

Prepares for 50th anniversary celebrations

Contactivity resumes in-person programs next week

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

While a date has yet to be set for Contactivity to officially celebrate its 50th anniversary in the fall, the seniors' centre has unveiled a logo to mark the year and is introducing the resumption of onsite programming starting Tuesday, April 19.

The first in-person activities will take place on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons beginning that week with line dancing, fall prevention and stretch and movement fitness, executive director Benita Goldin told

the *Independent* last week.

"Our plan is to gradually re-open and offer some programs on site with limited attendance. Everyone will be required to wear a mask, keep their distance, and show proof of vaccination."

A new program is also starting called A Walk in the Park for those "who enjoy leisurely walks and may or may not use a walking aid," she said. The group will walk and picnic in Westmount Park along with crafts coordinator Angelina Hum.

"Our partnership is still ongoing with Selwyn House School. This spring it includes Zoom visits for seniors and senior school students that include courses in photography and tech savvy. In May, it will include a vernissage of pictures taken by our members who were in the photography course." *continued on p. 22*

Sun visits Westmount, briefly



Marianne Cole was enjoying a beautiful 12°C afternoon in this pose April 6 in Westmount Park alongside the splash pad. She has just returned from three months in London, England, where she met with friends, did a little modelling and enjoyed mushy peas and fish & chips. The days afterwards were colder and rainier. Cole was pictured in our September 15, 2015 issue (p. 21) doing a handstand when she was a Pilates instructor and ballet dancer. She is now a fashion model and contortionist.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

Max Steinberg is city's hockey player of the month,
See p. 16

Council brings in Frédéric Neault to head Urban Planning

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council April 4 appointed Frédéric Neault as director of the city's Urban Planning department. This is a position that has been vacant since the promotion in December of Michel Larue to assistant director general for sustainable development, in which role he oversees the city's Urban Planning department.

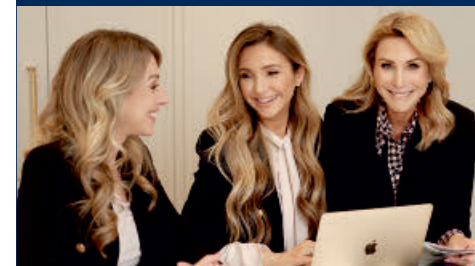
While the appointment went without comment from Councillor Jeff Shamie or

Councillor Conrad Peart, who moved and seconded the resolution respectively, Mayor Christina Smith welcomed him, saying he would start in Westmount April 25.

Larue told the *Independent* that Neault graduated from the University of Montreal with a degree in urban planning, and has 20 years of experience in public administration, latterly since 2021 with La Prairie on the South Shore and its heritage area of 96 hec- *continued on p. 26*

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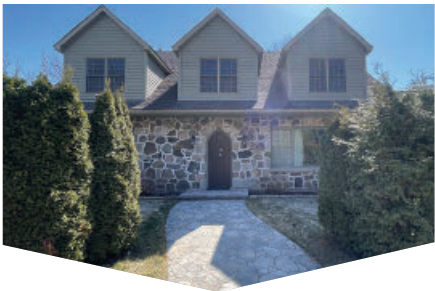
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Seniors can leave keys for emergencies

Lockboxes enable Public Security to help 2 residents after falls

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Within a period of 24 hours March 25-26, public safety officers were called to the homes of two older residents who fell and were unable to open their locked doors for help, Public Security officials said.

Both victims, however, had left their keys in lockboxes at Public Security, which were smashed to access the key and enable the responders to provide assistance. One woman needed help three times, eventually allowing Urgences Santé to enter and transport her to hospital.

"It's important for Westmount residents to know about these lockboxes because both these cases show that our officers

were able to provide assistance because they had access to these keys," said assistant director Kimberley Colquhoun.

The first incident occurred March 25 at 6 pm when the department received a call from someone who hadn't been able to get hold of her mother. When officers gained entry, they found the woman had "slipped out of her bed." When she was helped up, she "assured" them she was able to function on her own.

Delivering food

The next day at 1:20 pm, they were called to a different apartment by a friend of the resident who was trying without success to deliver food to her. Knowing she had left a key with Public Security, officers were called and found the woman had fallen. She was helped to a walker while her friend remained with her.

They were called back the next day, March 27 at 4:40 pm and again at 10:20 pm, at which time the woman was taken to hospital by Urgences Santé.

Man fined \$654 for cutting open lookout fencing

A group of people visible on the city's surveillance camera at the closed-off area of the summit lookout April 3 at 8:18 pm included one who had reportedly cut open the security fence that blocks off the damaged concrete area, Public Security officials said. The area is also posted for no-entry.

When patrollers attended, they encountered the group, described as "tourists" who wanted to take photos despite the encroaching darkness. Identified as friends of a Montreal man who had cut open the fence, they included visitors from the UK and Ontario. The fence cutter, a man in his 20s, was fined \$654 for defacing public property.

Green-waste pick-up starts next week

The city's seasonal garden-waste collection starts Tuesday, April 19. This service is totally separate from the green-bin program for household compost.

Grass, branches, leaves and other plant refuse should be placed curbside for pick-up.

They can be in yard-waste paper bags, in open containers or bundled with natural (i.e. non-plastic, non-metal) twine.

Bags and containers should not exceed 20 kilograms in weight, and tied-up branches should not exceed 5 centimeters in diameter and 1.2 meters in length.

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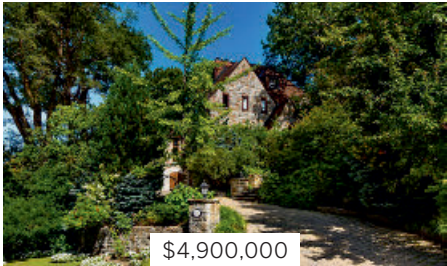
Magnificent 8 bedroom, 4 car garage stone residence nestled on close to 20,000 ft² lot. MLS 10079588



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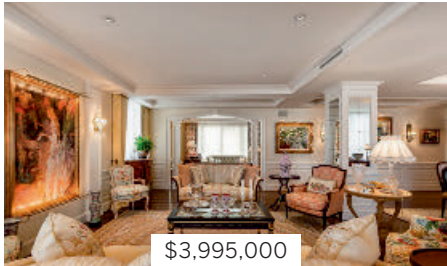
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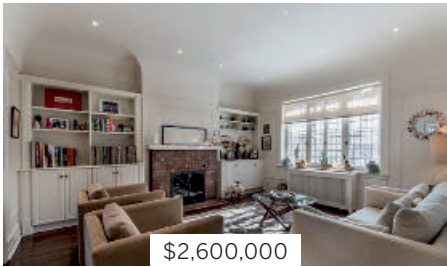


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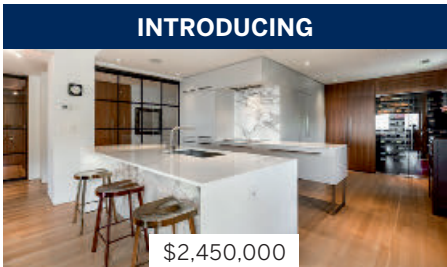


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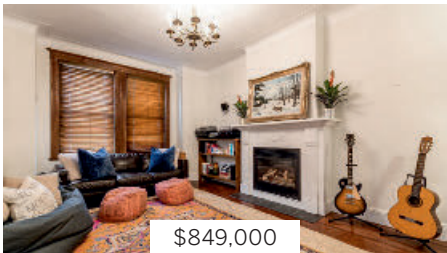


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HAMPSTEAD

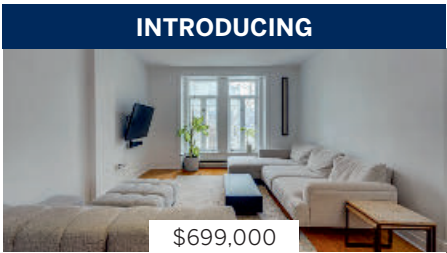
Renovated detached stone family home in the heart of old Hampstead. MLS 25950246



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CITY PLANS TO
BENEFIT EVERYONE

Talk about First World problems. A simple take-away from the March 29 letters to the editor in the *Independent* (p. 8) is that the homeowner knows better than the city bureaucrats. Oftentimes this can be true!

However, the city has to look at a larger picture than NIBMY. City roads and the design of homes and lots back in the day were not made for parking pads, removing grass to do so, nor for more than one or two cars per household, among other things.

So everyone must suffer some inconvenience. For instance, they put a bike *highway* on de Maisonneuve in front of our house years ago! They let the bikes *rule* Westmount Park by letting the path be a straight line!

We all enjoy the effects of city planning and, a majority of the time, the councillors and the employees are looking at the bigger picture and longer term.

LORNE WOODS, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

MORE STOPPING MEANS
MORE CONGESTION

Regarding the Lexington Ave. reconstruction debate (March 29, p. 1), I am glad to read that some of our city councillors have common sense. While I do agree the design is beautiful, I shudder at the extra pollution it will create. It reminds me of

the other beautiful design concepts such as Victoria Ave. and Westmount Ave. Very, very pretty, *but* [are they worth] the number of cars piled up there trying to get through?

Today, I came back from Montreal West on Bedbrook Ave. via Fielding Ave. to Côte St. Luc Rd. In the dim distant past, there was one stop sign – I repeat, *one* stop sign. Yes, there were traffic lights, which are still there, but *one* stop sign. Unfortunately, at my age and with driving I may have miscounted slightly today, but I believe it is now 21 stop signs. Each stop sign adds some extra pollution, even if people do the Quebec-type stop.

And, yes, by 2035 only electrical vehicles are *supposed* to be sold, but when will the vast majority of drivers have them? I'm afraid I may not see that.

ALFRED EDEL, VICTORIA AVE.

LEXINGTON SAFE, BEAUTIFUL
AND LOVED AS IS

Why is the city of Westmount creating an unwise and unwanted situation on beautiful and well-functioning Lexington Ave.?

In its planning, the city is displacing the magnificent, spacious, safe and well-considered urban plan that was created to accommodate the magnitude and architecture of the homes gracing its beauty, with a disproportionate concept in relation to the topography of the land, and the well-being of its residents.

The residents of Lexington Ave. do not want their street altered according to this plan, which the city has solely and singularly created and acted upon, the whole without proper prior consultation with the local residents who will be affected.

The drawings are a sadly problematic effort to change something that at present is very beautiful and practical and in line with a workable streetscape for upper Westmount.

The citizens residing on Lexington/Devon/Shorncliffe, understand very well what is transpiring around them, and the majority do not want, for good reasons, these changes to take place.

The residents have made substantial investments – emotional, visual and financial – not only inside their homes, but in particular on the exterior.....with the planting of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers, for the beautification of their lawns and emphasizing serious green exterior landscaping.

The premise that narrow streets are safer is wrong. Narrowing this street will only create dangerous problems.

The city's plan of a narrow street, shown with white lines on the roads, in reality will create massive parked vehicular traffic and angry drivers, struggling to be able to move forward. The bump-outs and wider sidewalks do not create more green space. Rather it shows more concrete.

Please..... who is going to benefit by this vast, costly and unwanted project?

This quiet, restful, beloved and safe neighbourhood will become noisy and dangerous.

Please do not destroy this unique and beautiful heritage area of Westmount, into which each citizen has poured vast amounts of respect, love and energy.

Repair the sidewalks and streets, and please leave the remainder in its beautiful, present, unproblematic state.

JUDITH & JOHN LECHTER,
LEXINGTON AVE.

SOME ARTIFICIAL GRASS
WOULD HELP

Readers of the *Westmount Independent* will surely be negatively surprised that I write to put in a good word for artificial grass in Westmount. That is, if, after the snow covering gone this morning [xx], they have not noticed the state of the Melville Ave. soccer field.

But I am sure all readers and residents will agree with my suggestion to Westmount Sports to place artificial grass at the goal post rectangles on every one of Westmount's soccer fields. Players themselves, after or during a game would be most appreciative when they find their legs, boots

and pants not covered with mud. Or, while furiously tackling each other at the goal area on a hot, dry summer day they would desperately try not to breathe into their lungs the flying, kicked-up dust: alas, unsuccessfully.

So, as in this case on soccer fields, artificial grass used discreetly, can achieve three goals: prevent eyesores, contribute to enhanced enjoyment and success of games and contribute to the physical health and happiness of players and the audience watching them play.

STEPHEN CHIN, SHERBROOKE ST.

SOUND ADVICE: SPEED KILLS

I was distressed when I read Laureen Sweeney's report (March 15, p. 1) that described Councillor Kathleen Kez's response to one of her constituents about the noise from cars travelling above the speed limit, which, shockingly, is 70 km/h [on the 720/136 autoroute]! To be certain, Kez followed traffic and, to go with the traffic flow, had to travel at 110 kmh.

Although the road in question is not zoned for pedestrians, most roads in Westmount are intended for them to cross or for cars. Hence, I expected to see some reference to the extreme dangers associated with high-speed car travel. It appears that neither Ms. Kez nor her constituent appreciate how much the danger to a pedestrian's life follows when struck by a car travelling above the posted speed limit.

Yet, it appears council is more concerned with the *sound* of fast-moving cars; its resolution calling for speed cameras makes no reference to safety. Does council intend to put noise ahead of life and limb? Is it possible readers are unaware of how greatly the chances of killing someone increases as speed increases? In a nutshell, a highly reputable study – one of many – reports that the average risk of death for a pedestrian reaches 10 percent at an impact speed of 37 kmph, 25 percent at 51 kmph, 75 percent at 50 kmph, and 90 percent at 93 kmph. Put simply, it found that “on average when the estimated impact speed increases by 1 kmh, the odds of a pedestrian fatality increases by 11 percent.”

I was a bit comforted to learn that at least one other Westmounter is concerned about traffic deaths. The letter from Paul Levesque (March 22, p. 6), noting that although traffic and speed is supposedly one of the city's top priorities, speeding remains a systemic issue. As he writes, the situation is made worse by coordinating green lights (as is now done to accommodate fast-moving cars on Sherbrooke), which in turn, encourages more passing-through traffic, as does the absence of adequate en- *continued on p. 9*

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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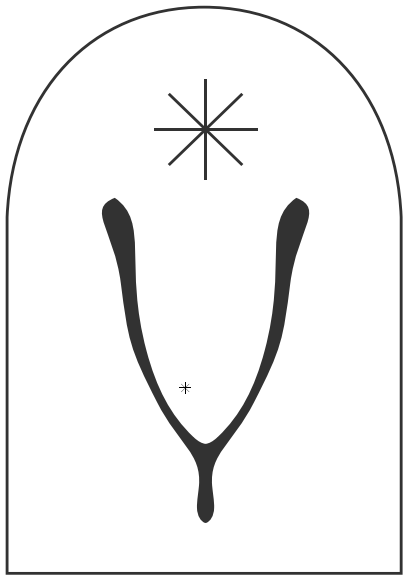
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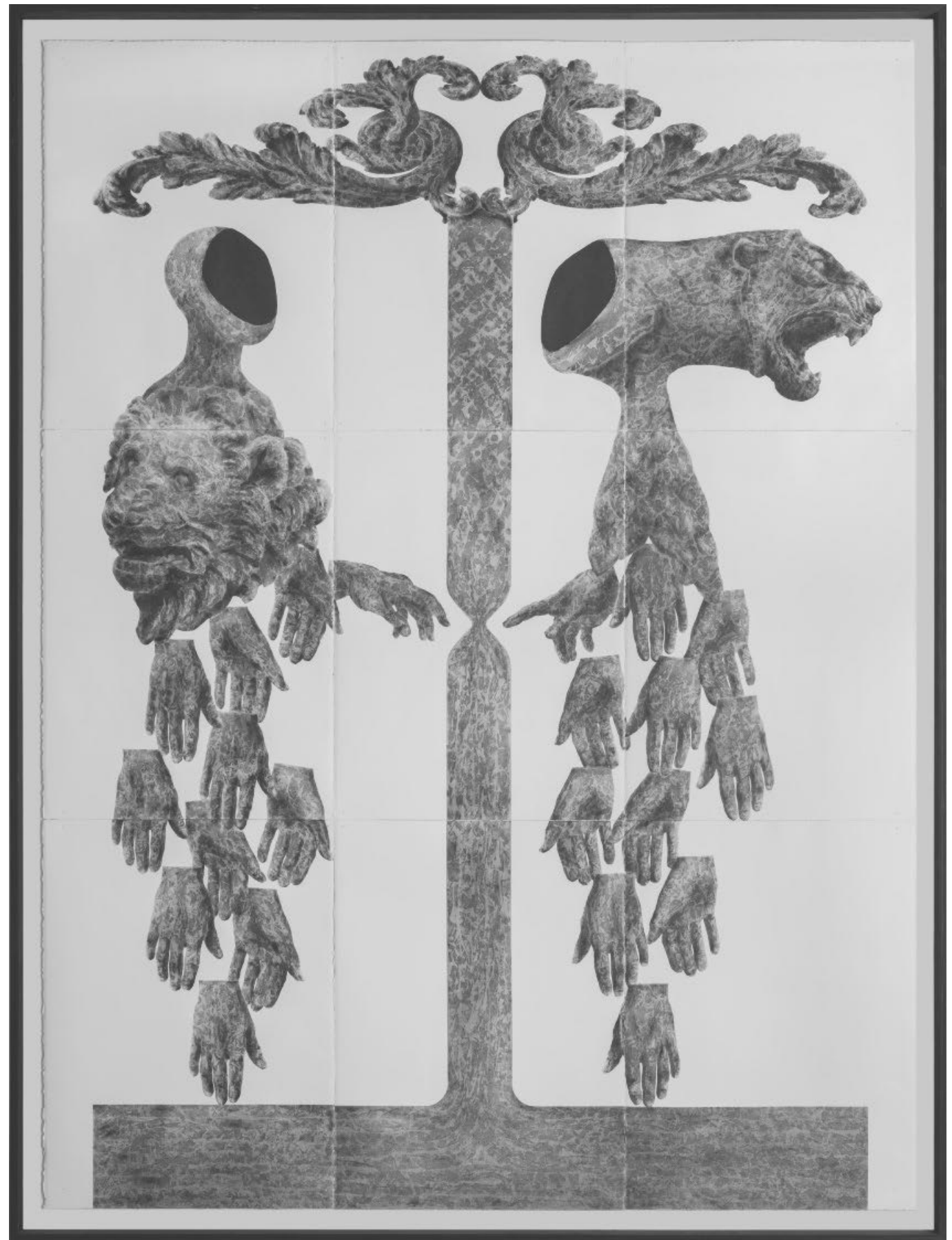
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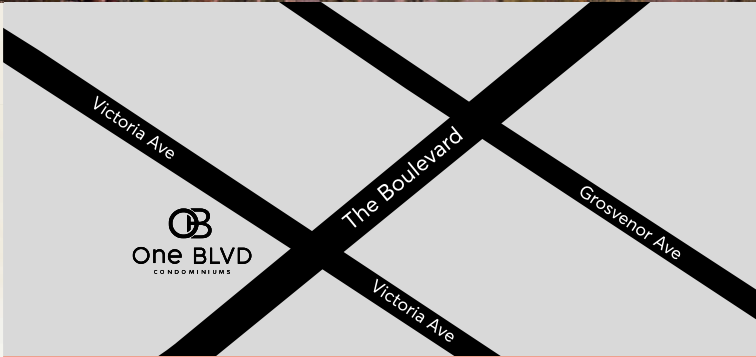

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

..... forcement. Levesque and
continued from p. 6 I may not agree that an awareness campaign is needed more than speed cameras (not traps), but I emphatically agree with his concluding note that the time is long overdue for the city to get truly serious about traffic and speed. The next pedestrian fatality may be someone you know and love, killed by a driver travelling not far above the posted limit. Ironically, and tragically, such an event will also help reduce the noise in the neighborhood.

BARRY PLESS, LANSDOWNE AVE.

WHY WAS YORK ST. NOT INVITED TO MEETING?

Open letter to Mayor Christina Smith

Why was York St. apparently overlooked when Westmount sent notices to area households about the special public consultation for residents of Districts 4 and 5 [on March 22]? It was only *after* the meeting took place that I learned, from a story in the *Independent* (April 5, p. 12), that area residents met with you, District 5 councillor Anitra Bostock and District 4 councillor Conrad Peart.

In addition to my home, three other households I randomly surveyed at various locations on York St. did not receive the flyer. That seems sufficient confirmation York St. residents were left in the dark about the public consultation.

It also raises the question: why did Westmount not place a notice in this newspaper about the meeting, given that so many of us are regular readers? If city hall relied only on flyers to publicize the event, was the distributor given a list of streets in both districts to ensure none was missed?

With a decade of non-stop major construction projects impacting area residents, particularly on York, as well as other recurring quality-of-life concerns in D-5, a public forum was a valuable opportunity to meet face to face with you and Councillor Bostock; it would have been most helpful to raise questions outside the limitations of a council meeting, especially in an atmosphere described as “relaxed” in the *Independent’s* coverage of the meeting.

Under the circumstances, I would hope that another such public consultation will be held in the near future and a greater effort be made to ensure all households are included in Westmount’s notification. After all, communication is the lifeblood of a healthy municipality.

DOROTHY LIPOVENKO, YORK ST.

Editor’s note: This request that an advertisement be put in the *Independent* was not solicited by me, although every reader’s support for, and kind words about, our efforts to sell ads to all entities (governments,

businesses, people) is much appreciated. – DP.

SNOW REMOVAL AFFECTS CLIMATE

In her March 27 article (“GHG-emissions dominate city council’s question period,” p. 7), reporter Laureen Sweeney focussed on the public’s questions to city council. I would like to point out that in referring to mine; the point was missed in quoting a few words about emissions from snow removal equipment “which scraped and re-scraped” a sidewalk outside my home. In fact, the *raison d’être* of my question was substantial, and the public deserves to know what was put to the council, namely:

“Environmental agencies have affirmed that the snow clearing emits as much CO₂ as driving 1,000 km in a vehicle. Two machines most frequently purchased and employed by Westmount are tractors – of various sizes – and snow blowers. According to research, this is also a major cost to dangerously increasing carbon emissions. Have these environmental costs been rigorously accounted for over the past year? Although the winter season is winding down, maintaining streets – snow clearing and de-icing – is a major activity and expenditure.”

Downplaying this is not in our children’s interest or in the public’s – and nor is it consistent with the commitment the council has made since the 2021 fall municipal election.

It truly was a disappointment that the three councillors who responded either resorted to “Patience!” or to conflate it with dangers of seniors falling, as in Cllr. Anitra Bostock’s reply. To be clear, in itself, this is not an insubstantial concern; however, there are no contradictions to fine-tuning a de-carbonization strategy with implementation action! There has been enough time since the all-candidates meeting [at election time]. At that time, the candidates seemed genuine. Yet, at this time, the new slate of elected officials has not addressed this critical problem with the weight it deserves. Now however, I fear that competing influences and herd mentality, replete with platitudes and rhetorical flourishes, are front and centre.

A final challenge to the Westmount public: although our land mass and population may appear to be limited, each of us must exert our influence. It’s considerable when we step up and speak as a whole. The image of the 2018 climate marches around the globe and last fall’s COP held in Glasgow can serve as a testament.

CAROLINE JONDAHL,
ST. CATHERINE ST.

GUEST COLUMN

A principled vision for the future of Quebec

BY COLIN STANDISH

Quebec politics has never been as fractious as it is today. The political landscape is fluid as the October 3 provincial election date approaches.

Eric Duhaime’s Quebec Conservative Party has ridden the wave of pandemic fatigue into political relevance. The once fringe Quebec Solidaire has a legitimate chance of becoming the official opposition. The Parti Québécois is increasingly irrelevant, and thanks to a series of strategic missteps, the once mighty Quebec Liberal Party (QLP) is in freefall amongst both francophones and anglophones. As a result, Premier François Legault’s CAQ is widely expected to win an even stronger majority this fall.

In this context, starting a new political party is a daunting prospect. That was the challenge considered by a small study group last November. Given the Task Force on Linguistic Policy’s success in exposing the immoral and illegitimate Bill 96, and

the QLP’s growing unpopularity, consensus is building that a new provincial party should emerge.

To defend federalism, human rights, and speak for Quebec’s English-speaking population. To be an option for Indigenous peoples, newcomers and francophones alike.

Before registering a potential provincial party, our group agreed that it should have a clearly worded statement of principles. Happily, lengthy discussions and debate over several weeks brought forth fundamental values that could form the foundation of a solid electoral platform that resonates with the Quebec electorate.

Our first principle is named for the famous line from Clifford Lincoln’s legendary legislative speech, “Rights are Rights are Rights,” to demonstrate our commitment to the defence of human rights, civil liberties, language equality and constitutional protections for all Quebecers. This also means opposing arbitrary and coercive laws. It’s *continued on p. 23*

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Film and butterfly gardens to be featured

Monarch to ‘rule’ over advance Earth Day event April 19

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

In keeping with its name, one could say that the monarch butterfly will rule over Westmount’s advance Earth Day celebrations on Tuesday, April 19 starting at 2 pm. That’s when a special event will take place at Victoria Hall featuring the iconic orange-and-black butterfly, whose feeding and breeding grounds are disappearing. The program takes place three days before Earth Day and will feature a screening of the film *Beauty on the Wing*, along with explaining the city’s plans for helping save the monarch and other butterflies.

Seeds available

Blends of seeds from the city’s seed-lending library will be available to create butterfly and/or bee gardens. The film to be shown features the life story of the monarch that takes place along the shores of Cape Ann and in the heart of Mexico’s forested volcanic mountains, explains Donna Lach, assistant director of the library and community events. Every stage of the monarch’s life cycle is experienced in close-up, from egg to caterpillar to adult, and set to the background

of sea and forest, sun and wind, she said. Following the screening, Kim Smith, the film’s director, will answer questions and address how to reduce the environmental impact in one’s choice of protein sources. An award-winning documentary filmmaker, she is described as specializing in creating pollinator habitat gardens using

primarily North American native wild-flowers, trees, shrubs, and vines. Required reservations can be made through Eventbrite. Masks will be required.

Spring can be dirty, dusty



Five-alarm fire April 6 on Sherbrooke near Metcalfe? No. It was contractors cleaning up winter debris and autumn leaves.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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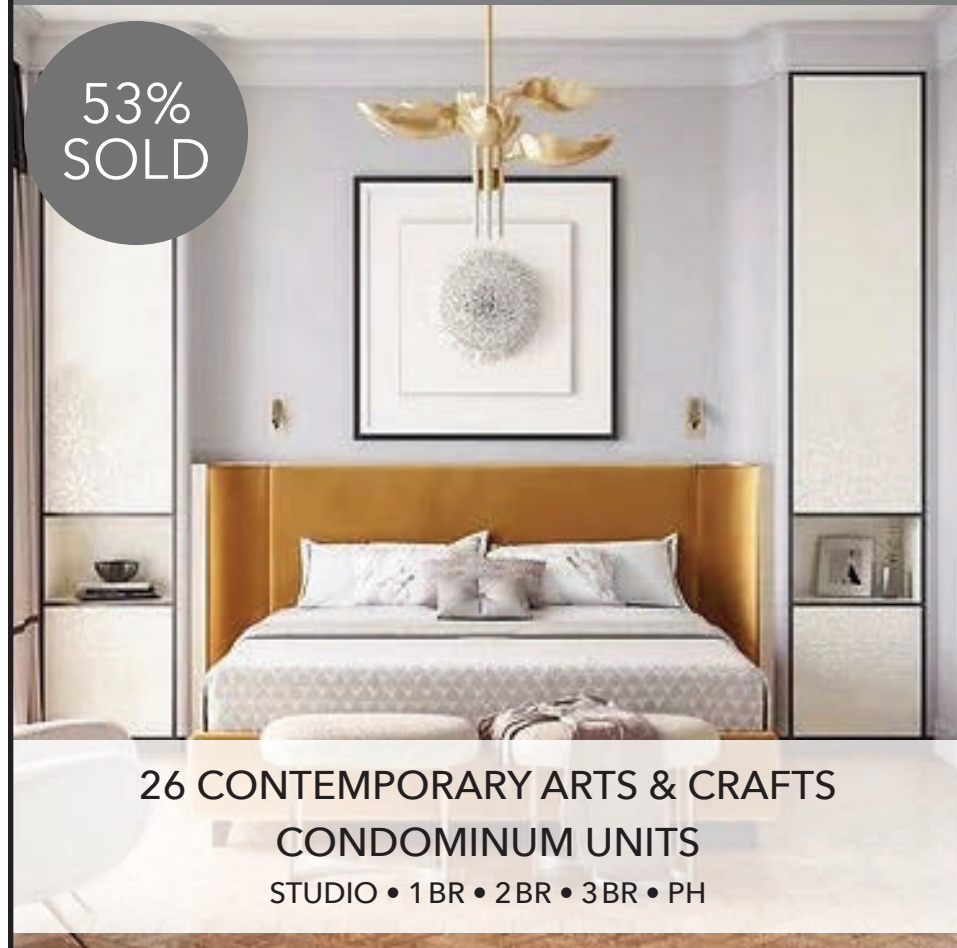
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‘Shocking’ to mix need with politics: Mayor Smith
Council appeals to Quebec to reinstate Dawson project

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

in francophone CEGEPs.”

Access for all

City council April 4 appealed to the Quebec government to maintain its expansion plan for what is characterized as overcrowded Dawson College, including relocation of its healthcare programs to new premises, in its next infrastructure plan.

A resolution approved unanimously says that the city expresses “to the Quebec premier its deep disappointment and disapproval” of the government’s decision to postpone the Dawson College capital project, stating the CEGEP offers “programs of study to Quebecers of all backgrounds.”

Pointing out that Dawson’s health care programs aim to train much-needed health-care workers especially given the pandemic experience, Mayor Christina Smith said “it’s shocking after all we’ve lived through these last two years that it turned into a political debate and is so needed for the benefit of the entire province.”

The resolution states that the college has a space deficit of 11,500 square meters, according to ministerial standards and that its expansion had been listed as a priority project in December 2020 before being suddenly postponed by the province in February 2022 “in favour of other projects

Councillor Elisabeth Roux, speaking in French, added her voice to the needs of both anglophone and francophone students as an opportunity to learn both languages.

Councillor Matt Aronson, who seconded the resolution, asked residents who were watching the council meeting “or reading about it in our local newspaper” to reach out to members of the Quebec legislature and all members of the community to express their dismay.

The resolution explains that “Dawson College students are entitled to the same quality of educational services as those offered to students in other CEGEPs in Québec,” and that there “cannot be two classes of institutions and students.”

Mayor Smith also noted in comments after the council resolution was adopted how the city had been working with the CEGEP for several years on the expansion plan, reported to be budgetted at some \$180 million, and which was previously reported as being planned on St. Catherine St. to the west of Atwater (see story February 8, p. 8).

Flashing sign installed at Greene rail bridge



Solar-powered lights have been added to one of the signs warning drivers about the low clearance under CP’s “truck-eating” rail bridge (as one nearby resident described it). It is on Greene northbound between St. Antoine St. and Prospect, as seen April 8.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILLEM WESTENBERG.



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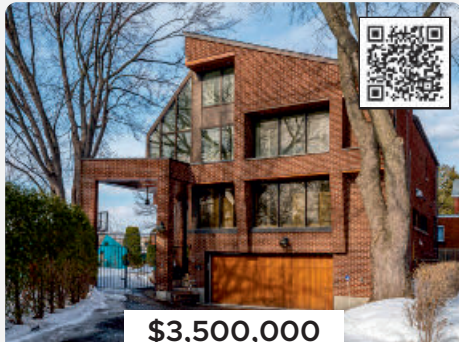
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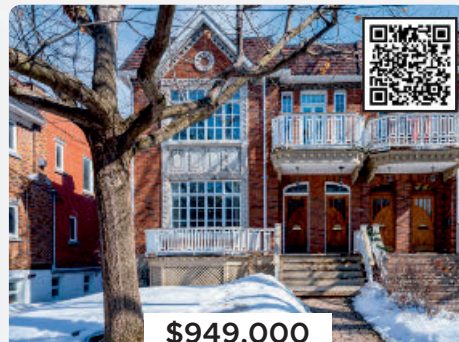
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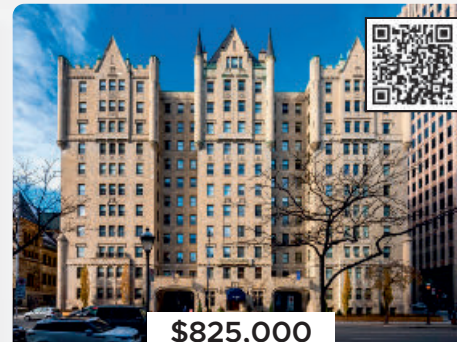
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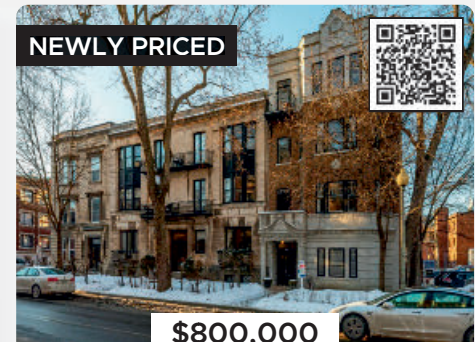
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Max Steinberg, city's hockey player for March Top scorer for team, chosen for leadership role

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Being named Westmount's hockey player-of-the-month for March is a salute to Max Steinberg of the U18/M18 Wings' team. He moves on to the adult hockey program next year, explained Andrew Maislin, operations manager for the city's Sports and Recreation department.

In announcing the recognition, Maislin recalled how Max had grown up in the department from the age of 6. "I have seen him develop from an ankle skater to one of the strongest players on his team."

This year, he has taken on a leadership role for the team and has brought them to various victories during the playoffs, Maislin added. "He is also the leading scorer, currently with a recent five-goal game."

Coaches had commented monthly on "how much he has matured not only as a hockey player but as a young adult and leader." This was one of the objectives of the player-of-the-month recognition program when it was launched in October 2019 by the Westmount Minor Hockey Association.

The city's recognition program aims to highlight player contributions and acknowledge the opportunities and skills that minor hockey, and sports as a whole, can offer young people in developing sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline, which can be transferred into other areas such as academics and community service, Maislin said.

"Max will be moving on to the adult hockey program next year and we wish him well on his next hockey adventure."



Volunteers must register Westmount Park clean-up set for Earth Day

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

An Earth Day clean-up of Westmount Park by volunteer residents has been set for Friday, April 22, at 1 pm regardless of the weather. "Guests" are also invited, according to a city notice, but all must be registered in advance on the home page of the city's website.

Those attending are invited to meet in the park outside the Westmount Public Library, wearing gloves and dressed accordingly.

Garbage bags are to be provided.

Earth Day is also being marked by the city of Westmount with an April 19 presentation of a film about monarch butterflies, *Beauty on the Wing* (see p. 10 for story).

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Go, Ukraine, go!



For the past year, Westmount resident Tony Moffat has been drawing on a paper bag each week to hold some treats that his wife Ann and he deliver to a friend who lives in a Westmount seniors' residence and rarely gets out of her room because of COVID restrictions. Topics have included cartoons, famous people and "astronomy stuff" (Moffat is professor emeritus of astrophysics at the University of Montreal). Recently, his theme became geopolitical...



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Putin draws inspiration from Lenin, Stalin, historian Serbyn tells Rotary

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Russian president Vladimir Putin is emulating Lenin and Stalin while trying to revive the Russian empire with a war in Ukraine, an Eastern European history expert told the Westmount Rotarians last week, while downplaying the possibility Putin wants to start World War III and trigger global nuclear annihilation.

An emeritus professor of Russian and Ukrainian history at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Prof. Roman Serbyn was the guest speaker during the Rotarians' noon-hour web conference on March 6.

Referring to the Russian government's so-called "special operation" as "Putin's ge-

nocidal war against Ukraine," Serbyn noted that the Russian president was born only a year before Joseph Stalin's death in 1953, and that Putin's actions are in line with Stalin-era strategy.

"Putin is actually going back to the Stalin era and imitating Stalin's tradition of state-building," he said. "Lenin, Stalin and now Putin have to be seen as state-builders."

While acknowledging that the idea of state-building is usually looked upon positively, he added that "it depends on what kind of state they're building," although Vladimir Lenin's goal was to spread the socialist revolution that had been started in Russia.

Although Lenin and *continued on p. 22*



Prof. Roman Serbyn, an expert on East European history, told the Westmount Rotarians last week that Russian president Vladimir Putin is following in the footsteps of former Soviet leaders Joseph Stalin and Vladimir Lenin.



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FÊTE DE PÂQUES : Fermetures et modifications aux services

Les bureaux administratifs de la Ville de Westmount seront fermés le vendredi 15 avril et le lundi 18 avril 2022 en raison de la fête de Pâques.

La Bibliothèque publique de Westmount sera fermée le vendredi, le dimanche et le lundi. L'horaire du samedi est de 13 h à 17 h.

Les collectes d'ordures et de résidus alimentaires auront lieu selon l'horaire habituel.

EASTER HOLIDAY: Closures and changes to services

The City of Westmount's administrative offices will be closed Friday, April 15th and Monday, April 18th, 2022 for the Easter holiday.

Westmount Public Library will be closed Friday, Sunday and Monday. Opening hours for Saturday are 1 to 5 p.m.

The garbage and kitchen waste collections will take place according to the usual schedule.

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LYSANNE FOWLER

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He is six years old, a wonderful husky-type with sweet brown eyes and a great disposition. He knows that he is cared for now and it makes all the difference in the world to him.

Albus is very healthy, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped. Please take a look at the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com and visit Albus' information page from his identification number 49896438, clicking on the "Book a visit" button to be directed to an adoption counsellor form for a visit at the shelter.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne



Kitia & Czar – yes, they are brothers!



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Kitia is the most smoochable, hunky marmalade tabby with green eyes, and his brother Czarus is the sleekest black short-hair with golden eyes.

They are siblings with unique features yet bonded personalities.

Both of these sweethearts are with a foster family for Montreal SPCA cattery, looking to be placed together as that is the only life they have ever known.

They are nine years young, quite healthy, up to date with their inoculations, neutered and microchipped.

Kitia was born a big guy and is presently a bit round so is on a slimming program and diet, which is also targetting urinary issues. Czarus is a smaller fellow overall and is doing quite well, having had dental work at the shelter.

These affectionate fellows are both classified as seniors so their new family is eligible for the humanitarian reduced rate on adoption.

Please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, selecting Kitia's information page by his identification number 49427303 and Czarus' information page by his identification number 49427334, then please click on the "Fill out the form" button to access the adoption counsellor information form in order to apply for their adoption.

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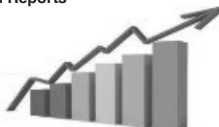

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Indig: Will best treatments be covered? – Hamilton: Who will do the work?

Local dentists skeptical about federal Liberal-NDP dental plan

BY JENNIFER BALL

Federal dental care is in the works. But is it a good idea?

The Liberal and NDP agreement to roll out a countrywide, income-based dental-care program has the goal of benefitting a third of Canadians, but two Westmount dentists – Dr. Douglas Hamilton and Dr. Jeffrey Indig – believe the plan is fraught with challenges. Their assessment was influenced by past experience with government-run dental programs and due to the fact that there is an acute shortage of health-care workers across dental practices in Quebec.

Both professionals run their practices – which are not associated – out of Westmount Square and have informed themselves about the scope of the proposed federal government dental plan. It targets

families with an annual income of less than \$90,000, with no co-payments required for anyone making less than \$70,000 a year. Coverage would start with children under 12 years old in 2022; expand to those under 18, seniors and persons with disabilities in 2023; and reach full implementation by 2025.

“As a doctor, I do not trust that the government would really fund it properly or maintain the funding over time because there is going to be pressure for budget cuts,” Dr. Hamilton said. “Can the government come up with a plan? Sure, they can come up with a plan. Will it work? Who the hell knows? Bureaucrats often get this wrong. They should be listening to the professional groups who know how dentistry is run.”

What does industry group say?

The professional group in this case is the Canadian Dental Association and the spokeswoman Zelda Burt had this to say: “The single best way to quickly improve oral health and increase access to dental care is to invest in, and enhance, existing provincial and territorial dental programs.”

“I concur,” Dr. Indig said after digesting Burt’s statement. “[Patients] do not want to go to the dentists for obvious reasons: the pain, the discomfort, the needles and everything related to the dental experience – but a stumbling block has always been the cost.”

“The government programs do not save teeth via root canals. [It pays for] extractions, and they lead to dentures because nothing more than that is covered. You cannot do crowns, bridges or implants on the provincial programs,” Dr. Indig said.

For the most part, dental disease is a behavioural disease, according to Dr. Hamilton. Brushing, flossing, cleanings, the right type of toothpaste, following through on the recommendations of the doctors are



Dr. Douglas Hamilton, owner of Westmount Dental Care in Westmount Square, on March 25.

all the behaviours that limit dental disease. “We do not want a federal program that has no personal responsibility because then people do not engage in the behavioural changes. They stay sick all the time and they need too much care.”

When the ink dries on the agreement, it could deliver the largest expansion of Canada’s public health care system in decades. Could practices handle that, especially considering that these patients

would have had limited, if any, dentistry in the past?

“The answer is: they absolutely cannot,” Dr. Hamilton said. “I don’t care what kind of program they put together. It is going to be meaningless for prevention because there is nobody to do it.”

The *Independent* reached out to Dr. Brenda Puchinger several times during the week of March 21, but she was unable to participate in the article.



Dr. Jeffrey Indig, co-owner of Dental Care Westmount Square, on March 30.



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Police Report

Fraud continues to be perpetrated in Westmount, say local police

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Although no car thefts or household burglaries were perpetrated in Westmount recently, fraud artists continue to be active on the local scene, according to a spokesperson for the Montreal police department's Station 12.

In the first of two recent local fraud cases, the owner of retail business located on St. Catherine St. filed a criminal complaint at the Stanton St. station on April 7, claiming that an unknown suspect cashed cheques that had been issued fraudulently under the company's name.

The cheques were issued between March 22 and April 5. Although Station 12 community relations officer Adalbert Pimentel declined to reveal the amounts on the cheques, he said they were "substantial."

He said the station's forensic detectives are investigating a variety of factors, including the dates and times when the cheques were cashed.

Fraudulent loan

In a second recent local fraud case, an upper Westmount resident filed a complaint on April 4, alleging that someone re-

cently made a fraudulent application for a loan at a bank branch while using his identity.

Again, the amount requested by the

Rotary, cont'd from p. 19

Stalin were building on the legacy left by the former Russian empire established by the imperial tsars, Serbyn said Stalin in particular came to realize that empires are notoriously difficult to control, while "history has shown that empires tended to fall apart."

'Homogenize the population into Russians'

As the successor to the centralized power system that was overseen by Stalin and those who came immediately after him, "Putin wanted to bring back all the lost republics after the [Soviet Union's] break-up of 1991, and also homogenize the population into Russians," he said, adding that this is the main goal of Russia's war against Ukraine.

Serbyn said he has no doubt that the Russian leader's actions amount to genocide, because Putin "wants to destroy Ukraine as an independent state," as he as-

suspect was "substantial," said Pimentel, while adding that the sum obtained ended up being used by the suspect to purchase a vehicle.

serts that Ukrainians are not a distinct people.

He maintained that Putin would like to put the Soviet empire back together under Kremlin rule, as well as under one unified state and one people. He referred to the Russification of the non-Russian minorities in the Russian Federation as "a genocide, according to the United Nations convention – it's a genocide of these groups."

While acknowledging he was mistaken in initially believing Putin wouldn't dare take on all of Ukraine, Serbyn said he also "never believed that Putin would want to start a Third World War or use nuclear weapons. Because if he used nuclear weapons, then there would be nuclear weapons used from the other side.

"Unless its nuclear weapons were only used against Ukraine – which is possible. But what kind of a morality would there be? Where would United Nations be if it allowed Putin to bomb or to destroy Ukraine with nuclear weapons? And if it touched the NATO countries, then there would be riposte from the NATO countries. So, I do not believe that Putin wanted the destruction of civilization."

Overheard

Young man, loudly, into his cell-phone, Sherbrooke west of Claremont, April 7 at 11:45 am:

"These people are millionaires ... I don't speak to people who work for other people ... It's a different way of thinking."

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Heurtel blames nationalism for Quebec's anti-immigration bias

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Former Quebec Liberal Immigration minister David Heurtel told the Rotary Club of Westmount on March 9 that some political leaders “are trying to use immigration as a wedge, as a dividing issue,” while “making it into a problem and a false debate around the preservation of Quebec culture.”

“It is not,” insisted Heurtel during the Rotarians’ weekly webcast, noting that Quebec’s two largest employers’ groups, the Conseil du Patronat and the Fédération des chambres du commerce du Québec, advocate raising the province’s quota for immigrants to over 65,000 applicants, although the CAQ government set a ceiling of 40,000 when first elected in 2018.

While pointing out that the government has been courting the nationalist vote, he said it “has very discreetly and without a lot of fanfare actually put in place measures to try to raise the ceiling,” although not in



Former Quebec Liberal Immigration Minister David Heurtel addressed the Westmount Rotarians on March 9 on Quebec’s labour shortage and immigration problems.

a permanent way.

Still, he said the new measures suggest “that economically speaking, if we want to continue to be able to pay for all the government’s services we have, which includes health care and the education system, which includes daycare – you name it – well, we’re going to need to absolutely invest in immigration.”

Desperate for miners

Heurtel, who now serves as counsel at the Fasken law firm on government and related issues, noted that labour shortages in Quebec have grown so acute that mining companies with operations in Abitibi-Témiscamingue are now willing to hire workers without any experience.

“They will fly you in, give you a place to live, start you off at \$80,000 a year and train you even if you’re never worked in the mining sector,” he said.

“And so, this is getting to the point where if we don’t address it seriously, this will affect our capacity, our financial capac-

ity to maintain what has been called the ‘Quebec model,’ the social safety net that we are so proud of in Quebec, and that we’ve seen over the past two years perform admirably in horrible, horrible circumstances.”

He said “this is one of those sleeping crises that we are not paying nearly enough attention to ... Of all the many solutions we have and the key solution to the entire problem that we have with a labour shortage and all the consequences that it brings

Guest column, cont’d from p. 9

a perfect lead-in to our second principle: Supporting the Canadian Constitution as the bedrock of the federal system.

Bilingualism is a preeminent principle, with guarantees for full linguistic rights for the two recognized official language minorities of Canada: The English-speaking minority of the province of Quebec, and the French-speaking minority living outside Quebec. We reject coercive language legislation, and favour promoting both official languages in both the public and private spheres.

Educational freedom of choice is more than a cliché. We support the notion that every Quebec resident, regardless of mother tongue, has the inalienable right to educational choice from daycare to CEGEP and university studies.

Quebec’s economy should always be examined within the context of the global one. Prosperity for all can happen by reimagining the role of the state, investing in the health and well-being of all Quebecers, and by removing constraints to labour mobility, entrepreneurship, and capital investment.

Finally, our principles’ document embraces the notions of *rapprochement* and *reconciliation*, which underscore a belief in unity of purpose and social cohesion. In particular, reconciliation between Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit, Métis) in Quebec and non-indigenous Quebecers

is immigration.”

Heurtel maintained that the current federal and provincial immigration systems are “completely antiquated,” having been developed during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, “at a time when in Quebec and the rest of Canada there was high unemployment. And so, the mindset of our system was to put a lot of obstacles to bringing immigration ... So, we have to transform this. But the problem right now is that there’s no political will to do this.”

has to include better access to healthcare, education, and economic opportunities.

Building a political party is not an overnight venture. You need supporters, funding, organizational structure, discipline and ideas. So far, Quebecers from different backgrounds have responded in an overwhelmingly positive way, offering to volunteer, run as candidates and donate to the new party. We wanted to be sure this was something people desired and needed. Within the current political context, this party could change the political landscape of Quebec. It will give a voice to the voiceless.

These principles would serve as the bedrock for a new party, if established. We hope they will resonate with all Quebecers who share our vision of a future that is inclusive, fair, prosperous, and ensures everyone’s dignity.

If we move forward, they will provide a bold, forward-looking, federalist vision for Quebec that encourages a renaissance to make our province a major economic, cultural, and language-rights hub of Canada and North America.

Colin Standish is the spokesperson for the Exploratory Committee on Political Options, which was formed in November 2021 to investigate the viability of a new federalist, rights-driven provincial party to contest the 2022 Quebec election. To learn more about it, go to exploratorycommittee.ca.

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City Views

VERONICA REDGRAVE

One cannot visit Rome without going to the opera. It doesn't have to be an expensive formal production.

Look locally. La Traviata is held every Saturday at the Chiesa di San Paolo entro le Mura. The first non-Catholic church in Rome, it is an amusing and amazing mix of Romanesque and Gothic. Columns are a mix of styles and coloured marbles. The mosaics by English pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones are inspired by those in Ravenna.

Speaking of churches, Piazza Navona's Sant'Agnese in Agone, with its undulating convex-concave façade, has artist Borromini's final touch. Inside, the polychrome décor boasts altars, paintings, sculptures and a frescoed cupola. During this time, artists' homework – or goal – was to communicate the power of the church in order to counter these nailed to a door by a man called Luther.

The psychological magnetism of the art answered this challenge with theatrical works that impress and grab the viewer with their drama. And there is a drama on

Postcard from Rome #3: City is a Caravaggio



Everywhere in Rome, darkness leads to light: the Pantheon.

every street.

Rome is a Caravaggio. There are echoes of his famed *chiaroscuro*. From deep darkness one emerges into light: alleys grazed by graffiti lead into the salvation of sunlit *piazas* anchored by churches: the profane and the sacred.

Goal-less meandering is a delight. From the urbane *chic* of designer shops on Via del Condotti to plastic flowers seen in a colourful look-at-me arch at the entrance of a pizzeria.

Plastic is sometimes even a *trompe l'oeil*. One hedge is so perfectly and precisely pruned that it looks plastic. And it is.

Every block jump

continued on p. 26

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A Walk in the Park for those with or without walking aids. Slow-paced walk in Westmount Park. – Instructor: ANGELINA HUM, Tuesdays, 10:00-12:00 April 12th to August 30th. Free for Members

Line Dancing (In Person) – Instructor: LINDA CHOU, Tuesdays, 1:00-2:30 from April 19th to June 7th – Cost: \$56 Mem / \$64 Non-Members

Journalism & the Indigenous Clean Energy Project (Online) – Presented by: APHRODITE SALAS, Thursday, May 26th from 1:30-2:30 pm, Free for Members

A Journey of Awakening and the Alchemy of Love (Online) – Presented by: LIANNE BRIDGES, Thursday, April 14th from 1:30-2:30 pm, Free for Members

What's your Story? StoryScapes Workshop (Online)
Presented by: PATTI WARNOCK, Wednesdays, 10:00-12:00 from May 4th to May 25th, Free for Members

Express Yourself through Voice and Rhythm! with NAOKO FUNAHASHI (Online)
Voice Thursdays, 11:00-11:45, May 5th to June 2nd
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Easter Services

Maundy Thursday, April 14, 6:00 p.m.
Service of Tenebrae, with Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 15, 11:00 a.m.
Service of Words and Music

Good Friday, April 15, 7:30 p.m.
Choral Service presenting "Messiah" by Handel

Easter Sunday, April 17, 8:30 a.m.
Morning "Sonrise" Service

Easter Sunday, April 17, 11:00 a.m.
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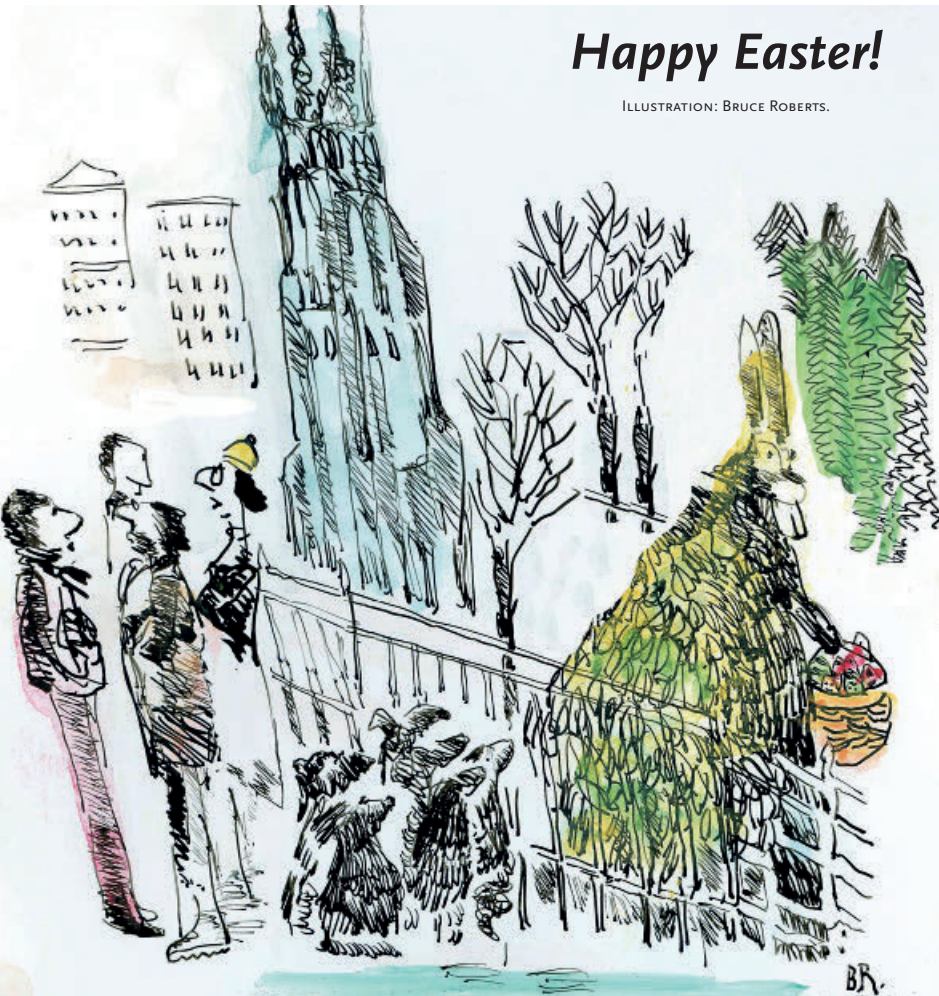


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City Views

VERONICA REDGRAVE

I met Boris Brott many years ago. My PR firm had created Word Power, a campaign reading to children in libraries across Canada.

Boris was one of my readers. He invited me to his home in Hamilton, where I also met his wife, lawyer Ardyth Webster.

Fast forward to Montreal and years later. I ran into Boris again at one of his black-tie fundraisers for the Orchestre Classique de Montréal, where he was artistic director and conductor.

And a mere two years ago, he conducted

.....
Neault, cont'd from p. 1

tares.

Neault has also worked in Repentigny, l'Assomption, St. Donat, St. Amable and the city of Montreal's Lachine borough.

He will work with assistant Urban Planning director Nathalie Jodoin, an architect, and report to Larue, who joined the city from Terrebonne to head the Urban Planning department in October 2020 (see story, September 29, 2020, p. 10).

Remembering Boris Brott (1944-2022)

"A Viennese Afternoon" at Westmount's Victoria Hall. Once again, I had the pleasure of chatting with this charming man. We shared out favourite Italian stories. An ardent Italophile like myself, Brott was also guest conductor at some of Italy's finest opera houses.

Much has been written about his contribution to music. I will simply say he was also special in many other ways.

We will miss you.

► Boris Brott congratulates soprano Aline Kutan at what we described as a "standing-room only" audience in Victoria Hall for "A Viennese Afternoon" February 16, 2020. The event was covered in our March 3, 2020 issue, the second-to-last one before the first COVID shutdown. The audience was more than appreciative of the concert and its standing ovation elicited a stirring encore.

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



.....
Rome #3, cont'd from p. 24

starts a conversation, be it colossal ancient walls protecting fleeing popes, or crumbling ancient arches just discovered during digging for the Metro.

To the harmonious elegance of the Greek architectural orders the Romans added marketing muscle, communicating imperial supremacy. Today, re-cycled columns with powerful Corinthian capitals tell the tale. The magnificently massive Caracalla baths (216 AD) reach for the sky. One of its columns was once shipped to Florence. A small gift to Cosimo de' Medici from the pope.

Streets are a fugue of point and counter-

point: contrasts are everywhere. Look away from your phone's GPS. In fact, sometimes these directions don't work, as the city centre is confusing even to high tech. Map mis-readings mean meanderings – and discoveries. Follow or cross routes as they come up. One of Rome's bridges, Ponte Rotto (Ponte Emilio), is the oldest stone bridge in Rome (2nd century BC).

And, of course, there is the food. Enough to mention that the artichokes are the size of grapefruits and are offered à la Romana (steamed with mint) or the centuries-old recipe *alla giudia* (crisply fried).

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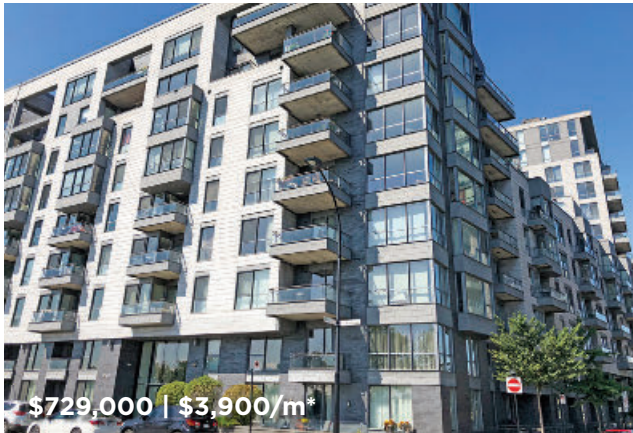
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