

# WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly, Vol. 15 No. 12b

We are Westmount

December 7, 2021

## Food drive hiked to \$3,860 from 5 Saisons, Metro events

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The two collections of non-perishable food and cash donations for Public Security's holiday baskets outside Westmount's two large grocery stores during pre-giving and Giving Tuesday events raised \$1,670, Public Security officials said.

A total of \$800 came from cash donations at Les 5 Saisons on Greene where a patrol vehicle was stationed November 28 on the first day of Hanukah. Another \$850 was generated by shoppers going to and from the Metro grocery store on Victoria Ave. on Tuesday, November 30. These amounts, added to the \$2,190 that had

been raised at Artisans Westmount, brought the total so far to \$3,860.

The amounts provided last week by assistant director Kimberley Colquhoun will be used to supplement food baskets with gift cards, turkeys, hams and other perishable items to augment the non-perishable food.

"We're already getting phone calls from people saying they will have food out for us to pick up on Saturday (December 4)," she said last week.

"One person told us she had just added a special order to the home delivery she will be receiving."

For more coverage, see p. 22.

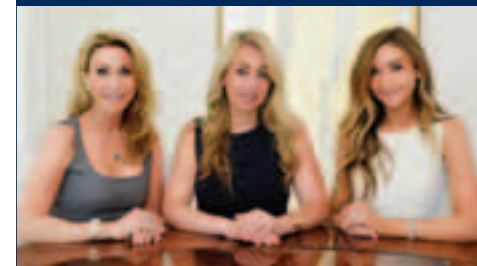
## They aren't kidding about winter tires



Cars were being stopped by Montreal police as they entered Westmount westbound on Sherbrooke St. December 2 at around 10:30 am. Officers were checking to see if winter tires were installed. At least one motorist was nabbed. The deadline was December 1 to switch to winter tires.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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## Two budgets held off till December 20

The city's 2022 capital works budget is expected to be presented at the last council meeting of this year December 20, Mayor Christina Smith said last week. The 2022 operating budget is also expected to be adopted at the same time.

Both would have been expected to be unveiled at the meeting December 6, she

explained. But it was decided to hold them off until later to allow the new councillors more time to familiarize themselves with the city's functioning and its needs.

It is not known at this point what time the budget meetings will take place. Usually these require separate meetings. The regular council meeting is listed for 5:30 pm.

This issue is the second-to-last one before our usual Christmas break.

City council commissionerships revised, along with standing committees, p. 6

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**Demolition hearing set for Dec. 9, 4 pm**

# One letter of opposition received for 45 Summit Crescent

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A single eligible comment was reported to have been received by the city concerning the demolition of 45 Summit Cresc. This was one opposing its demolition within the 10-day allowable period following the city's legal announcement.

The letter, which appears on the Urban Planning website under "demolition," has the sender's name and address removed but indicates it comes from a neighbouring property.

"Please consider this email communication as good and sufficient notice of our opposition to the demolition application of 45 Summit Crescent, on the grounds that it will interfere with our peaceable enjoyment of our property and the use and enjoyment of our property," it states.

The writer asks for further information from the city and the owners of the house



45 Summit Crescent with city's notice of demolition work, as seen November 3.

involved "in the interests of resolving this matter." It was not known whether any was received.

The proposed demolition is to be the subject of a hearing scheduled to present the case on December 9 at 4 pm. Initial presentation by the city proposes a second storey be added to the detached stone house at the corner of Gordon Crescent.

## Gift Guide

after p. 12

Letters, p. 14

Pet Page, p. 16

Christmas coverage, p. 15

Hanukah coverage, p. 18

Lucy & Tyson, p. 20

Retail Review:

Presentationsgifts.com, p. 21

## Two \$1,300 fines issued to contractors occupying public domain

As a rush continues to complete construction work before the onset of heavy winter conditions, Public Security officials said last week a number of contractors have been warned to obtain permits to occupy the public domain – streets and sidewalks.

Two previously warned "repeat offenders," were fined \$1,300 each, one December 2 for blocking entry to the lane behind 4817 Sherbrooke.

Another was closed down by police December 1 when a boom truck on the sidewalk forced pedestrians out onto the street. Public Security was called and confirmed that no permits had been issued or applied for. Public safety officers issued a statement of offence (ticket).

## Workers fined for working on Sunday on Burton

A ticket for \$153 was issued November 28 when workers were spotted carrying out work-related material from a basement on Burton Ave., on a Sunday, when work is prohibited, Public Security officials said. The crew was seen at 10:57 am.

## 'Confused' woman spotted by passer-by

A passer-by called Public Security November 24 to report a woman at the corner of Victoria and de Maisonneuve who appeared confused, department officials said. On speaking with her at 10:06 pm, responding officers reported the woman claimed to be looking for her son who had left with her dog. She had identification showing her as aged 86 and living in Ottawa.

Police were called, stated that she currently lived on Old Orchard in NDG, was known to them for previous offences but was not currently wanted.

As a result, they drove her home.

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Reorganization includes committees

# City councillors named to revised commissionerships

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The new city council will include a range of re-organized and re-designed commissionerships to reflect the direction of the new council for the next four years and combine some related issues.

Expected to be announced December 6 after press time, Mayor Christina Smith described to the *Independent* some of the responsibilities expected of these new commissioners as well as the committees on which some of the councillors will serve.

**‘TAC’ becomes Mobility**

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), for example, will become the Mobility Committee to address inclusion of recommendations from the Accessibility Committee, whose mandate expired in October. The Mobility Committee will relate most closely to the Public Works commissionership.

Major commissionership changes include splitting off Library and Community Events from Sports and Recreation, which will now include “parks” as in major park projects.

Engineering will be added to the Urban

Planning commissionership, and will be distinct from Public Works, which will focus on regular activities such as snow removal.

Environment and Sustainability will be known as Climate or Climate Change to touch all city departments while information and public consultation will be “elevated” into a commissionership, as will a special designation of partnerships with Westmount’s Dawson and Marianopolis CEGEPS.

**Commissioners, committees named**

The new commissioners, listed in order of district number, and with possible fine-tuning of title to come, are:

**Antonio D’Amico** (District 1): Commissioner of Finance;

**Elisabeth Roux** (District 2): Commissioner of Library and Community Events;

**Jeff Shamie** (District 3): Commissioner of Administration and Hydro Westmount;

**Conrad Peart** (District 4): Commissioner of Urban Planning, Architecture and Engineering – “to deal with the important infrastructure issues above and below ground,” as Mayor Smith described it;

**Anitra Bostock** (District 5): Commissioner of Public Works, Accessibility and

Mobility;

**Mary Gallery** (District 6): Commissioner of Sports and Recreation, and Parks; and responsible for the relationship with Marianopolis and Dawson College;

**Matt Aronson** (District 7): Commissioner of Climate-Sustainability, Citizen Engagement and Communication, Economic Development; and responsible for establishing an environment committee with clear targets for the city administration;

**Kathleen Kez** (District 8): Commissioner of Public Security, “a very important issue for her district,” according to Mayor Smith.

**Committees:**

**Mobility (formerly TAC):** Councillors Bostock and Kez;

**Finance & Administration (F&A):** Councillors Shamie (chair), D’Amico, Peart and Kez;

**Planning Advisory Committee (PAC):** Councillors Peart and Gallery;

**Library Board:** Councillor Roux and Gallery;

**Local Heritage:** Councillor Roux;

**Hydro Westmount Committee:** Councillor Shamie (chair).



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**'The 4 Anglos' provide four pre-holiday shows**

# Bowser & Blue return to Vic Hall after pandemic absence

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount is presenting four last-minute pre-holiday comedy performances at Victoria Hall by "The 4 Anglos:" Bowser and Blue, Terry Mosher and Josh Freed.

Their newest show, "Surviving the COVID Apocalypse," comes at the suggestion of Mayor Christina Smith, who saw it elsewhere and proposed it come to Victoria Hall to provide easy access for local residents and help the Public Security's holiday food drive. Of the \$45 admission fee, before tax, \$5 from each ticket will be donated.

"I'm thrilled they're coming," Mayor Smith said. The performance "is very uplifting, after all we've been through over the last two years."

There will be four performances starting with Friday, December 17 at 7:30 pm followed by two on Saturday, December 18 at 2 pm and 7:30 pm as well as a matinée Sunday, December 19 at 2 pm.

Former city councillor George Bowser, a resident of Columbia, and Rick Blue were scheduled to perform last year but the event was cancelled owing to the pandemic, said Donna Lach, assistant library director in charge of community events.

"We were just so fortunate that Victoria Hall was able to accommodate them on

short notice this year when Mayor Smith came up with the suggestion," she said. "People want to get together now because everyone is wanting that human connection."

A vaccination passport and masks will be required to enter Victoria Hall. Tickets will be available at Victoria Hall and at the door or can be reserved at Eventbrite, whose link is to be found on the city's website.

## Library's 200 jars of honey sell out in a week

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Honey from the two beehives on the roof of Westmount Public Library went much more quickly than usual, library director Julie-Anne Cardella said last week.

All 200 jars were sold within one week even though they could only be obtained under current procedures that limit entry to the library to those who have vaccination passports and membership cards. The honey last year was offered as part of the curbside pick-up given pandemic restrictions at the time.

As a result of this year's quick sell-out, Cardella said, it is hoped that more jars might be obtained next year.

Supplied and supervised by Alvéole, the urban agriculture service that cares for the hives, they are now winterized in the hopes that many of the bees survive, as they have over previous winters. The first hive was installed in May 2014, followed by the second the next year (see story October 8, 2019, p. 1)

## Indie's holiday schedule

December 14 – issue

December 21 & 28, and  
January 4 – no issues

January 11 & following – issues

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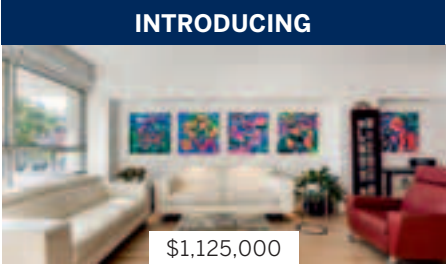


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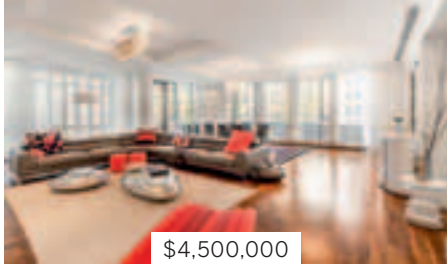


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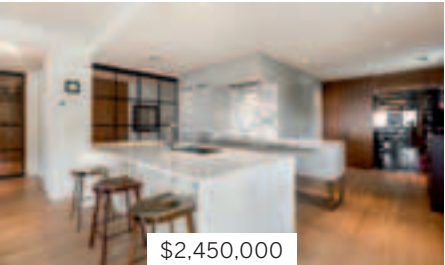
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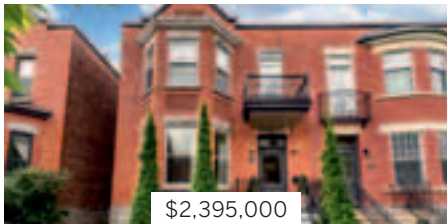
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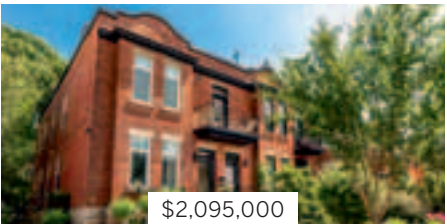
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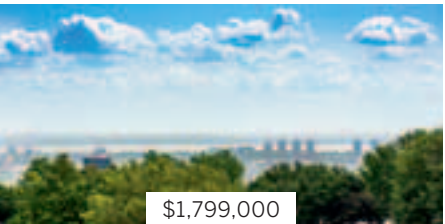


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Co-owner Lieberman: space is larger

Argo Bookshop ‘sails’ a little further from Westmount

By MARTIN C. BARRY

The good news is that Montreal’s oldest English-language independent bookstore is under a new roof after completing a move to a new St. Catherine St. locale.

However, since Argo Bookshop’s new address at 1841-A St. Catherine West near the edge of downtown is around a block further from Westmount, that’s not so great.

Unless, of course, you’re a devoted walker.

*Still close*

“We’re still quite nearby,” Argo co-owner Moti Lieberman, a Westmount resident, said in an interview with the *Independent* during a re-opening event on November 27, while adding that a good number of the store’s customers are Westmounters.

Founded in 1966, Argo Bookshop was situated at 1915 St. Catherine St. West since 1969. According to Lieberman, the new store is twice as big as the old one. The larger space was needed because in recent years he and co-owner Adele Prevost were outgrowing the old locale.

The new space has allowed them to ex-

Argo Bookshop co-owner and Westmounter Moti Lieberman is seen here on November 27 in the outlet’s new and larger premises at 1841-A Saint Catherine St. West in Montreal.

pand Argo’s selection, including tripling the size of the children’s section, while creating more room for some of the owners’ favourite topics, which include sci-fi and fantasy, local authors, social issues, activism and Japanese literature.

*Bookstores in Westmount*

For several decades, the Double Hook on Greene Ave., which closed in 2005, was perhaps Westmount’s most celebrated independent book store.

Then another local and independent literary mainstay, Nicholas Hoare Books, shut its Greene Ave. outlet at the end of 2012. Babar en Ville, which took over the Double Hook locale, closed in 2015.

So, while the pickings may have become slimmer than ever for Westmounters fond of reading books purchased locally, some it would seem don’t mind walking the extra distance to get to an independent book store.

“We have a fair number of people coming over from Westmount to buy from us,” said Lieberman, noting that during the pandemic they also received many orders and made home deliveries to addresses in Westmount.

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The tree is lit!



Mayor Christina Smith and daughter Issy lit the Christmas tree on the lawn of city hall December 1. See p. 15 for more coverage.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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## Akiva students and staff celebrate Hanukah



Students and staff at the Akiva School gathered in the Kensington Ave. school yard on December 1, the fourth day of the eight-day Hanukah celebration, to ignite the fifth light on their “hanukkiah” candelabrum. (“Hanukkiah” is another word for menorah.) This year, the school retired its 50-year-old hanukkiah, replacing it with a new one built by students under the direction of Nick Roussos, director of STEAM programs and technology at Akiva. Staff from the left are Nick Roussos, director of Judaic studies, Tali Sibony, head of school, Rabbi Eric Grossman, and students Nathaniel Aintabi, Naomi Altman, Lillian Brethholz, Ali Peres, Dana Avertchekova, Eitan Zur and Michael Mizrahi.

PHOTO: MARTIN C. BARRY.

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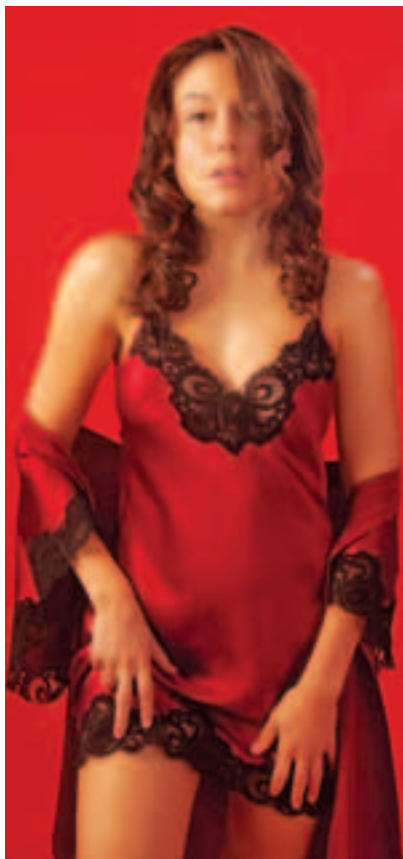
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# How to reduce risk of home fires this holiday season

Safety might not be the first thing people think of as the holiday season approaches. Faith, celebrations, decorations, and holiday dinners all come to mind when considering the holiday season. But that doesn't mean safety should be left out of holiday planning.

Fire safety bears special consideration during the holiday season, when the prevalence of fire hazards like Christmas trees, holiday lighting displays and other decorative items increase the risk for home fires. Such tragedies can be averted with a few simple safety measures.

- Tend to your tree. Live Christmas trees are awe-inspiring, but they also pose a significant fire risk. The National Fire Protection Association urges celebrants to purchase only healthy trees with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. Such trees are less likely to dry out, especially when well-watered throughout the season. Dry trees can catch fire more easily than healthy ones if embers from nearby fireplaces or candles drift in their direction.
- Recognize that location matters when decorating. The NFPA notes that Christmas trees should always be placed at least three feet away from any heat source, including fireplaces, space heaters, heat vents, candles, and even overhead lights. If decorating with candles, never place them on the tree or on tables where other flammable decorations have already been placed. Hanukah menorahs should never be placed near curtains or other decorations.
- Turn off all lights and extinguish all lit decorative items when leaving the home or going to bed. Lit candles and menorahs should never be left unattended. The



NFPA recommends turning tree lights and exterior decorative lights off when leaving the home or going to bed.

- Utilize a fire screen on fireplaces. Embers can catch on trees, decorations or anything else that's flammable if they escape the fireplace. Fire screens prevent that from happening by ensuring embers from burning logs stay in the fireplace. Like candles and menorahs, fires burning in a fireplace should never be left unattended. Make sure all embers have been extinguished before leaving the home or going to bed.
- Keep discarded trees away from your home. A 2014 analysis from the NFPA found that none of the 10 days with the largest share of Christmas tree fires were before Christmas. Dried out trees still pose a fire risk even after they've been removed from a home. When discarding a tree at the end of the holiday season, place it at the curb or keep it a safe distance away from your home and garage until you can.

Fire safety measures are an important component of the holiday season that can prevent this joyous time of year from turning tragic.

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Kindling the flame



Rabbi Lisa Grushcow of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom lights a candle from the Flame of Hope, as Mayor Christina Smith looks on. See p. 18 for more coverage.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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## Christmas tree tips and tricks



Freshly cut Christmas trees are farmed specifically for the holiday season and support local economies. They also tend to last a bit longer than pre-cut trees available elsewhere.

Christmas trees are an iconic symbol of the holiday season. Whether they are personal trees nestled in the corner of a living room for families to enjoy or towering evergreens serving as the focal point of a town square, Christmas trees are a wonder to behold.

Many people have fond memories of time spent around the Christmas tree sharing gifts and family traditions. Live trees and their pine-like aroma can be especially nostalgic trees to include in holiday plans. The National Christmas Tree Association says that approximately 25 to 30 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States every year. North American trees hail from all 50 states and areas of Canada.

While freshly cut trees can be particularly beautiful and aromatic additions to the season, they require a bit more work than artificial trees in order to remain beautiful and thrive throughout the holiday season. Maintenance can help keep Christmas trees as perfect as possible.

- Even though it is tempting to buy a real tree as early as possible, their shelf life is limited even with the best care. Dural Christmas Tree Farm advises that, under the best conditions, a real tree should last up to four weeks before drying out.
- Consider the needles when looking for a real tree. Pull your hand toward your body along the branches. If many needles fall off, the tree is past its peak.
- Think about the room in which the tree will be located. Leave at least 6 inches be-

tween the tip of the tree and the ceiling, accounting for the height of the tree stand as well.

- If needle retention is a goal, the Scotch pine variety has the best needle retention and a high survival rate, lending to its popularity, offers Precision Tree and Landscape. Douglas fir and balsam fir are other durable trees.
- If possible, buy a freshly cut tree from a reputable nursery or tree farm, advises The Old Farmer's Almanac. Many pre-cut trees sold elsewhere were likely cut weeks before and may not be fresh.
- Cut the bottom of the tree trunk before bringing it home to facilitate the uptake of fresh water daily. Trees can absorb as much as a gallon of water in a day, so make sure the tree gets fresh water every day.
- Keep trees away from as many heat sources as possible and away from direct sunlight to prolong longevity.
- According to Karabin Farms in Connecticut, to make a Christmas tree last longer, boil a gallon of water and then dissolve one cup of sugar in the water. Allow to cool. After freshly cutting the trunk, pour in the warm sugar water. Continue to add fresh, cool, plain water to the tree stand afterward.

Once needles begin to fall off with frequency, the tree is reaching its prime. Remove it so it does not become a fire hazard.



# How to care for fresh holiday wreaths

Majestic Christmas trees garner the lion's share of the decorative fanfare when the holidays arrive. Trees may be the focal points of holiday decor, but the humble wreath adorning the front door is the first decoration guests are likely to see when visiting a home.

Wreaths may need some care to maintain their beauty all month long. Here are some tips to help holiday wreaths last as long as possible.

When shopping for a wreath, choose freshly cut greenery that you assemble yourself; otherwise, look for wreaths made from freshly cut boughs with their foliage intact. Make sure not too many needles or leaves are falling off. Heavily decorated, preassembled wreaths may be convenient, but ornaments can make it challenging to give the wreath the moisture it needs.

Access to moisture will help to keep the wreath fresh. While a Christmas tree trunk may sit inside of a stand filled with water, wreaths require a little ingenuity. According to the wreath and garland retailer Club Botanic, if you will not be hanging a freshly purchased wreath right away, keep it in a plastic liner in a cool, dark place to help it retain moisture. Just make sure you don't seal that liner closed. Before hanging, lay the wreath in a couple of inches of water

for about an hour or up to a day so that the cut stems can soak up water.

Once the wreath is hanging on a door or elsewhere, spritz it with water every few days to prevent it from drying out.

Where you hang the wreath is key to its longevity. Wreaths and garlands hung indoors likely won't last as long as those hung outside, advises the floral retailer Bouqs.com. Evergreen boughs tend to require a colder climate to thrive, and indoor heat can prematurely zap moisture from the wreath. Using a humidifier indoors or misting the wreath may help.

It's probably best to hang fresh wreaths outdoors, but avoid direct sunlight, which can dry out the greenery. Slightly shaded spots are best. If your front door is bathed in full sun for hours, hang an artificial wreath there instead of a fresh one.

Another factor that can affect the wreath's longevity is an ample flow of oxygen. Wreaths tend to last much longer when kept on an outer door, indicates Harbor Farm in Ellsworth, ME. Wreaths sandwiched between a front door and a storm door will probably perish faster due to lack of oxygen.

Following these tips can help keep fresh wreaths as vibrant as the day they were brought home.

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*Estate's heirs are Concordia, McGill, Hebrew Univ.*

# Max Stern art works slowly being recovered, Epstein tells Rotarians

By MARTIN C. BARRY

It's not easy to explain in less than 20 minutes a story that began more than 80 years ago about a family of art dealers from Germany that came to Montreal following World War II after most of its treasures had been forcibly sold off or confiscated.

But that's what Clarence Epstein did on November 24, as he explained during the Rotary Club of Westmount's weekly webcast the events leading up to the creation nearly 20 years ago of the Max Stern Art Restitution Project.

## Three universities collaborating

The project, a collaboration between Concordia and McGill universities in Montreal and Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel, seeks to return art pieces originally owned by the late art dealer Max Stern.

The three institutions inherited the bulk of Stern's art collection when Stern, longtime owner of the Dominion Gallery in Montreal, passed away in 1987.

Epstein is an expert in looted art, art restitution and art collection management. He formerly served as the executive direc-

tor of the Max and Iris Stern Foundation, and was also a member of the federal government's Canadian Cultural Property Export Review board.

The Stern family had managed by the 1930s to build up one of northern Germany's most successful art dealerships, when the National Socialist (Nazi) movement came to power and suppressed the rights of Jews to work in professions.

In 1934, when Max Stern inherited the family's gallery in Düsseldorf, he received a letter from Germany's Secret State Police (Gestapo), notifying him that as a Jew he was no longer allowed to work as an art dealer and was required to close his gallery and sell his art.

In 1938, he left Germany with just a suitcase and a few belongings and lived for a few years in England. There, he and his sister tried to set up a new gallery, although they encountered anti-German discrimination as World War II broke out.

Interned at first in prison camps in the UK, he was sent to Canada where camps had also been set up.

Thanks to a letter of recommendation from the Birks family, Stern was released from an internment camp in Quebec. He



Clarence Epstein, an expert in looted art and art restitution, explained the Max Stern Art Restitution Project to the Westmount Rotarians during their November 24 webcast.

made his way to Montreal where he was hired as the director of the Dominion Gallery, eventually becoming the owner.

Epstein maintained that while Max Stern "had moved beyond" the fortune in art he was forced to part with, after Stern's death the contents of Stern's archives led researchers to the realization "there was a

period of unfinished business" and some obligations that should be pursued.

From the outset, those leading the restitution project found themselves challenged by complex art ownership issues, which were sometimes politicized. A turning point came when a US court ruled regarding a work, forcibly sold by Stern and later acquired by a German baroness, that "a stolen work of art is always considered stolen," Epstein said.

## US court: Stolen remains stolen

"No matter where you transport it, no matter how long it takes, it still falls outside the statute of limitations, and a forced sale is equivalent to a stolen work. And that has become the foundation stone for the project."

Since then, research has revealed that upwards of 40 paintings originally owned by Stern have circulated over the past four decades on the art market, usually through major auction houses located in Germany. To date, nearly a dozen works have been recovered at a rate of one or two a year. "We are making headway, but it is slow," said Epstein.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OPT-IN RULE NEEDED FOR PUBLISAC

Many or most companies are making the move to paperless. Invoices are sent by email and paper copies need to be requested. All small contributions to the environment. I believe Publisac should follow suit. The pile of circulars left at my door in a plastic bag must stop. The solution that now exists is to install an unsightly sign in a visible location. Ridiculous.

If anything, Westmount should impose the reverse: put up a sign supplied by Publisac if you want it. Let's do a small part for the environment. I suggest Westmount adopt this way of functioning. Anyone agree?

Fed up of junk mail,  
KAREN MCAULEY, ARGYLE AVE.

THANK YOU, CLLR. KEZ, FOR DISTRICT 8 INFO

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Councillor Kez for her annual District 8 bulletins, which were very much appreciated as they were very informative in keeping residents up to date on what was happening in our district.

As I am someone who appreciates numbers, her annual detailed reviews and explanations of the city's audited reports were most informative.

In all my years of living here, I have not seen a councillor make such an effort to keep residents informed. I am very happy

she was re-elected as we need representatives who are as responsive to her constituents as she has been. I am sure many others will also.

RICHARD SCHULTZ, CLANDEBOYE AVE.

HONOUR GARNEAU, PART 2

To echo your letter from Mark Lalonde and Valeri Schwartz (November 9, p. 6), Marc Garneau was my favourite politician for years. He was the best there could ever be: intelligent and fair towards any situation.

Of course, I always voted for him and PM Trudeau cashed in on that vote. But now I am feeling very cheated. Marc Garneau was taken away from me, on purpose [when he was removed from cabinet]. But why?

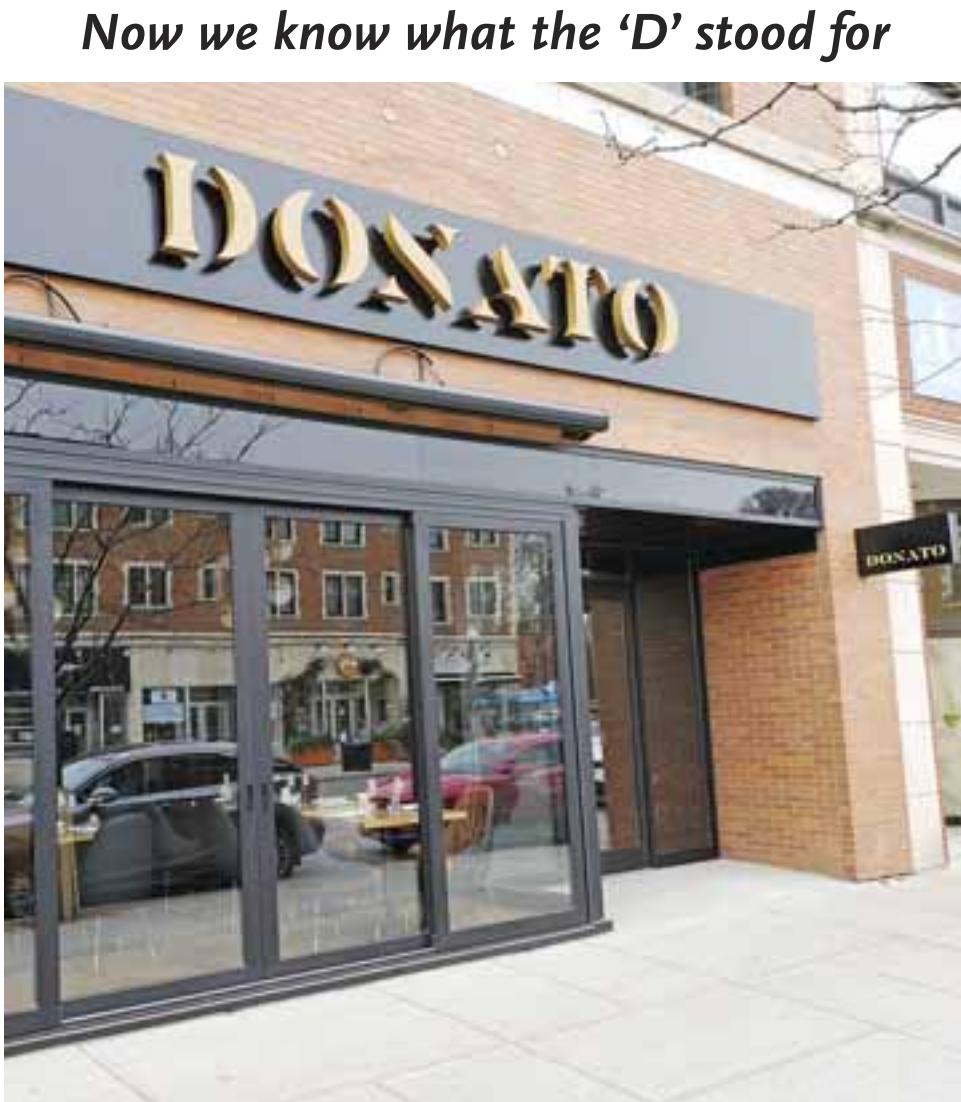
"Parc Marc Garneau" in the heart of our beautiful Westmount sounds good to me. But we will miss this great man – in person – forever.

Thank you for serving Canadians so well. You have our hearts, Monsieur Garneau.

ADELEHEID LOESECKE, HILLSIDE AVE.

Correction

A letter in our November 30 edition (p. 14) wrongly identified the background of the late Elisapee Pootoogook. She was in fact an Inuk, the singular of Inuit. – DP.



Renovations of the former Gascogne site on Sherbrooke near Grosvenor have been under way for some time, with only a mysterious "D" to identify the new tenant. We now know it is for a restaurant, Donato, as seen December 4. Gascogne closed on January 3, 2019 (January 16, p. 26).

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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Tender price includes much more than concrete

Cost of splash pad 'concrete' raised at council meeting

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Why was the cost of the splash pad in Stayner Park so much higher than the costs of concrete reported on the internet for pools, city council was asked November 15 by Fred Girvan of Victoria Ave.

Calculating the amount of concrete per square metre that would have been used in the splash pad approved by the city May 3, he wondered how a future product of this type would be priced.

The approved tender for the splash pad had been given to the lowest bidder, Mayor Christina Smith replied. According to city council documents, this had been \$377,171 including taxes, which in this case, had been the lower of two bids. The higher one was \$449,966 including taxes. "The prod-

uct is very well used," she said of the splash pad.

Councillor Kathleen Kez, who represents District 8 where the park is located, said that in the case of a splash pad, for example, there was all the underground plumbing that also had to be considered in addition to the concrete.

In fact, background documents for the Stayner splash pad stated that the tender costs included demolition of the existing one plus excavation, disposal and transportation of soils, abandonment of the existing water and sewer connection as well as the installation of new services. These included a new electrical connection, new drainage system and a new foundation. Then came the concrete and concrete surface.



Tree is illuminated at outdoor gathering

# City's Christmastime continues on city hall lawn

By RALPH THOMPSON

Those attending this year's Christmas tree lighting in front of city hall, December 1 at 6 pm, were given a special treat. The city's "elves" had been very busy coopting

singers, instrumentalists and smart phones to provide lots of seasonal music.

Donna Lach, assistant director of the library and community events, calmed down the crowd and introduced Mayor Christina Smith, who wasted no time in

starting a countdown to the tree lighting, with daughter Issy assisting.

(See p. GG-2 for a photo).

The music ensemble Association musicale de LaSalle, comprising trombones, saxophone and flute, then provided sooth-

ing background music while drinks, cream cup cakes and cookies were served. Finally, Seraphim, a well-known Montreal chamber choir, sang a number of Christmas songs *a cappella*. The event was attended by about 100 people.



Above, some of the attendees. Right, Ira Sokolov accompanied her 7-to-9 and 10-to-13 year old classes with rousing Christmas songs. Below, The city's "elves," aka Community Events staff members Emily Gamble, Melissa Denis-Daigneault, Claude Danis, Donna Lach and Ron Harris, took a quick break from the set-up for a selfie.



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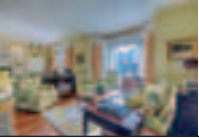



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# Golden Brandy



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LYSANNE FOWLER

A delight, Brandy is a friendly and playful hunk of love.

He is a treasure of silly antics, hilarious and affectionate in so many ways. He is presently enjoying his time in a foster family for Gerdy's Rescues and Adoptions, where he is playing in the fenced backyard with the family's two dogs and is interested in cats as well.

He is a typical golden, treat motivated



and a good eater. His lifestyle before joining his foster family was more sedate, so now he is keen on lots of exercise, getting back into shape and being out on leash, where his excitement is evident.

A very healthy and happy-to-greet-every-one six-year-old, he is up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped. Brandy will do very well in an adult family with someone at home for work or part-time for company, ensuring the best bonding to work on his training as a team. If you would like more information of Brandy, please send an email to [info@gerdysrescue.org](mailto:info@gerdysrescue.org) for more information on him and, yes, more great photographs!

Your neighbour, Lysanne

# Oscar, and catnip mice



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Oscar is, bar none, one of the most stunningly handsome male longhairs that I have ever seen.

Majestic and serene, he is a loving and playful presence while he is waiting for a forever family.

He is presently in foster care for the grassroots animal rescue Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions, where his foster mum reports that he is calm, quiet, sweet, and will do anything for food .....

Such a healthy three-year-old, he is up to date with his vaccinations, neutered and microchipped. If you would like more information on precious Oscar, please send an email directly to [info@gerdysrescue.org](mailto:info@gerdysrescue.org) and you will be contacted with more information and more photographs of this very handsome fellow.



## Mice galore

Here is a colourful seasonal selection of handknitted catnip mice, which are now the Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions classics



that our cats adore and have such hilarious fun with.

Year after year, a great holiday gift idea as well, with the added warmth of knowing that each purchase is a fundraising contribution. Adorable artistic handknitted mice, with a plump tummy filled with fragrant catnip, are available right now for \$10 each at Little Bear Pet Supplies (4152 St. Catherine St., corner Greene Ave.), Hôpital Vétérinaire Général MB (3400 St. Antoine St., corner Greene Ave.), Doghaus (5671 Sherbrooke St. W. in NDG, corner Harvard Ave.).

Go quickly! There are such beautiful selections!

Your neighbour,  
Lysanne

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# Theresa Foundation helps Malawi, Lambert tells Rotarians

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

In the wake of HIV/AIDS epidemic in southern Africa, grandmothers buried their own children while also struggling to ensure the survival of their grandchildren.

In 2006 in Montreal, Thérèse Bourque Lambert felt moved by their resilience, feeling that she could not ignore their struggle, while wanting to do something direct and local but small at the same time.

She reached out to a long-time family friend, a development officer posted in Malawi with the Canadian International Development Agency, and “tasked” him with finding a project to support grandmothers and their grandchildren that could be sustained from Montreal.

Thus in 2007, after an eight-month search and after examining many applications, the tiny village of Mnjale located in central Malawi was chosen as the focus. Since then, projects have benefited hundreds of grandmothers and orphans of the African AIDS epidemic in three villages in Malawi under the Theresa Foundation.

Brian Lambert, a long-time Westmounter and the son of Thérèse Bourque-Lambert, explained the foundation's mission and purpose to members of the Rotary



Brian Lambert, a long-time Westmounter and son of Thérèse Bourque-Lambert, explained the Theresa Foundation's work in Malawi to the Westmount Rotarians on November 3.

Club of Westmount during their webcast meeting on November 3.

Lambert said the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Malawi is around 35 times greater

than in Canada. In addition, it strikes women in Malawi to a much larger extent. Even today, the country has one of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalences in the world.

He said Malawi, a mostly agricultural and impoverished nation, was chosen because of its neediness, as well as the fact that it is one of Africa's most stable and peaceful nations.

In addition to support related directly to HIV/AIDS, part of the Theresa Foundation's mission each year now is to provide seeds and fertilizer to grandmothers. In fact, supplying fertilizer has become the single biggest item in the foundation's annual budget, Lambert said.

For their part, the orphans benefit from many of the same things as the grandmothers, including a community centre that was built by the foundation.

As well, there is now a kindergarten at the community centre, where a protein supplement is fed to the children to prevent malnutrition.

Since the loss of the CIDA connection in 2010 when Canada's aid program to Malawi came to an end and the family friend left the country, the Montreal-based Missionary Sisters of Immaculate Conception stepped in and agreed to continue providing oversight and management on the ground.

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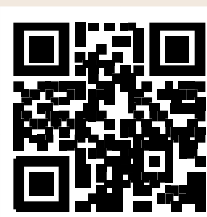
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Second day of Hanukah

# Flame of Hope comes to Westmount

BY RALPH THOMPSON

The city welcomed people of all faiths and backgrounds to city hall November 29 at 5 pm to illuminate the second candle of its menorah.

The event, in collaboration with Congregation Shaar Hashomayim and Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, included prayers

and songs, along with latkes, jelly doughnuts and drinks. Vaccine passports had originally been mandated but that was dropped at the last minute because it was solely an outdoor event.

There was also a very special visitor, the Flame of Hope, flown in courtesy of Austrian Airlines. Two flight attendants, Wolfgang *continued on p. 19*

## About the Flame of Hope

*Provided by Lawrence Lefcort, North American coordinator*

The Flame of Hope project was founded to bring healing and justice to some of the darkest places and most dangerous situations in the world. The flame is an international peace symbol that unifies the most historical flames from around the world into one flame. It includes:

1. The Hiroshima Flame (taken from the embers of the atomic bomb that destroyed Hiroshima on August 6, 1945),
2. The legendary Spirit Flame of Hon-ganji (the largest Buddhist school in Japan, which has been kept burning for 400 years),
3. The Nagasaki Flame of Commitment brought from Olympia, Greece,
4. The Eternal Flame of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem,
5. The Flame of Peace from the Nativity Church in Bethlehem,
6. The lights of Lourdes from the Grotto of apparitions, France,
7. Blessings of the botafumeiro from the

cathedral Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

More than 85,000 people across the world have added their wishes and prayers to the flame, wishing for peace, justice and a bright future. This year the flame will light Hanukah menorahs at synagogues in Tokyo, Jerusalem and Montreal to remember and give light to people who have been oppressed in the past and the present day.

The flame aims to provide light to people who have been and are being persecuted, and sow the seeds of hope to resolve the world's most challenging issues, including achieving peace in the Middle East, ending human trafficking, eliminating environmental degradation and stopping religious discrimination.

The flame is supported by other notable thought-leaders, including former prime minister of Japan Mr. Yukio Hatoyama; Dr. Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, and Clifton Truman Daniel, the grandson of President Harry Truman. In January 2022, the Flame of Hope will visit The Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta, Georgia to be unified with the centre's Eternal Flame.



Rabbi Scheier (left) and Rabbi Grushcow light the first two candles in their menorahs as councillors Conrad Peart, left, and Matt Aronson look on.



Austrian Airlines flight attendants Schuetzl Thomas (left) and Wolfgang Kerndler with the Flame of Hope.

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New friends?



Dr. Guttman receives HRF medal of honour

The Health Research Foundation (HRF) of Innovative Medicines Canada awarded its medal of honour to former Westmounter Dr. Astrid Guttman on November 24. Guttman is a physician and senior scientist in the Child Health Evaluative Sciences (CHES) program at Toronto's The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) and a senior scientist and chief science officer at ICES.

She specializes in health systems performance and policy evaluation related to the care of children and youth. Her research focuses on the use of population-based administrative data to improve health outcomes for children and youth facing a variety of complex disorders.

Guttman will receive \$20,000, which she chose to donate to SickKids. The funds will support summer students from under-represented communities at SickKids Research Institute.

Since 1945, the HRF medal of honour has been awarded annually to exceptional individuals whose work or contribution to public policies in support of research and development in Canada have achieved international recognition, including Dr. Charles Best for his co-discovery of insulin. – VR.

Indie's holiday schedule

December 14 – issue

December 21 & 28, and January 4 – no issues

January 11 & following – issues

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## Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

# Gift baskets galore, for all occasions



Jackie Yermus and Liz Yermus.

The upside of the persistent pandemic (I try to look on the bright side...!) is that entrepreneurs are appearing with innovative ideas. I recently met a local mother and daughter who have done just that.

Jackie Yermus was a shoe designer with ALDO. Then COVID came. Having lost her position, she joined forces with her mother Liz Yermus. Today, they have a great service: gift baskets of all kinds.

“We can go from small scale to the more extensive range for corporations and wedding planners – and of course the holidays,” noted Liz.

Jackie stressed that their suppliers are local. “For example, we have super spices from Montreal-based Kanel and alpaca throws from Pokoloko, which is in the Gatineau.”

Furthermore, they deliver, free. “We drive all over Montreal!”

They launched with home-made tie-dyed masks, which sold out immediately.

“We donated \$2 from each one sold and raised \$500 for Auberge Shalom. Now

Mandy’s carries our masks and \$2 from each sale is donated to the Welcome Collective.”

In November, they supported the ICRF Women of Action fundraiser. Having opened a mere year ago, their service is driven by social media – Instagram in particular.

Their website lists the range of products offered under various themes: “Books,” “For Him,” “Baby & Kids,” “Holiday” and “Homeware,” for example.

Like many future super-success stories, the dynamic duo works out of home. “Our basement is full of things to pack,” laughs Liz.

Luckily the family business has lots of help. Jackie’s son Jacob Roberts (7) loves to assist, as does his cousin Ben Roberts (10).

PRESENTATIONSGIFTS.COM

## 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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# Public Security brings ‘Giving Tuesday’ to the streets



Public Security's booth outside 5 Saisons on Greene Ave. November 28, before the city and Chabad Westmount's menorah lighting (see November 30, p. 1).



From left, on Victoria Ave. in front of the Metro grocery store November 30, Councillor Mary Gallery, parking inspector Jordan Ciampini, former councillor Cynthia Lulham, Councillor Anitra Bostock, Mayor Christina Smith, Councillor Kathleen Kez and public safety officer Troy Graggs.

LEFT-HAND PHOTO: VERONICA REDGRAVE; RIGHT-HAND PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Public Security set up giving booths on Greene November 28 and on Victoria November 30, the internationally recognized day of providing help to hungry families: Giving Tuesday.

*See p. 1 for the unit's results.*

Public Security assistant director and food basket coordinator Kimberly Colquhoun also explained that monetary donations can be made online ([westmount.org/en/food-drive/](http://westmount.org/en/food-drive/)) and in-kind ones dropped off by December 10 at municipal buildings, including the Westmount recreation centre

(WRC) to the attendant at the Academy Rd. entrance Monday to Friday, 3 pm to 10 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 9 am to 4:30 pm.

Boxes will then be put together for needy local families as recommended by the CLSC Metro, all the while respecting allergies and gluten-free needs, along with gift cards for supermarkets and pharmacies for delivery after December 17.

### 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: [editor@westmountindependent.com](mailto:editor@westmountindependent.com)

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[www.facebook.com/groups/246296065508834](http://www.facebook.com/groups/246296065508834)

The federal power of disallowance over any provincial law must be used against the province of Quebec's Bill 96. We – all Canadians – must insist upon its use.

We are asking people to join The Committee to Disallow Bill 96 on Facebook.

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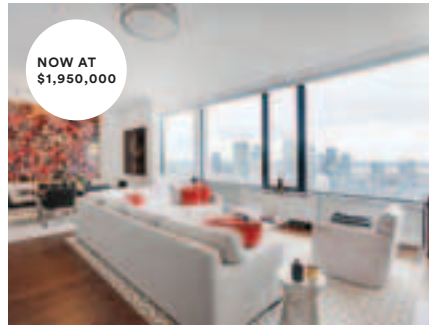
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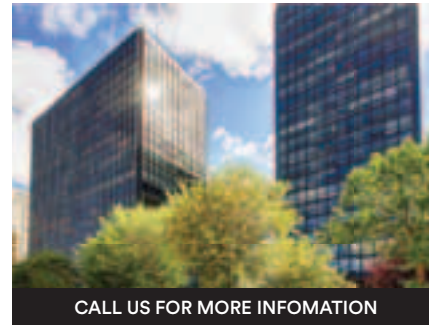
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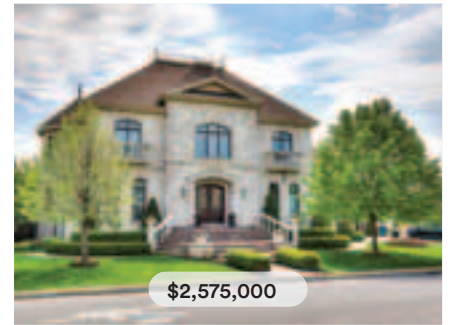
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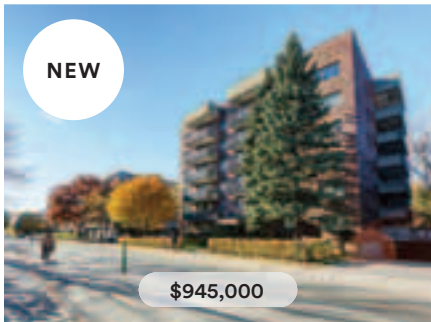
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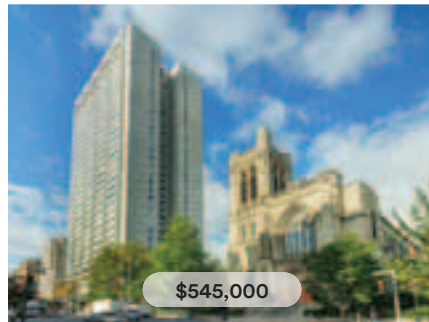
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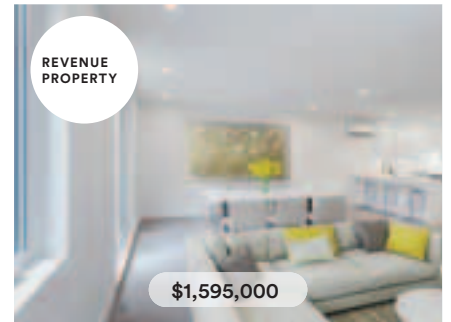
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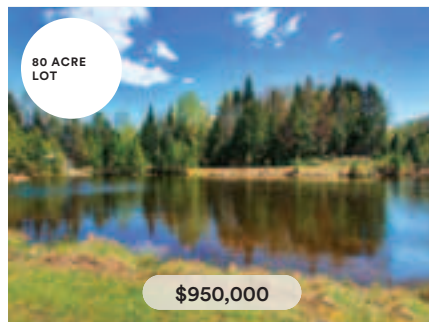
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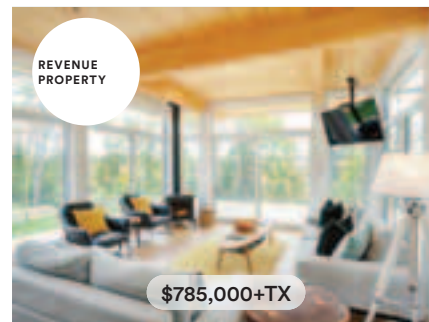
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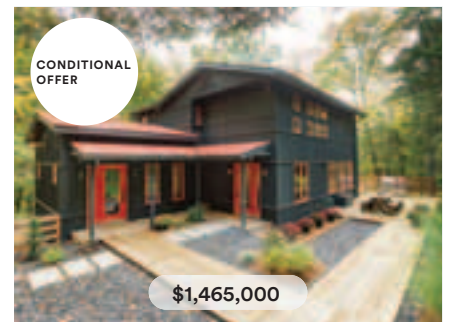
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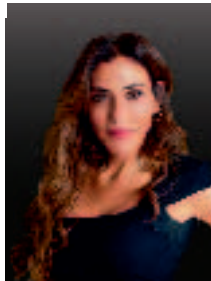
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