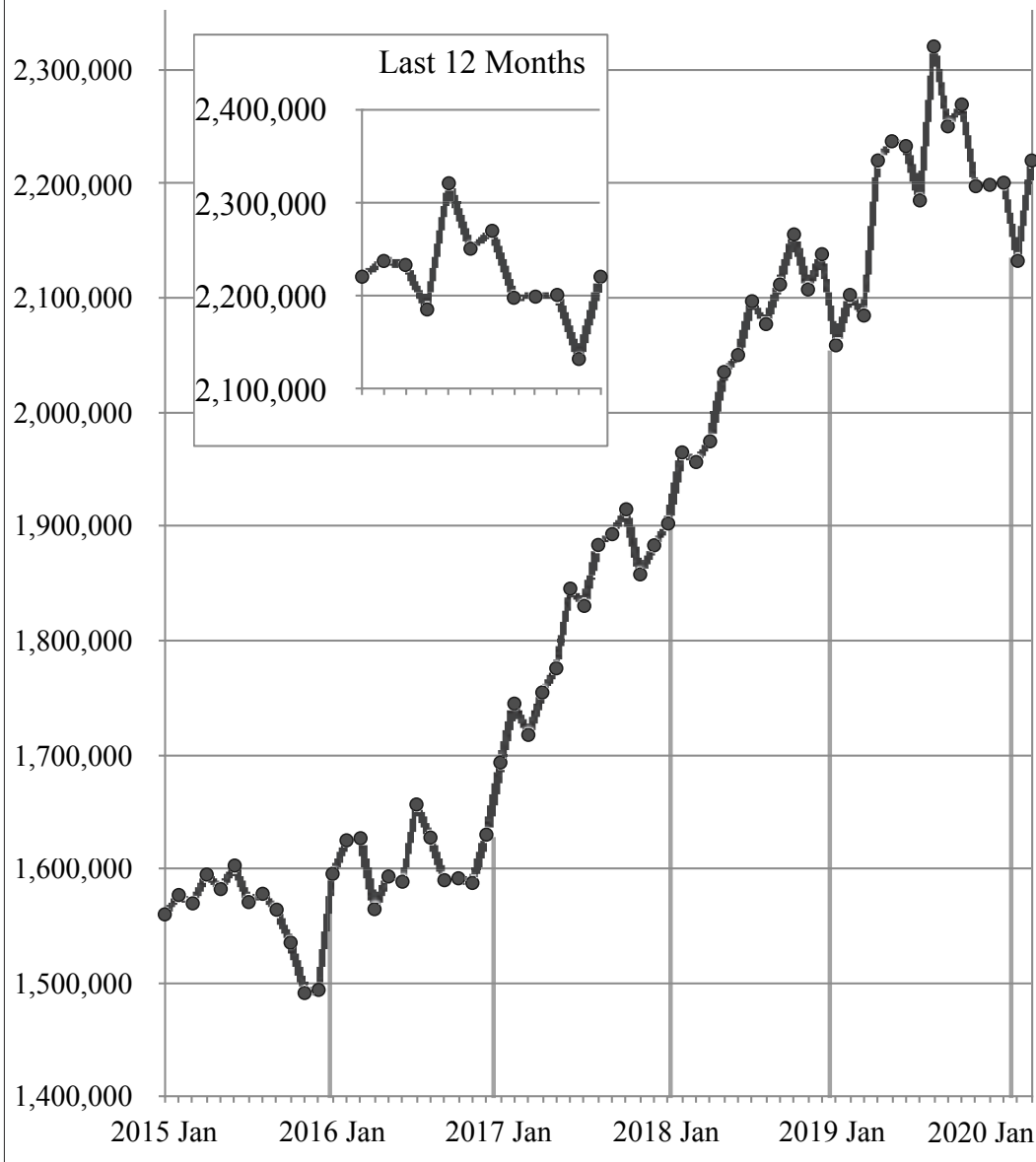
Agents posted two condominium sales in March, one as late as March 24 for an apartment in an older building on de Maisonneuve Blvd., for \$495,000, the lowest price in the first quarter of the year, but in fact this was for 37 percent more than its municipal valuation, the highest mark-up for seven sales in the first three months. The other March condo sale was dated March 13, for a \$650,000 newer unit.

In adjacent-Westmount areas, it appears eastern NDG, which posted 37 sales in all of last year compared to southern Côte des

Neiges' 22, is losing out to its northern neighbour this year. In the first three months we have seen only one sale in eastern NDG while there have been four in southern CDN, with an average price of \$1,536,500, almost the same as in 2019. Two sales in the Square Mile and four in the Trafalgar-Daulac section round out the adjacent-Westmount sales so far.

By mid-April, there were still 98 active listings for Westmount houses, down only two from a month earlier, none under \$1 million but still four over \$10 million. Thirty

Average adjusted price for 'typical' Westmount house, by month, January 2014 to March 2020, based on accepted offer dates



houses now are for rent in Westmount, up from 22 a month earlier. So far five houses

have been rented in 2020, ranging from \$3,650 to \$8,800 per month.

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*Westmount  
A-dog-tions*

LYSANNE FOWLER

Yes, this is Eadie’s soft brown-eyed stare when attention or treats are offered. All dog people know that rapt attention moment.

Young Eadie is a delightful puppy in need of a stable home in a family environment. At four months of age, good habits are already established in this affectionate little fellow’s personality. He is craving to learn more and please more. As a very handsome black, white and brindled shorthair, he is growing quite well and will catch up to his tall ears soon!

Eadie is available now for adoption from Gerdy’s Rescues & Adoptions. He is a great playmate, even having bonded with a cat! He has had all the vetting, inoculations and treatments for his age, and is neutered.

Please contact this grassroots volunteer animal rescue group at its email [info@gerdysrescue.org](mailto:info@gerdysrescue.org) or visit its website at [www.gerdysrescue.org](http://www.gerdysrescue.org) to find out more about

## Eadie Puppy



adorable and playful Eadie through its contact page.  
Your neighbour,  
Lysanne



*9 Lives*

LYSANNE FOWLER

Adorable Scan is available for adoption from the Montreal SPCA cattery. As you can see as he comes closer, he is a white domestic shorthair with artistic black accents here and there! He is a cuddly and silly senior, active and very bright. He is healthy, up to date with his inoculations and treatments, neutered and micro-chipped.

Scan’s identification number is 44143381 and you can find out more about him by referring to its website at [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com). On its adoption page, you can complete the simple online application for Scan’s adoption. You will be contacted by a member of the adoption staff shortly for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA,

***Moisson Montreal –  
pet supply donations***

The Montreal SPCA is partnering with

## Scan, so funny and affectionate



Moisson Montreal to provide support to families that are struggling in these current crisis situations. If there is a need, please dial 211. This telephone number assembles all of the community resources in Montreal and they will refer you to a neighbourhood organization for support.

They have not forgotten pets, providing cat and dog food, as well as litter, through the organization’s distribution centres. For the pet food and supplies provided, the SPCA offers many thanks to Mondou, Royal Canin Canada and other companies for their generous donations.

Your neighbour,  
Lysanne

## Gardens closed



COVID-19 has even closed Westmount’s community gardens, “until further notice.” This one near Westmount High and Hallowell Ave. was photographed on April 17.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

## Deadline for comments on St. Léon expansion: April 29

Wednesday, April 29 is the deadline for written comments concerning the expansion project for École St. Léon in lieu of a referendum registry. Now that city hall is closed to the public in accordance with prevention measures regarding the coronavirus pandemic, this procedure is being permitted by a decree of the Quebec government. It is not subject to a referendum by qualified voters.

The decision to follow this change in the process was made by the city council to expedite the development of the school’s proposed three-storey addition (see story April 14, p. 1).

### 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.

email us at:  
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Why list your goods (or services) on fly-by-night, who-knows-who-is-replying websites when you can list (and sell) locally?

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## Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

*Fundraiser profile: Tina Khan*

# ‘Défi Canapé’ event was for at-risk youth



From our May 14, 2019 issue: Tina Khan, second from right, with, from left, Ava Nouraeyan, Parker Sheil, Lisette Olsson, Laura Lavy and Janet Faith, with whom she was sharing co-chairing duties for the Batshaw Centres Foundation’s “Défi Canapé” of last year. Lavy is Khan’s co-chair this year.

*As Social Notes depends on social events, which in turn depend on gatherings, times have changed.*

*But we’ll meet again.*

*Until then, we profile the disappointed but determined supporters of great causes to see how they are faring in our smaller world and learn their event’s new plans.*

***This issue’s interview: Tina Khan***

**What was your event? It was planned to be held on what date?**

Our event, Défi Canapé – A Taste of Montreal, was going to be held on April 29. Along with a silent auction, numerous local chefs would have created their most delectable canapés and our event participants would vote for their favourite. Funds were going to support local at-risk youth, namely children who are victims of abuse and neglect.

**Have you planned a new date for your event?**

We are working on an online alternative to our original event. There are still many details to be worked out.

Most importantly, we want to be sensi-

## Lost boot



This small boot was photographed at Sherbrooke and Melville April 10.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

tive to all that is happening around the world, and ensure that the timing of an online event is appropriate.

However, like many, the at-risk youth and families that would have been supported through our fundraiser have been severely impacted by the current global crisis. The current COVID-19 pandemic is creating immense pressure on food banks, which are struggling to meet the demand. Additionally, our [at-risk] youth don’t have access to the technology for distance learning while schools are closed so are more isolated from their families than ever before.

For those looking to help us supply food, technology and other emergency supplies to the most vulnerable children and families through our Family Emergency Fund, please visit [batshawfoundation.ca](http://batshawfoundation.ca)

**How are you sheltering in place?**

I am home with my two kids and husband, trying to find the balance between working, home schooling and parenting!

**Instead of cocktail attire, what are you wearing?**

Trying to make the most of this home time by enjoying the comforts of leggings, cozy sweaters and slippers.

**How are you staying in touch?**

Through so many, many methods – WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Houseparty. I never knew there were so many different video conferencing platforms!

**What do you miss the most given our current, smaller world?**

So many things! Getting together with my friends, my weekly family dinners, eating at restaurants, my office, retail therapy; the list goes on.

**Have you developed a daily routine at your house?**

Yes. I think for us, putting a routine in place was important to make our kids feel more secure during these uncertain times, not to mention the adults!

Now that we are quite a few weeks into this social distancing life, as a family we know what to expect on a given day of the week and how weekends differ from the weekday routine. The daily routine has helped us find a balance between working from home, parenting and home schooling.

We have also made sure to make outdoor time part of the routine in order to feel less quarantined.



# RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION PARTIALLY RESUMES AS OF APRIL 20

We are now in the 6<sup>th</sup> week of preventative containment and restrictions to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. While the number of cases and deaths related to this pandemic continues to rise, public health officials tell us that the virus' progression curve is beginning to flatten. We must continue to stay at home and adhere to physical distancing.

**In this context, the Government of Quebec has announced the lifting of restrictions on certain non-essential activities, particularly in the residential construction sector. In accordance with this announcement, the City of Westmount will authorize residential construction work on its territory as of April 20. We understand that it's critical that residents have access to housing.**

However, I would like to specify that only construction or renovation work required for the completion and delivery of residential units by July 31, 2020 at the latest will be authorized. This is to ensure that those who need to move into a new house or apartment in Westmount before July 31 will be able to do so. This measure excludes all non-essential beautification or expansion projects.

Projects that will be allowed to resume must already have a valid permit issued by our Urban Planning Department. No new permits will be issued as long as the main activities of the Urban Planning Department are suspended.

The Quebec government also announced that certain landscaping and maintenance are allowed. You will find more details on our website.

We must not forget that the COVID-19 virus is still present. For this reason, construction workers and contractors will have to respect the physical distancing of two metres and stricter health and safety rules to protect their health and that of the population. These prevention measures are detailed in a new prevention guide published by the CNESST (Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail). If you witness a dangerous situation or behaviour on a worksite, please contact the CNESST at 1 844 838-0808.

In conclusion, I invite all citizens to continue to follow government and public health recommendations to fight the spread of the virus. This pandemic has turned our lives and those of our loved ones upside down, but together we will overcome this ordeal.

We thank you for your support and understanding. Take care of yourself and others.

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

Mayor Christina M. Smith and Council





# LA CONSTRUCTION RÉSIDENTIELLE REPREND PARTIELLEMENT À PARTIR DU 20 AVRIL

Nous sommes maintenant dans la 6<sup>e</sup> semaine de confinement et de restrictions préventives pour faire face à la pandémie de la COVID-19. Bien que le nombre de cas et de décès liés à cette pandémie continue d'augmenter, les autorités de la santé publique nous disent que la courbe de progression du virus commence à s'aplanir. Nous pouvons entrevoir la lumière au bout du tunnel. Nous devons continuer à rester chez nous et à adhérer à la distanciation physique.

**Dans ce contexte, le gouvernement du Québec a annoncé la levée des restrictions sur certaines activités non-essentiels, notamment dans le secteur de la construction résidentielle. Conformément à cette annonce, la Ville de Westmount autorisera à partir du 20 avril les travaux de construction résidentielle sur son territoire. Nous comprenons qu'il est essentiel que les résidents aient accès à un logement.**

Je tiens toutefois à préciser que seuls les travaux de construction ou de rénovation requis pour l'achèvement et la livraison d'unités résidentielles pour le 31 juillet 2020 au plus tard seront autorisés. Nous voulons ainsi nous assurer que ceux qui doivent emménager dans une nouvelle maison ou un nouvel appartement à Westmount avant le 31 juillet puissent le faire. Cette mesure exclut tous les projets d'embellissement ou d'agrandissement non-essentiels.

Les projets qui seront autorisés à reprendre devront déjà avoir un permis valide émis par notre Service de l'aménagement urbain. Aucun nouveau permis ne sera délivré tant que les activités principales du Service de l'aménagement urbain seront suspendues.

Le gouvernement du Québec a également annoncé que certaines activités d'aménagement et d'entretien paysagers sont autorisés. Vous trouverez plus de détails sur notre site web.

Nous ne devons pas oublier que le virus de la COVID-19 est toujours présent. Pour cette raison, les travailleurs et entrepreneurs en construction devront respecter la distanciation physique de deux mètres et des règles d'hygiène et de sécurité plus rigoureuses pour protéger leur santé et celle de la population. Ces mesures de prévention sont détaillées dans un nouveau guide de prévention publié par la CNESST (Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail). Si vous êtes témoin d'une situation ou d'un comportement dangereux sur un chantier, veuillez contacter la CNESST au 1 844 838-0808.

En conclusion, j'invite tous les citoyens à continuer à suivre les recommandations du gouvernement et de la santé publique pour lutter contre la progression du virus. Cette pandémie a bouleversé nos vies et celles de nos proches, mais tous ensemble nous surmonterons cette épreuve.

Nous vous remercions de votre soutien et de votre compréhension. Prenez soin de vous et des autres.

La mairesse Christina M. Smith et le Conseil



Social Notes  
VERONICA REDGRAVE

# Fabulous ‘Open Minds’ raises \$400k

Open Minds, the annual fundraiser for the Douglas Foundation, was an unparalleled success on February 20. The hit, repeat event raises funds for mental health

research and patient care at the Douglas Institute.

The evening united over 400 supporters to build hope for the millions of Canadians

partment, McGill University.

Amidst many Westmounters enjoying the night were **Anne Marie Boucher** and **Mitch Garber**, **Susan Doherty** and **Hal**



Organizing committee and co-presidents: top row, Aphrodite Salas, Nancy Spafford, Alicia Hamilton, Caroline Dillon and Louise Chagnon Bucheit; second row, François Hudon, Pam Salzman, Isabelle Roberge, Michael Denham and Susan Doherty; bottom row, Yolanda Page, Sarah Ivory, Marisa Giannetti, Leena Lakdawala and Jeannie Vondjidis.



Benoit Brière, Lesli Green, Teanoosh Zadeh, Mitch Garber and Micheal Page.

impacted by mental illness.

Co-chairs **François Hudon** (head, North American customer contact centre, BMO) and **Michael Denham** (CEO, BDC) joined **Sarah Ivory**, chair of the organizing committee (there with **Guthrie Stewart**), the foundation's chair of the board of trustees, **Marisa Giannetti**, and executive director **Laura Fish**. They spoke about the impact of mental illness.

Video testimonials communicated the personal impact of Alzheimer's and schizophrenia.

A longtime supporter of the foundation, Beatrice Ristorante, was the caterer, and its tacos balanced in mellow yellow lemons received "cool" comments. Noted guests included **Lynne McVey**, CEO CIUSSS Montréal West Island and **Dr. Gustavo Tu-recki**, scientific director, Douglas Research Centre, chief of psychiatry, CIUSSS Montréal West Island, and chair, psychiatry de-

**Hannaford**, **Sarah Karyn** and **Andrew Lassner**, **Rosanne** and **Lloyd Feldman** (general counsel Stingray); **Maude Leblond** (head, financial institutions group, investment banking, National Bank Financial), and Axio Health Clinic's **Cynthia Carsley** and **Dr. Vincent Lacroix** (medical director), as well as **Josée Noiseux**, CEO Montreal Heart Institute, **Benoit Brière**, **Lesli Green**, **Teanoosh Zadeh** and **Micheal Page**.

Hard-working committee members were **Louise Chagnon-Bucheit**, **Caroline Dillon**, **Susan Doherty**, **Jill Drummond**, **Marisa Giannetti**, **Sabine Korzenietz**, **Alicia Hamilton**, **Leena Lakdawala**, **Marion Le-febvre-Buchanan**, **Yolanda Page**, **Michèle Plourde**, **Isabelle Roberge**, **Aphrodite Salas**, **Pam Salzman**, **Nancy Simard** and **Jeannie Vondjidis**.

Acclaimed DJ Abeille ensured that everyone had the best time ever. Indeed they did. The amount raised was \$400,000.

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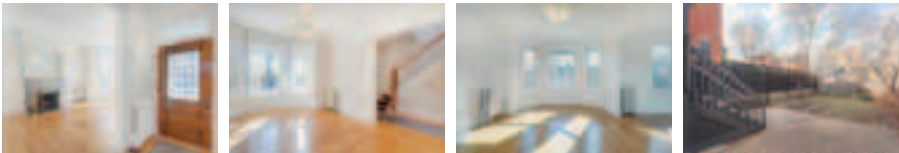
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LE CHÂTEAU | GOLDEN SQUARE MILE  
Fully renovated PH w/ unique terrace + 360° views



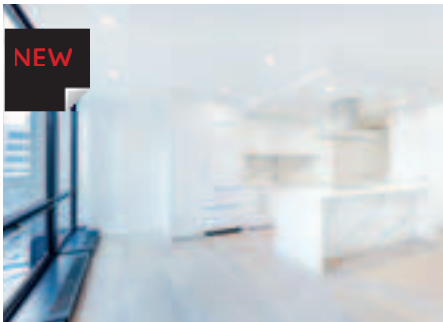
52 ROSEMOUNT \$2,490,000  
Stunning historical home, best location on the flats!



ORO | VILLE-MARIE \$1,895,000  
2 bdr condo w/ large deck + Mountain views



LA CONCEPTION \$1,395,000  
Equestrian estate with private beach



WESTMOUNT SQUARE \$795,000  
Fully renovated, open concept, 1bdr + garage 920 ft²



WESTMOUNT SQUARE \$740,000  
Mountain views, 1bdr + garage



12 WINDSOR | WESTMOUNT \$5,800/MO  
Magnificent property in Victoria Village w/ garden



# J|P

## JILL PRÉVOST



### HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR TIME AT HOME...

#### HAVE A WALK ABOUT

Have a walk around the outside of your house,  
Are there any holes that could fit a mouse?  
Are there any cracks in your foundation wall?  
If yes to the above, I can tell you who to call.

#### PAY IT FORWARD

Time to organize your pantry + see what's out of date,  
Go through your closet and make piles to donate,  
Change the look of your space by painting a room,  
If you can't pick a colour, call your designer on Zoom!

#### BREATHE & FLOW

Time to change filters, so you get cleaner air,  
Check all your windows to see if any need repair,  
Test all smoke detectors and see if the batteries are due,  
Clean all eaves & gutters, so the water can pass through.

#### GIVE GRATITUDE

Most of all take advantage of your time in your house,  
Time to get closer to the kids or your spouse,  
Give thanks to the heroes who fight for us every day,  
Remember, please don't worry *ça va bien aller...*

I'm here to help. If this period of uncertainty  
has you thinking about your next chapter. Call me.  
**Let's write your next chapter TOGETHER...**



Visit all my properties  
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**514.591.0804**



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