

44 signed up from 'Westmount' units

Army's assistance at vax centres ends after a month

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As of last week (February 15), when military assistance at Quebec's booster vaccination centres officially ended, the last of the army reservists involved in "Operation Vector" returned to their home units.

Passports still needed for WRC

Vaccination passports are still required at the Westmount recreation centre until "at least March 14," according to Sports and Recreation director Dave Lapointe. This was the latest update at the end of last week following Quebec's easing of some restrictions.

Among these were 44 officially listed as coming from Westmount units, according to Lieutenant Kary-Anne Poirier, public affairs officer with the 34th Canadian Brigade Group.

"One interesting Westmount connection," she said, was that the operation in the Montreal region was led by Lieut. Col. John Shore, commanding officer of the Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR).

The 44 "Westmount" reservists were identified as coming from the RMR, whose armoury is on St. Catherine St. beside the Westmount recreation centre, and the 34 Signal *continued on p. 10*

Hillside armoury 'demo' approved, see p. 13

A walk in the (Summit) woods



Columnist and photographer Ralph Thompson follows the footsteps of others, literally, and takes the reader on a less well trodden path, see p. 18.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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'Safe environment for teens:' Cllr. Gallery

Teen Zone partnership at WRC renewed by council

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's annual partnership agreement with the YMCAs of Quebec for the Teen Zone at the Westmount recreation centre (WRC) was renewed by the city at its council meeting February 7.

This year, the city's annual financial contribution will be \$56,192, payable in

two instalments February 15 and July 15, according to the resolution moved by Councillor Mary Gallery, whose commissionership includes sports and recreation. This compares with last year's \$53,773.

Under the agreement, initially approved April 8, 2014, the centre is managed by the Y to combine city resources with the Y's ex- *continued on p. 10*

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Support for continued non-profit status

City backs Atwater Library's tax-exemption request to Quebec Municipal Commission

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

An application by the Atwater Library and Computer Centre to the Quebec Municipal Commission to retain its status as a non-profit organization was supported by city council resolution February 7.

This designation is conditional on the commission concluding the library "still meets the conditions required to confirm such a tax exemption" as recognized in November 2012, stated Councillor Antonio D'Amico, finance commissioner, in moving the resolution.

Pays for services

While the library holds tax-exemption status on most portions of the property, "they are still bound to pay a compensation for municipal services," he told the *Independent*.

This is a "similar kind of practice faced by houses of worship and educational institutions."

"This compensation is imposed according to the non-taxable value of the immovable entered on the real estate assessment roll at the rate of \$0.3707 per \$100 of the assessed value," he explained. (This compares with the mil rate on a single-family dwelling of \$ 0.7459 and a non-residential rate of \$2.9659.)

\$6k increase

In 2021, this amount was \$14,276, according to Lynn Verge, the library's executive director, an increase from \$8,289 in 2015. This was based on the commission's ruling, the property assessment roll and the tax rate.

The portions of the property deemed not tax exempt included three parking

per \$100 of value:

Atwater's 'compensation' rate

\$0.3707

Tax (mil) rates

Single-family = \$0.7459

Non-residential = \$2.9659

spaces rented out and the occupancy of office space by Foundation Aubin. On the other hand, non-profit occupants of the three-storey building such as the Montreal Children's Library and the Canadian Writers' Federation were included in the non-profit portion.

Renewable after 9 years

The library's status as a non-profit organization is renewable after nine years but the application for this year is still under consideration.

"Our assessed [property] value has gone up as we've upgraded our building," Verge explained. "This included extensive code compliance work, major conservation to the exterior (masonry, windows and roof), new and expanded washrooms, upgrades to public rooms, and the installation of an elevator and new accessible entrance."

Just as improvements to any house or building, these upgrades have increased the library's assessment despite being funded by private donors and the federal government.

"As unfair as it seems, we are being penalized by the municipal authorities... to ensure that a fine heritage building is fitted for more decades of community service."

She also reiterated previous complaints of having to pay Westmount permit fees based on the value of construction projects.

Last year, many library supporters wrote letters of concern over the amount of the city's annual share of grants to some six or seven non-profit organizations that provide specific services to Westmount residents the city is unable to, in this case to the library for its computer courses.

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City Views: clothing retailer Cheryl Glense, p. 16



T's Takes, p. 18

infoWestmount, p. 12



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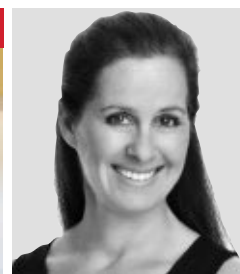


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‘Excited, motivated and prepared’

Matthew Frenkiel honoured as player of the month

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Matthew Frenkiel was named last week as the city’s hockey player of the month for January, announced Andrew Maislin, operations manager for Westmount’s Sports and Recreation department.

“He plays with the U/M9-3 Wings team and is in his first season playing inter-city hockey for Westmount,” Maislin said. No stranger to the game, however, Matthew graduated from the MAHG instructional hockey program.

According to the team’s head coach Paul Tsang, “Matthew is a dream to coach because he is excited, motivated and comes prepared to learn every time. He’s a positive influence both on and off the ice, which is so important as young players develop their skills and learn to play as a team. Matthew’s just simply a great teammate.”

The player-of-the-month recognition program was launched in November 2019 to acknowledge how, through hockey and sports as a whole, children are able to develop sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline, which they can then transfer into other areas of their lives.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT SPORTS AND RECREATION.



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Delivering Valentine's greetings



Helping with the Valentine's Day delivery of flowers, cookies and cards February 14 to 50 seniors are, from left, Contactivity centre outreach worker Fiona Smith, Public Security assistant director Kimberley Colquhoun and Councillor Kathleen Kez, public security commissioner.

"The recipients were so happy to see us and loved receiving a rose on Valentine's Day," Colquhoun said.

"Some expressed that they couldn't wait to try the cookie with their afternoon tea."

The Valentine's surprise visits and presents were a joint initiative of the Contactivity Seniors' Centre and Westmount's Public Security department involving seniors on their vulnerable peoples' registry and the daily Telecheck calls (see story February 15, p. 3.)

PHOTO COURTESY OF PUBLIC SECURITY.

Can showcase many types of visual arts Applications now accepted for Gallery at Vic Hall

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's annual application period for Westmount artists to submit proposals for the next exhibition season at the Gallery in Victoria Hall is now under way from February 15 to April 15.

The proposals are open to emerging, semi-professional or established artists residing in Westmount. Selected artists will be offered a solo or shared exhibition at the Gallery at Victoria Hall.

"At the Gallery, we are equipped to showcase a variety of mediums," said Mélissa Denis-Daigneault, Community Events technician. "These include photography,

painting, drawing, printmaking, textile and some installations such as sculpture. We are open to proposals from artists working with a variety of visual arts mediums."

Proposals are evaluated by the Gallery selection committee. A visit to the artist's studio may be requested during the evaluation period.

Proposals must include: 10 high resolution images of recent works, a descriptive list including the titles and details for each of the submitted works, a brief *curriculum vitae* and an artist's statement. Eligibility and an application form are available on the city's website under recreation-culture/community-events-gallery.



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Police Report

Second arrest made in ongoing local 'grandparent' frauds

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Following the arrest of a phone scam suspect at a home in Westmount last month, police at the SPVM's Station 12 report a second suspect was taken into custody last week in conjunction with several more "grandparent" frauds perpetrated or attempted recently in Westmount.

Officers from Station 12 arrested the first fraud suspect on January 25 after a retired Westmounter had been fooled into believing false claims that a close relative was in trouble with the law and in need of bail money in the US (see February 18, p. 18).

Scam: 'Grandchild' in trouble on vacation

In a similar fraud incident reported to staff at Station 12 on February 10, another retired Westmount resident filed a criminal complaint about being targeted by suspects who were using the so-called grandparent scheme.

According to Station 12 community relations officer Adalbert Pimentel, the complainant reported receiving a call from someone claiming to be their grandchild, saying he had been arrested by the police while on vacation overseas.

The plaintiff was persuaded to send several thousand dollars to post bail. An accomplice of the perpetrators was sent to pick the money up in person at the victim's home in Westmount.

In an additional phase of the scam after the initial amount had been paid, the suspects contacted the victim again to say that a further amount, several thousand dollars higher, would be needed to cover more legal expenses.

RCMP impersonator

In another case with similarities, yet

another resident went to the station, this time on February 11, to report that he received a call from an individual claiming to be with the RCMP.

The caller maintained that the resident's grandchild had been involved in an accident causing injuries to others, and that \$10,000 was needed to bail the grandchild out of jail. Again, the caller told the victim that an officer would be sent to pick up the money.

The following day, the victim was again contacted and told the amount to pay had risen by a few thousand dollars because one of the people injured in the accident had died.

Grandchild scam #3

And in yet one more incident, on February 12 a third Westmounter filed a complaint of being targeted by phone by individuals posing as law enforcement officials seeking large sums of money to deal with legal problems involving a grandchild.

According to Pimentel, all the cases involved residents living on streets between Sherbrooke and Côte St. Antoine in Westmount.

He said that in at least one of the three cases, investigators from Station 12 coordinated efforts with the victim and were able to arrest a suspect at the victim's home on February 11 when a money pick-up was set to take place.

While he could not confirm that the suspect arrested in January had anything to do with the subsequent incidents, Pimentel said the investigators are treating them all for the time being as "related incidents."

He said the perpetrators appeared to have enough basic information on each of the victims to surmise they had grandchildren, and that one hypothesis is that they obtained it by browsing publicly-accessible social media accounts.

Pimentel suggested that the best thing seniors can do when they find themselves being targeted by phone by suspicious callers is simply to hang up. "If it's legit, they'll get back in touch with you," he said. If still in doubt, he added, call relatives or friends to verify what might be going on.



Let's work on that.

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'No need to be alarmed:' supermarket industry rep

2021 Kellogg's strike continues to affect local supermarket shelves

By JENNIFER BALL

If you have wondered, while doing the weekly shopping rounds, why some Westmount grocers' shelves have gaps in the non-perishable sections, read on.

They are experiencing a shortage of Kellogg's products. The issue is affecting all of Kellogg's brands: Pop-Tarts, Corn Flakes, Rice Krispies and Pringles chips, to name a few and it started back with a Kellogg employee strike in 2021.

Kellogg employees walked off the job in October 2021, but they ratified their contract and resolved the labour dispute on December 21.

Although Kellogg Canada declined an interview, they provided a statement.

"Kellogg Canada has experienced ongoing challenges as our business continues to be impacted by the ongoing pandemic, rising commodity and freight inflation, logistics challenges, packaging and labour shortages, as well as the prolonged work stoppage at four of our US cereal plants in Q4 2021. Although indicative of the challenged operating environment all manufacturers are experiencing, we've been working hard to address these intermittent shortages. This includes a continued focus on rebuilding inventory across our customer distribution networks



Select shelves seen February 14 of the Metro grocery store on Victoria, left; 5 Saisons on Greene, middle; and the Alexis Nihon IGA, with a sign (inset) explaining the current challenge.



to help ensure we return to consistent and reliable in-store availability as quickly as we can, and get consumers' beloved Kellogg's cereal brands back on store shelves."

Since 1963, the Retail Council of Canada (RCC) has been an advocacy association for retailers. The RCC represents over 45,000 businesses and online merchants in general merchandise, drug and grocery.

Francis Mailly joined the RCC in 2019 as a manager, government relations, grocery division and is the spokesperson for IGA (managed by Sobeys), and Metro (that also manages 5 Saisons).

"In normal times – in non-pandemic

times – two months after a labour strike, the customer would not see downstream effects but the strike compounded with global supply chain issues and a labour shortage has resulted in some bare shelves," Mailly said.

"It is going to resolve by itself but it is still going to be fragile. Even if it is entirely resolved, it will be possible to have delays for Kellogg's products, for a few days, as for any other product."

For the stores under Mailly's remit – IGA, Metro and 5 Saisons in Westmount – broadly speaking the labour shortage is making it hard to bring products from

point A to point B, in a normal stretch of time, to make sure that all the shelves are full at the same time.

"There are some empty shelves not because the product is missing but because we don't have the arms to put the products on the shelves," Mailly said. "That is right across job roles. The entire chain is fragile. There is no lack of food at all. It is only delayed."

Mailly wanted to stress that there should be awareness on the part of shoppers but no need to be alarmed. "There is similar produce out there for the type of produce that is getting to the market later," Mailly said.

Sowing the seeds of inclusion at Zera Café

February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance & Inclusion Month

By RALPH THOMPSON

February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance & Inclusion Month (JDAIM) and Westmounter Joel Segal, president of Federation CJA, introduced the *Independent* to Zera Café, one of the many entities that the federation supports in the greater Montreal Jewish community related to children and adults living with disabilities.

"There are 16,000 disabled Jewish people, 15 years or older living in the greater Montreal area," said Carly Goodman, senior manager, community belonging & disability inclusion for Federation CJA.

Zera is a not-for-profit business located since February 1 inside Cummings House on Côte St. Catherine. It is a catering service founded in March 2020 by Eve Rochman, a McGill graduate in commerce and in health and social services. Cummings has a large commercial kitchen that has been underused since the start of the pandemic.

For Rochman, the pandemic cloud has

had a silver lining. Zera means "seed" in Hebrew and Rochman's vision was to develop a business with inclusion and diversity in hiring people that worked to help them to grow and flourish as valued employees and community members. The

café currently employs six young neurodiverse people four days a week to prepare and deliver meals around Montreal. Volunteers also help out.

"These young people get a chance to grow, they feel valued, they work hard and

get the job done just like anyone else," said an enthusiastic Rochman.

The very diverse menu is prepared weekly and displayed online (<https://zera-cafe.ca>). Frozen meals from previous weeks can also be ordered online. The café is not open for sit-down meals at this time because of COVID constraints, but you can visit their website.



Members of Federation CJA and a few of the Zera Café team in the Cummings House kitchen on February 17: from left, Joel Segal, Jonathan Novack, Eyal Faitelis, Pamela Teitelbaum, Cary Goodman and Eva Rochman – holding a tray of quiches.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WELL-BALANCED COVID MEASURES FINALLY RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF SENIORS

This press release was received February 16 by the Independent.

The CIUSSS West-Central Montreal Users' Committee is delighted with the measures announced today by the [provincial] minister responsible for Seniors and Caregivers, Marguerite Blais, and the national [Quebec] director of Public Health, Dr. Luc Boileau, at a press conference held today.

"We feel that a real balance has been struck between respecting the autonomy of residents, their psychological, emotional and relational well-being and the new protective measures of COVID in line with the current vaccination context and the characteristics of the Omicron variant. It's about time," says Irène Demczuk, resource person for the committee.

The users' committee believes that this easing of measures will change the lives of many seniors, even in an outbreak situation.

"With these measures, we will finally stop penalizing seniors who did not have COVID, but who remained in 'preventive isolation' for 10 days in their room because they had a distant contact with a positive person, most often a staff member. Minister Blais' announcement shows that we can move beyond overprotective and even

ageist attitudes and base prevention practices on current data while respecting the rights of seniors, who are full-fledged citizens," said the committee spokesperson.

The Users' Committee hopes that the CIUSSS and CISSS will be able to monitor the application of these measures in accordance not only with the new directive but also with respect for the autonomy and rights of residents.

The Users' Committee of the CIUSSS West-Central Montreal brings together 13 users' and residents' committees. It was one of the first to sound the alarm on preventive isolation measures for seniors in a document sent on January 17 to Ministers Dubé and Blais entitled "When prevention is experienced as a prison" (see January 25 Independent, p. 6).

TRÉJA-VU ON GROSVENOR – CAN'T WE BE TOLD IN ADVANCE?

Yet again (see letters: October 22, 2019 p. 8 and November 9, 2021 p. 6) my Grosvenor Ave. home has been rendered inaccessible by construction activities without warning. This time for aqueduct repair (above right).

My message remains as before...would it be possible to get advance notification in order to make adjustments in my daily routine?

PATRICK FITZ GERALD,
GROSVENOR AVE.



FANTASTIC FALCON

A visitor to Chesterfield Ave. Spotted in my neighbour's plum tree on 29 January. Photo taken after a light snack of a junco or sparrow.

Northern goshawk, I believe.
Fantastic.

THOMAS LAPIERRE, CHESTERFIELD AVE.



STRIKING STATUE

Driving along St. Jacques heading east, we saw this against the skyline. It's on the grounds next to the Glen Hospital (Glen Path Hill?). Artist unknown.

Striking!

GEORGE AND BERYL BOWSER,
COLUMBIA AVE.

NOT THE SOURCE

RE: "Firefighters answer eight calls at '4300' in less than six weeks" (February 15, p. 12). Notwithstanding that this article mentions that the unidentified source is at the Stanton fire station, I've received several calls inquiring if it was me.

My response: No, not me.

In the interest of accuracy, the former owner bcIMC sold the building to Minto REIT in November 2019. There have since been eight individuals in the roles of district manager, property manager and service coordinator.

STEPHEN COHEN, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

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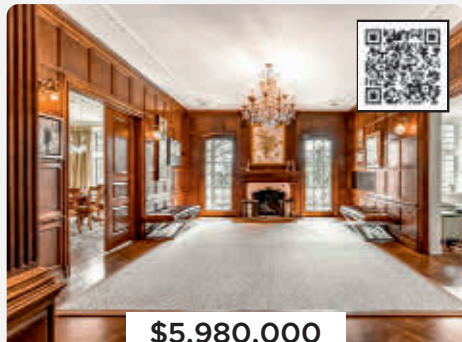
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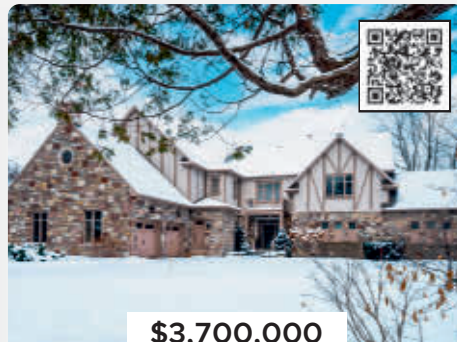


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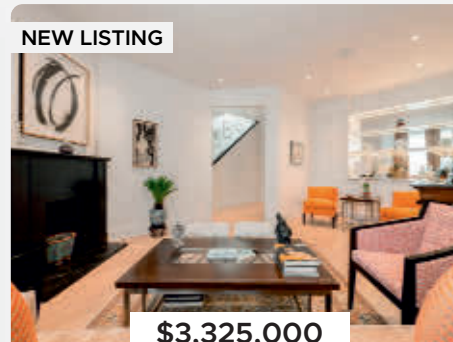
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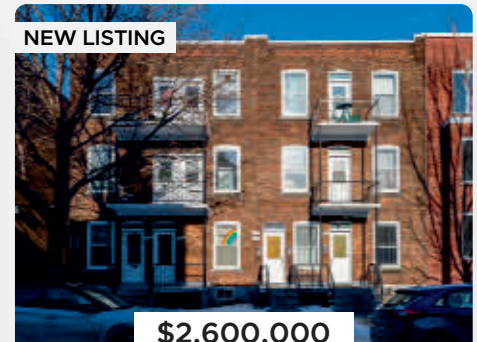
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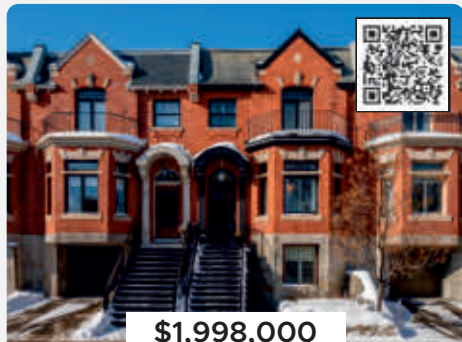
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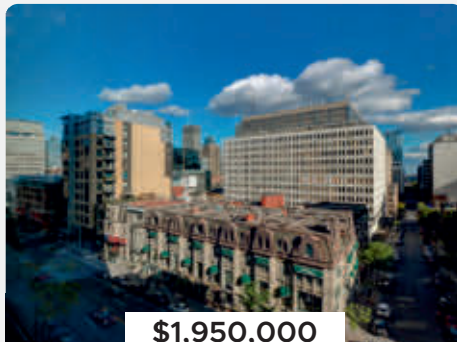
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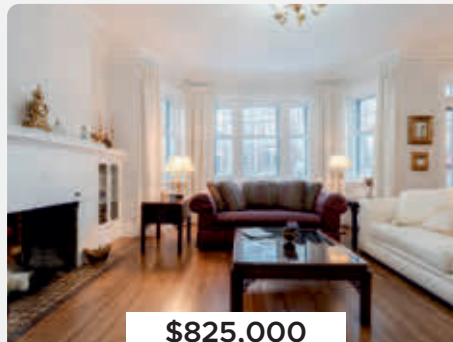
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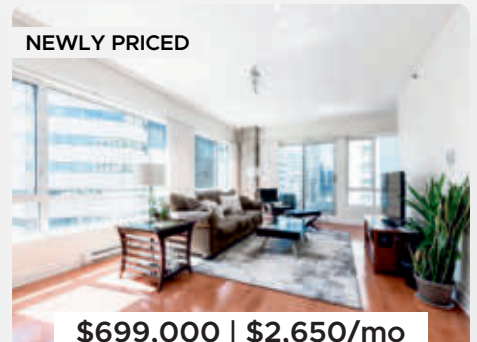
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Army's assistance, cont'd from p. 1

Regiment now based there too, as well as the 2 Field Regiment of Artillery, which is located in the armoury on Côte des Neiges Rd. just east of the Westmount border, which it shares with the Hussars, whose participants were also included in the Westmount total.

Because many of the reservists have full-time jobs or are students, only those who were available were able to sign on to the work at the vaccination centres.

Operation Vector was tasked with re-

ception duties, guiding people through the vaccination steps, and cleaning and disinfecting areas and surfaces. The reserve force members signed a 30-day contract with the possibility of extension depending on their availability and the needs of the operation.

When a vaccination centre no longer required support, the soldiers returned to their units or were re-assigned to another centre.



Master Corporal Martel of the 2 Field Artillery at his work station at the vaccination centre in Ahuntsic January 27.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CANADIAN ARMED FORCES.



Corporal Youk of the Royal Montreal Regiment signals that he is available to register the next person at the Olympic stadium January 6.



Corporal Green of the RMR assists at the Olympic stadium January 6.

Teen Zone, cont'd from p. 1

expertise and track record of operating teen zones across Canada (see story February 11, 2014).

During last fall's COVID limitations, the Teen Zone was open with restricted access prior to closing on December 21, according to Dave Lapointe, Sports and Recreation director. It has been open for in-person participation since January 17 but at 50-percent capacity.

Online programming

“Over the course of the pandemic, the Teen Zone has been offering online programming activities such as tutoring and intervention when open and closed,” he noted.

The teens' access to the WRC is limited

to the Teen Zone (TZ) and “The TZ coordinators are responsible for the governance of all COVID-related protocolism” LaPointe explained.

“It’s an important partnership with the city,” Councillor Gallery said last week. “Since 2014, this dedicated space in the WRC provides a safe environment for teens to gather, connect and build relationships, an alternative to home and school. We are very proud of this important partnership in our community and encourage more kids to go and check it out.”

She said the Teen Zone's staff promotes the centre to increase participation by contacting and delivering flyers to the many schools in Westmount as well as through social media platforms and websites.

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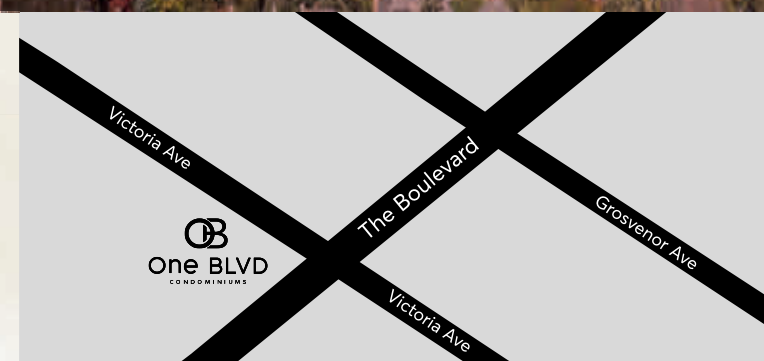
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Published by the City of Westmount

NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE
DU CONSEIL

Lundi 7 mars

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL
MEETING

Monday, March 7



Galerie du Victoria Hall : appel aux artistes de Westmount

Vous êtes invités à soumettre votre candidature pour la prochaine saison d'expositions **au plus tard le 15 avril 2022**. Renseignements et formulaire de candidature : westmount.org.

Taxes municipales 2022

La date limite pour le premier versement est le **vendredi 25 février**. Vous pouvez consulter votre compte de taxes sur le portail en ligne VOILÀ! westmount.org

Inscription pour les activités du printemps

Le guide des activités sportives et de loisirs printemps 2022 est présentement en ligne. Les inscriptions pour les résidents de Westmount débuteront le **mardi 15 mars à 8 h**. Inscription en ligne seulement. westmount.org

Fermeture du boul. De Maisonneuve entre Claremont et Vendôme

La Commission des services électriques de Montréal effectuera des travaux pour une durée d'environ 3 mois à partir de la semaine du 21

février. Ces travaux nécessiteront la fermeture complète du boul. De Maisonneuve en direction ouest, entre les avenues Claremont et Vendôme. westmount.org

Mois de l'histoire des noirs


Westmount reconnaît la contribution de la communauté noire à la prospérité, la diversité et l'inclusivité de la Ville. westmount.org

Gestion des déchets : sondage et outils

Une brochure sur la gestion des matières résiduelles a été distribuée aux résidents. Vous êtes invités à répondre à un court sondage et à consulter nos outils en ligne. westmount.org

Bureaux municipaux fermés au public

Tous les services sont disponibles en ligne et par téléphone. westmount.org



Gallery at Victoria Hall: invitation to Westmount artists

You are invited to submit your proposal for the next exhibition season **on or before April 15, 2022**. Find the details and application form at westmount.org.

2022 Property Tax

The deadline for the first instalment is **Friday, February 25**. You can view your tax bill in the VOILÀ! Online Property Portal. westmount.org

Registration for spring activities

The Spring 2022 Sports and Recreation Activities Guide is now online. Registration for Westmount residents will begin **Tuesday, March 15 at 8 a.m.** Online registration only. westmount.org

Closure of De Maisonneuve Blvd. between Claremont and Vendôme

The Commission des services électriques de Montréal will carry out work for approximately 3 months beginning the week of February 21. It will require the complete closure of the

westbound lane of De Maisonneuve Boulevard between Claremont and Vendôme Avenues. westmount.org

Black History Month

Westmount recognizes the black community's contribution to the prosperity, diversity, and inclusivity of the City. westmount.org

Waste management survey and tools

A brochure on waste management was distributed to residents. You are invited to complete a short survey and to consult our online tools. westmount.org

Municipal offices closed to the public

All City services are available online and by phone. westmount.org

BIBLIOTHÈQUE

Bibliothèque ouverte au public

Nous sommes heureux d'accueillir à nouveau les visiteurs! Un service de cueillette en libre-service est en place à l'intérieur. Avant de vous déplacer, informez-vous des exigences et conditions. westlib.org

Concours littéraire McEntyre 2022

Et ensuite? Nous te demandons d'écrire une histoire, un poème ou un essai décrivant comment tu envisages le futur. Soumets ton texte en ligne ou en personne **avant minuit le vendredi 1er avril 2022**. westlib.org

Trousses pour bébés

Procurez-vous un ensemble spécial pour les tout-petits de 2 ans ou moins. Il comprend des livres cartonnés, des recettes, un pichet à lait et plus encore. wwayling@westmount.org

L'heure de conte en ligne

Chaque mercredi, le personnel de la Bibliothèque des enfants vous propose des contes en ligne à westlib.org et sur sa chaîne YouTube.

Trousses de bricolages pour enfants

Inscris-toi pour participer à un atelier de bricolage à faire chez toi! Une trousse te sera remise à la Bibliothèque. **Le 7 mars** : Saint-Patrick; **le 21 mars** : Vive la neige!

Activités de la relâche scolaire

Du 28 février au 4 mars : Chasse au trésor du bonhomme de neige à la Bibliothèque; **Mardi 1er mars, 14 h**, Victoria Hall : Film en famille - Luca (2021). Inscrivez-vous à westlib.org.

Collecte de sang Héma Québec

Mercredi 2 mars, 13 h 30 à 19 h 30, Victoria Hall. Par rendez-vous seulement. Pour prendre rendez-vous, visitez hema-quebec.qc.ca ou composez le **1-800-343-7264**.

Conférence - Art Space Ecology

Mercredi 9 mars, 19 h, Victoria Hall. John K. Grande vous parlera de la façon dont le monde et notre rapport à l'art changent. Inscription requise. westlib.org

LIBRARY

Library open to the public

We are pleased to welcome visitors back! A self-serve pickup system is now in place inside. Learn about the requirements and conditions before you arrive. westlib.org

2022 McEntyre Writing Competition

What's next? We would like you to write a creative story, poem, or essay about how you envision the future. Submit your entry **by midnight on April 1, 2022**. westlib.org

Baby Kits

Ask us for a special kit for newborns up to 2 years. The kit includes board books, recipes, a milk pitcher and more. wwayling@westmount.org

Storytime online

Enjoy a new story online read by the children's library staff each Wednesday. Videos are posted at westlib.org and on the Library's YouTube channel.

Take and Make Craft Kits for Kids

Sign up for a fun craft kit to do at home! Kits can be picked up at the Library. **March 7**: St. Patrick's Day; **March 21**: Let it Snow!

March break activities

From February 28 to March 4: Snowman Scavenger Hunt at the Library; **Tuesday, March 1st, 2 p.m.**, Victoria Hall: Family Movie Day - Luca (2021). Register at westlib.org.

Héma Québec Blood Drive

Wednesday, March 2, 1:30 to 7:30 p.m., Victoria Hall. By appointment only. To make an appointment, visit hema-quebec.qc.ca or phone **1-800-343-7264**.

Lecture - Art Space Ecology

Wednesday, March 9, 7 p.m., Victoria Hall. John K. Grande will discuss how the world and our ways of seeing art are changing. Registration required. westlib.org

To allow 'reconstruction' of heritage building

Demo permit approved at hearing for Hillside armoury

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's Demolition Committee gave its approval February 17 for a demolition permit regarding the dismantling of 87 percent of the vacant armoury at 1-3 Hillside, which was described as showing significant deterioration. This permit is required whenever 50 percent or more of a building's exterior is removed.

In this case, the decision came after a two-hour long online Zoom hearing and deliberation on the demolition application to convert the vacant 1910 industrial building into a five-storey project to include some 27 new residential units.

One reason for the approval was the "positive economic and social impact" it would have on the mainly residential character of the area, Councillor Conrad Peart stated in moving an approval resolution.

It was adopted unanimously by the Demolition Committee, which consists of all members of the council, after a half hour period of deliberation.

PAC, council disagree

While the decision did not "align" with an "unfavourable recommendation" from the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), he noted that the roles of the city's design review committee and the council had different aspects to consider.

Peart, who, as the city's commissioner of urban planning and infrastructure, is a member of the PAC, said he considered the project to dismantle 87 percent of the building constituted a "reconstruction" of what had been there rather than a "restoration" as presented at the hearing by developers.

Other reasons cited in the approval resolution were that the majority of 29 letters of comment or opposition received by the city favoured the demolition to make way for the development project and that an



The east wall of the Hillside armoury, which faces Hillside Lane and Westmount High, as seen February 21.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

analysis by the city's Urban Planning department showed the proposal met criteria of the demolition by-law.

Among others were that numerous transformations of the heritage-rated building over the years had already affected the authenticity of the original riding academy turned armoury.

Must go through SCAOPI

Obtaining a demolition permit is the first step before the replacement plan is subjected to the city's SCAOPI process for projects that do not conform to current zoning. In this case, this is for height and density.

Most questioners came from next door

Of more than 12 questioners at the webinar meeting, most lived in the condo building at 11 Hillside Ave. directly west of

the armoury, objecting to what they considered to be their lack of privacy resulting from the windowed west wall of the proposed new building.

They were reminded that their own building had brought more than 40 new families to the area. This followed approval of a demolition permit for the former site of Giant Steps School, located in what had been a curling club.

Councillor Matt Aronson, who represents the District 7, asked the developers a number of questions concerning the project.

Among them were whether any excavation was required, steps to ensure any of the work was not a burden to neighbours, communication plans and whether the project's power supply would be based on traditional Hydro Westmount electricity or solar panels, for example.

He was told it was too early to discuss the electricity issue but that a request from neighbours for a weekly newsletter was being integrated into a communication plan, and that excavation work would follow normal procedures, but was required since the current basement was only seven feet high. It had been built as a stable.

Aronson said the answers were "incredibly satisfying" and put his mind at ease. He subsequently seconded the approval resolution.

Cllr. Aronson:

Building verges on dangerous

He said he was "really sensitive to the objections of the neighbours. Nobody wants to live in a construction zone. Noting that housing was in short supply in Westmount and that the vacant armoury now verged on presenting a danger, he was favourable to the benefits the project would provide.

Under the proposal described at the hearing, the entire east wall of the armoury along Hillside Lane needed to be removed along with roof and (window) openings accounting for most of the 87 percent of demolition (see also story February 1, p. 10).

Built as a riding academy, the building had been used for 67 years as an armoury until vacated by the 34 Combat Engineer Regiment (formerly the 3 Field Engineers) before it moved out in 2014, citing deteriorated condition.

Starting in 2017, it was sold by Canada Lands to a developer whose projected use and plans fell through before the property was acquired by Groupimmo Élite at the end of 2018 (see story April 2, 2019, p. 6).

Luciano and Maya Girlando, of Groupimmo Élite, presented the current plan for a stepped-back five-storey building (see story February 8, p. 10).

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LYSANNE FOWLER

Her name is Luna but it could be Happy.

Still so young at 13 months of age, this beautiful husky had a rough beginning of life yet is now so very happy, affectionate and playful. She is in foster care for the grassroots animal rescue Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions and her foster family reports that she is very bright and enjoys enrichment toys that keep her mind busy.

She has also learned her basic commands and is being taught new ones, which she is keen on responding to as well.

As a husky, the great outdoors is calling

Lovely Luna

her, throughout her long walks, playtime in the dog park or games in the fenced backyard. Luna is very social and interactive. She is keen on the company of other dogs and enjoys older children but is not used to cats. As a youngster still, she needs the constancy of leash training and learning to control her joy when she meets new people!

Luna is very healthy, up to date on her vaccinations, spayed and microchipped. If you would like more information on her, please do not hesitate to contact the volunteers at Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions at their website www.gerdysrescue.org and email them at info@gerdysrescue.org to fill out an adoption application form.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne



Mini Mouse and Tiger



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Black, long-haired Mini Mouse is a delicate pixie while her buddy Tiger is a hunky lovebug.

Both are in a foster family for the Montreal SPCA, ready for adoption into a forever family.

Mini Mouse is curious and adorably affectionate while Tiger is surprisingly shy at the beginning but warms up when coaxed out of his shell. Mini Mouse is quite the playful beauty at nine years of age, while Tiger is a cuddly handsome classic grey tabby of six years of age. Mini Mouse

is the instigator: she encourages Tiger to come out of his shell and then they enjoy playtime together and with family members.

Both are healthy, up to date with their inoculations, sterilized and microchipped. Tiger had dental work done and has fewer teeth so he is on a diet of wet food, which he quite enjoys.

If you would like more information on Mini Mouse, please refer to her identification number 49129716 and also Tiger's identification number 49129839, which are on their profile pages at the www.sPCA.com website. Please fill out the adoption application forms online at the centre of each page, the first step to an appointment at the shelter to meet the adoption coordinator for them.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne



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'Are we there yet?'



Maccarone offers bursaries for second time

Jennifer Maccarone, the provincial legislator for Westmount-Saint-Louis, launched the second edition of her student bursary program February 17. It is for students living and attending a post-secondary institution in the riding. Four bursaries will be awarded, two for \$500 to CEGEP students and two for \$1,000 to undergraduates.

To be eligible, students must meet certain criteria and register for consideration by March 10: bit.ly/3sGbLim.

"I am very proud to renew the bursary program for a second consecutive year. We have increased the amount of the bursaries and I hope that they will help encourage our youth to pursue their post-secondary education at an institution in the riding," said Maccarone in a press release the same day.

Westmount resident and bursary recipient Emma Westenberg wrote about her experiencing interning for Maccarone in the *Independent's* June 1, 2021 issue (p. 9).



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City Views

VERONICA REDGRAVE

What a way to leave winter blues behind! St. Tropez meets Sherbrooke St. soon.

Cheryl Glense, the fashion guru behind the Westmount shops Ritsi and Courval, is opening a Vilebrequin boutique. The first flagship store in Canada will launch early May!

Although I usually wear black, thanks

The brights of spring!



Cheryl Glense. Sadly, I could not show the back of this chic cashmere coat-let. It had “sunshine” written in colourful letters!

to working so closely with Iona Monohan, renowned as Canada’s finest fashion editor, I may have to re-consider. Born in the French Riviera, Vilebrequin brings brights just in time for spring and summer. Famous around the world for its colourful prints for babies, teens, men and women, the brand offers beautiful bathing suits as well as go-everywhere beach wear.

I spoke with Cheryl in her other shops (busy lady!). Once again, there I was tempted to betray the elegance of ebony as the seasonal colours she showed at Ritsi were more than alluring. Most of her cashmere collections – sweaters, slouchy pants, travel scarves – come in rainbow tones: fuchsia, Matisse blue and the prettiest petunia pink – a colour I usually loathe.

In addition, she has fabulous fashions in linen from Italy by Bottega di Brunella. “and I carry Dead Supply and Rails for my younger clientele,” she adds.

The shop’s bold jewellery line from London is the perfect accessory. Her connecting shop Courval has lingerie that is not only louche and sexy but flannel and comfy.

The Diamond T robes (even one with a *Downton Abbey* look and feel) are still “best-sellers.” (The line has been around for 100 years by the way, so they are doing some-



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thing right.)

Courval is not just any lingerie shop. Passers-by have already commented on the masked black bikini-clad curvaceous mannequins in the window, which “attract a lot of clients!” she laughed.

The shop Courval itself is a long-time landmark, celebrating a centennial four years ago (see February 6, 2018, p. 1). From the fun leopard carpeting to the early-season Shan bathing suits in Ritsi and the best-selling Marie Jo bras and Hanky Panky lacey panty line in Courval, Cheryl Glense understands the fickle fashion market. The proof? She is opening her third store. Can't wait!

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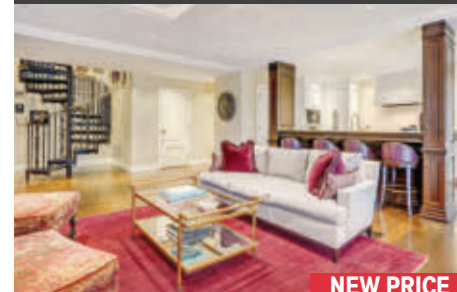
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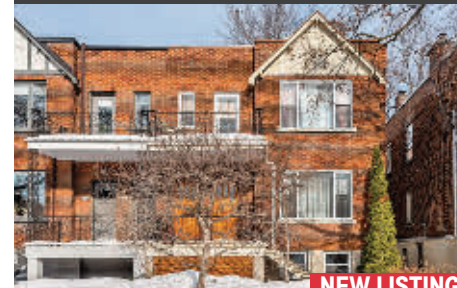
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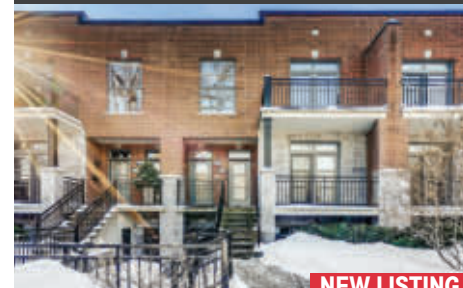
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T'S TAKES
RALPH THOMPSON

A less well trodden path

Summit Woods is a Westmount gem discovered over and over again by Westmounters, Montrealers and visitors from far and wide, along with their four-legged partners.

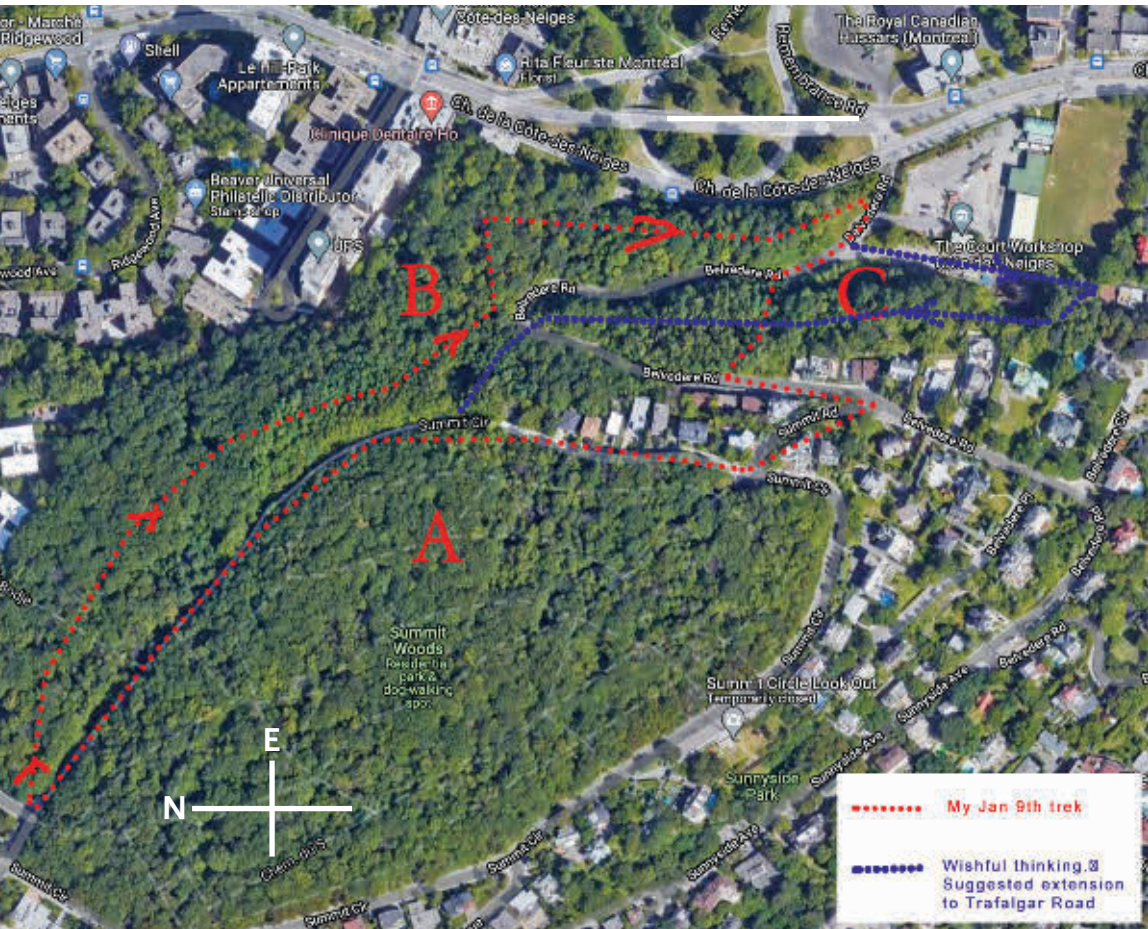
On a sunny Sunday afternoon, the main oval area, "A" (see map) can become quite crowded, but how many have ventured a little further north, beyond the Summit Circle walking path to much quieter areas B or even C?

I have occasionally wandered into area B, but never gone much beyond the first 200 or 300 meters.

Area 'B'

Judging by cross-tracks, area B is a well-used shortcut between Ridgewood Ave., Forest Hill Ave. and area A. But I was curious.

Was it possible to walk the full length of area B and even C, from the west arriving at the junction of Belvedere Rd., Côte des Neiges Rd. and the Westmount Public Works yard?



An aerial view looking southeast at the eastern part of Summit Woods, photographed February 9 at sunrise. The houses at centre right are on Summit Circle near Summit Rd. The loop in the lower centre of the photo is Belvedere Rd. making its way down to Côte des Neiges, which runs from bottom left to top right.

It's clear from Google maps, the total area of area B and C is almost as large as the popular oval area A, but much less used.

On February 9, I set out early, as I often do, to enjoy a beautiful sunrise, take some photographs and follow the trail in area B end to end, if possible.

In all cases, I followed existing tracks. With the snow and the lack of any signage on the topic, it is not clear whether these are official, 12-month paths or winter-only creations of users.

Starting at the corner of Oakland Ave. and Gordon Cresc., the first part of the trek is similar to the rest of Summit Woods, un-

dulating terrain with well-compacted, wide trails, but it quickly becomes more interesting.

The track narrows, there are few east-west options and some fairly steep gradients with a number of fallen trees and other obstacles. It twists and turns eastward, at one point climbing up quite close to Summit Circle.

After this point, the gradient dips downwards. The path veers sharply left close Belvedere Rd. There was no evidence of a continuation of the trail east into section C.

At this point, the trail becomes just a few foot prints, possibly a short cut from Forest Hill Ave. to Belvedere. There's a short steep descent heading north slightly west, then the trail of footprints turns back to the east, and a narrow collection of imprints leads along the top of an escarpment with Côte des Neiges Rd. and the sprawling Notre Dame des Neiges and Mount Royal cemeteries visible on the left.

It really feels more like a Westmount wilderness, with tangled bushes and twisted undergrowth for the next 300 or 400 meters.

The ending

It becomes fairly rough terrain and as the woods narrow to a point, at the junction of Belvedere and Côte des Neiges and there was just a solitary pair of footprints in the snow, possibly, made by someone like me, determined to reach the end of the woods, just because you can.

The latter section is more rugged than the rest of the Woods, for sure, but

there are several points that branch off back up to the Summit Circle walking path or Belvedere Rd.

Over the full length of this part of the woods, area B, about a kilometer, I met one solitary man with his two dogs.

It was a peaceful trek, no loud conversations on cell phones or individuals barking at their dogs. Just a quiet peaceful hike in the woods.

My camera was at the ready for wildlife, maybe an elusive red fox or curious screech owl, but I only saw a few squirrels, a couple of dark-eyed juncos and a few crows.

There's a diverse collection of tree varieties, including a small grove of birch.

Area 'C'

To make a complete loop, there is a steep trail that leads up and across area C, cutting off the long U-shaped curve of Belvedere. This was used by domestic staff going to work in upper Westmount, according to an article in the *Indie* some years ago.

The craggy rock face running along the lower part of Belvedere is quite interesting, a great place for basic rock climbing, if it were accessible – a whole new outside activity for Westmounters, maybe naming it Falaise St. Westmount?

One could imagine the small Public Works yard being made into an extension of the Woods, allowing a trail to develop to the far end of area C, connecting to Trafalgar Rd., then turning back and running parallel to Belvedere Rd. along the falaise, the length of C and then back up towards Summit Woods walking path. The whole loop around would make a healthy two-kilometer hike.

If you go, I recommend donning cleats at this time of the year and taking a hiking stick if you're a little unsteady. In my opinion, this is a fun wilderness trail, ideal for the slightly more adventurous who wish to enjoy a quieter, more serene less well-trodden path.

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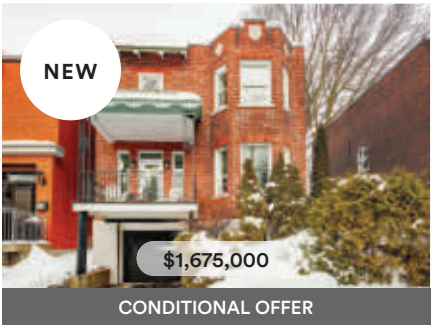
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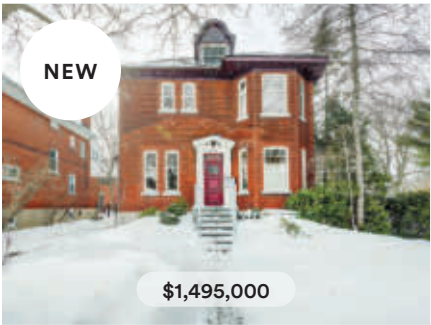


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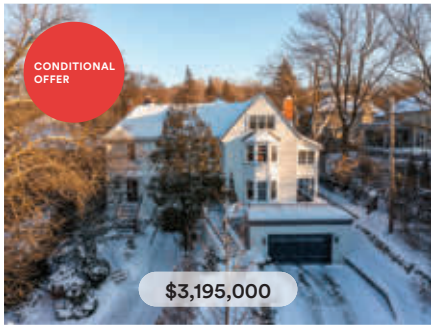
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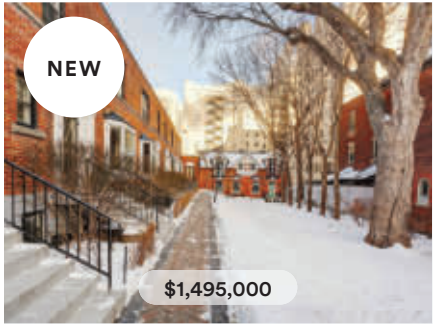
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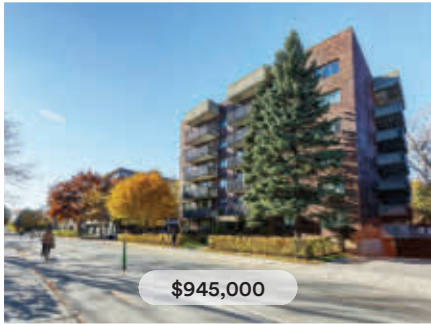
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