

# WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly. Vol. 18 No. 4e *We are Westmount* April 30, 2024

## Joannette retires after 5 decades at Metro



From left, Gajan Rajasingam, owner of the Metro grocery store on Victoria Ave., is seen here on April 24 with Daniel Joannette, who retired last week after nearly 50 years' service at the store. See p. 3 for story.

PHOTO: MARTIN C. BARRY.

## Newell named Manoir's Outstanding Volunteer



From left, Simona Buth, supervisor of leisure activities at Manoir Westmount, presented the retirement residence's 2024 Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service on April 17 to Shirley Newell in recognition of her 10 years of dedicated volunteering. See story, p. 2.

PHOTO: MARTIN C. BARRY.

An advertisement for Lori Schwartz, a real estate broker with RE/MAX. It features a photo of a house at 4947 Glencairn Westmount Adj. for \$4,500,000. Lori Schwartz is shown in a professional headshot. The text includes "THE RE/MAX COLLECTION", "LORI SCHWARTZ REAL ESTATE BROKER", and the phone number "514.651.5235". At the bottom, it says "RE/MAX ACTION INC. AGENCE IMMOBILIERE".

## Separate program under development for Contactivity Council awards \$82,500 in supporting grants to 6 non-profits

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

In keeping with its process of awarding supporting grants to community non-profit groups and organizations at this time of year, city council April 8 approved a total of \$82,500 to six.

These groups are ones that provide services not otherwise provided by the city. For what is believed to be one of the first

times, however, these exclude what is usually the lion's share of the amount that typically goes to the Contactivity seniors' centre at this time. According to the approved council resolution, this grant remained under consideration to be determined "in accordance with a partnership agreement for 2024, currently being developed." This "partnership" is one of those being forged *continued on p. 19*

An advertisement for Glenda Caplan, a real estate broker with THE AGENCY. It features a photo of Glenda and the text "THE AGENCY", "GLENDA CAPLAN REAL ESTATE BROKER", and the phone number "514.862.6950". The email address "GLENDA.CAPLAN@THEAGENCYRE.COM" is also provided. At the bottom, it says "THE AGENCY MONTREAL REAL ESTATE AGENCY AN INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND OPERATED FRANCHISEE".

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# Newell is Manoir Westmount's 2024 Outstanding Volunteer

By MARTIN C. BARRY

As part of celebrations for National Volunteer Week at Manoir Westmount on April 17, the retirement home's 2024 Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service was presented to Shirley Newell, a volunteer at Manoir Westmount for the past 10 years.

Newell was a volunteer long before she became a member of the Manoir Westmount community a decade ago, noted Simona Buth, the residence's supervisor of leisure.

According to Buth, Newell moved to Montreal in 1997. Before then, however, she volunteered at several organizations in Worcester, Massachusetts, where she lived with her husband and children for 25 years.

Her work also included public relations at Anna Maria College, then later at a mission in China and at St. Thomas' College in Sri Lanka.

### Many Manoir activities

In May 2014, she moved into Manoir Westmount and quickly became involved in a variety of activities. With her vast volunteering background, it was natural for her to take on many volunteer roles, "always with grace, kindness and good

humour," said Buth.

Newell has served on Manoir Westmount's resident council and its nominating committee. As well, she has helped with numerous bazaars, was one of the key people responsible for putting together the residence's "community book" and has interviewed countless residents for it as well as the Manoir newsletter.

In addition, she has entertained residents in the residence's Acting for Fun group and the former Manoir choir. She has also led many current events sessions, and organized and led several Christian book clubs, with a new one set to begin in May.

If that is not enough, Shirley takes the time to share her healing experiences, to lend an ear, to give words of encouragement, and to send out caring notes.

"Her acts of kindness and special projects come from the sincere joy of making our lives here a little nicer for all of us, despite her personal challenges," stated a letter from a friend nominating her for this year's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. Shirley Newell's name will be added to Manoir Westmount's perpetual plaque honouring volunteers for outstanding service.

*See photo on p. 1.*

## Public art



This painting, and another similar one to the left, was taped to trees in Westmount Park near the lagoon, as seen April 17.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.



# Cyclists caught riding through Summit Woods

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Two cyclists were ticketed \$81 each April 21 for riding in Summit Woods, according to Public Security officials. The two, who did not live in Westmount, were spotted using their bikes at 1:40 pm on the portion of the former Summit Circle that has been gravelled over. It is regarded as a trail with signage for no cycling at both entrances.

The northern third of what was once a fully paved part of the “circle” was converted into a gravelled park path in 2016. It was retained with sufficient width to allow for the passage of fire trucks, as well as hydro and water works vehicles. A major Montreal water main lies beneath (see story May 8, 2016).

## Two caught stealing parcels on Elm

A call to Public Security April 20 at 1:17 pm resulted in police arriving at Elm and Sherbrooke in time to question two people reported to be seen stealing parcels from outside homes on Elm Ave. A person des-

cribed as a witness remained available to possibly identify the alleged thieves if required by police, according to Public Security officials.

## No permit found for lift in the sky

An aerial lift vehicle that had been left on the street outside 4151 de Maisonneuve “for some time” was ticketed April 24 for \$1,326, according to Public Security. The vehicle was reported to not have a permit from the city for occupying the public domain. The ticket was left after unsuccessful attempts to contact the company owning the vehicle at 6:30 pm. The location was in the area outside Westmount Square between Wood and Greene.

## Woman treated for profuse bleeding

An 83-year-old woman who fell on Sherbrooke at Redfern April 25 was found bleeding profusely from a cut on the nose, Public Security officials said. She was left in the care of Urgences Santé.

# Longtime Metro employee Joannette retires after almost 50 years

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

After nearly five decades serving customers at the Victoria Ave. Metro store, Daniel Joannette was preparing to fly off on a well-deserved vacation after finishing his last shift on April 25.

The store was still operating under the Steinberg’s supermarket banner when Joannette, a customer service employee, first started full-time in early August 1975. He became a Metro employee in 1992 after Steinberg’s went bankrupt and some of its assets were sold to Metro.

During almost 50 years at the store, Daniel served generations of Westmounters, some of whom were children when they first met him. They still do their food shopping at the Victoria Ave. store.

Having been on staff for so long, he learned about virtually every aspect of its operations, from cashier management to the butcher counter. The store’s owner, Gajan Rajasingam, will sorely miss having someone like Daniel around.

“Especially in the meat department, he was one of the best butchers we ever had,” he told the *Westmount Independent*.

“Employees with lots of experience and

who take this business seriously are very hard to find,” he added. “We will be missing him a lot. But at the same time, we are happy for him to be able to retire and enjoy life.”

Apart from missing day-to-day interactions with clients, Daniel said he will also be giving up a daily commute from Boucherville on the South Shore that he enjoyed. For the past three years, he travelled by electric bike to a ferry boat linking the Longueuil Marina to the Old Port in Montreal.

From there, he went by e-bike onto the Metro at Place d’Armes, then westward to Metro Vendôme, only a few blocks from Victoria Ave. “That’s *magnifique*,” he said, noting that the half-hour boat trip was “like being on vacation” every day.

After a career of taking only a few weeks off each year, in September he plans to take a lengthier holiday in Italy and France, the latter country being his wife’s place of birth.

“It was a pleasure to serve the people of Westmount,” said Daniel. “Very nice people here. It’s like a village, where we all know each other.”

See p. 1 for photo.



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## Opinions on dogs at Summit Woods

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Cojalac wins third major contract in 3 years

Upper Lansdowne’s \$7M re-do set to start May 29

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city’s largest reconstruction project for this summer – a re-do of Upper Lansdowne Ave. and replacement of the water main – was awarded April 8 by city council to Cojalac Inc. at its bid price of \$6,781,883 including tax credits. The work is due to start May 29.

This portion of roadway stretches from Belfrage and Edgehill north past Devon Park to Lansdowne Ridge, a route leading to Upper Belmont and Villa Ste. Marcelline school.

Nudging the \$7-million mark, this is the same amount that had been projected in the city’s 2024 capital works budget of \$35.5 million for financing through a loan by-law (see story January 16, p. 8). The recent contract to Cojalac was based on the lowest conforming bid of five.

“The road is to be taken down completely,” Councillor Conrad Peart explained April 8 as commissioner of infrastructure and urban planning. This involves removing the asphalt as well as the concrete base, replacing the sidewalks and the sewer, and updating of electrical work by Hydro West-

mount.

Mayor Christina Smith stressed that a city point person from Engineering would be on site and suggested that this would be “an opportune time” for residents to replace their own private portion of the waterline into their houses while the city’s excavation is under way. Historically, some of these private water entries were made with lead pipes.

Councillor Antonio D’Amico, who represents District 1, also emphasized the presence of a point person on site and information on timelines to be provided to residents.

New consultation process

Outlining the city’s “new strategy” for public consultation on such major projects, Peart pointed out that “many options” had been worked through in November for Upper Lansdowne at a participatory workshop, as well as via an online questionnaire and reports, as options were worked through. These led to a final report presented February 1 by Transfert, the city’s hired communications firm.

Preferred options were detailed as

maintaining two-way traffic on Upper Lansdowne and Upper Belmont, adding a raised pedestrian crossing at Devon Park with speed humps to the north and south, new stop signs at Belfrage and the planting of more trees.

Hydro Westmount objectives include the use of “warm LED street lighting (2,700 K) that is energy-efficient, upgrading the hydro network, and preparing the infrastructure to meet future needs.”

Plans presented at Victoria Hall remain posted on the city’s Engage website.

This is the third major road infrastructure project awarded in three years to Cojalac, on the heels of the Lexington project at over \$6 million in May 2022 and work on Mount Pleasant undertaken last summer at just under \$4 million (see August 15, 2023, p. 6).

We welcome your letters

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week. Email us at: [editor@westmountindependent.com](mailto:editor@westmountindependent.com)

FROM GLOBE & MAIL BESTSELLING AUTHOR

GATHERINE MACK

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GATHERINE MACK

USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR



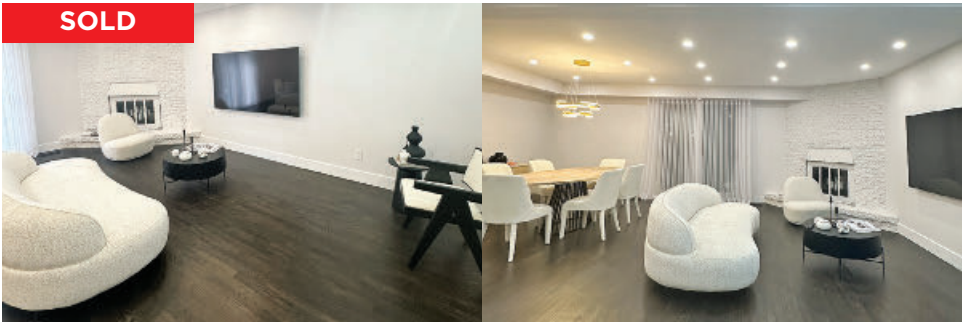




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Mayor's Column  
CHRISTINA SMITH

After reading the article published in the *Westmount Independent* on April 23 (p. 1) entitled “Province replies to Cllr. D’Amico: Off-leash dogs must be ‘enclosed,’” I felt it was important to correct the misinformation circulating on this issue both in the community and in the paper.

The article, particularly its title, presents an incorrect summary of the response given by the Ministère d’Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l’Alimentation du Québec to Councillor D’Amico regarding the definition of a dog run.

**Ministère’s response**

The ministère’s response, of which the council is aware, states that dogs must be always kept on a leash, except for dog exercise areas. However, the ministère adds that “Neither the regulation nor the application guide specifies what a dog exercise area is” (“Ni le règlement [provincial] ni le guide d’application ne précisent ce qu’est une aire d’exercice canin”).

The ministry also states that “it is gen-

erally recognized that these areas are set up for this purpose so that dogs can play freely off leash and socialize with each other” (“qu’il est généralement reconnu que ces lieux sont aménagés pour cet usage afin que les chiens puissent jouer librement sans laisse et socialiser entre eux”).

Our dog runs in the city and Summit Woods during restricted hours throughout the year have for decades adhered to that, there is no change or anything new being proposed as to where dogs are free to walk off leash and have done so for decades.

Therefore, contrary to what the *Westmount Independent* article’s title may suggest, the provincial government is not saying that the only places where dogs can be off leash must and can only be enclosed areas.

**The petition to ban off-leash dogs in Summit Woods**

The other issue that must be clarified is a petition that is circulating to ban off-leash access to the Summit Woods. The

city is not proposing any changes to access to Summit Woods. This [regulatory situation] has been in place for decades. What we are proposing is stricter enforcement of required licences, increased fines for those who do not follow the rules and harmonizing the times across the city for parks.

The proposed changes to the by-law ensure that the wording is consistent with the provincial legislation. The city will also continue to strictly enforce all laws and restrictions to dogs that are deemed dangerous.

These decisions to designate areas for dogs are clearly [within the jurisdiction] of the municipality. You will see in the coming months a continued investment made in Summit Woods. We will continue to protect it and ensure that it is accessible for generations to come.

I would also like to remind residents that from mid-April until mid-June dogs are required to be always on leash during the bird nesting season.



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# An Important Message for Dog Owners

**There is a group of Summit Circle residents who want to  
ban all off-leash walking in Summit Woods.**

They have been bombarding the media with their petition to ban dogs – under the banner of a 'Save the Summit' campaign, spreading disinformation about the history and status of Summit Woods, and false accusations about dogs wreaking havoc and destruction.

**Parks are for everyone!**  
(not just those who live nearby)

We, who regularly walk our dogs at The Summit are law-abiding, local and Westmount-adjacent citizens who care deeply about the woods. Our presence deters potential mischief, and serves to increase safety and security, which is greatly appreciated by the City of Westmount. We are not the problem!

**This group seems to be obsessed with trying to force the City to change the law  
and deny us access to this wonderful community resource that is meant for all to enjoy.**

**We want to stop them. Don't you?**

**This is your chance!**

Join us at the next Westmount City Council meeting

**Monday, May 6th at 7 PM.**

4333 Sherbrooke Street West

**Every one of us who enjoys the privilege of walking our dogs in Summit Woods needs to show up!  
We are all in this together. See you on Monday.**

**Westmount Dog Owners Association WDOA  
Friends of Summit Woods**

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (SUMMIT WOODS DOG RULES)

IS WESTMOUNT JUST ONE BIG DOG RUN?

[After my April 23, p. 6 letter, the *Independent's* editor added a note regarding my statement about parks being turned by council into dog runs that began:]

"Unless it is intended as hyperbole or prediction."

In Westmount, numerous beautiful and picturesque sidewalks are remarkably narrow. Yet, some dog owners opt to allow their dogs' leashes to extend so far that the animals essentially wander the sidewalk freely, often with the owner far behind and unaware.

This practice is a recipe for disaster. What if one of these dogs decides to attack? Our only option is to step onto the street to avoid the animal. Shockingly, some of these dog owners have the audacity to act as though we are inconveniencing them by simply trying to navigate the sidewalk safely.

Provincial law (#128, Article 20, chapter 38.002) mandates that dogs must be leashed in public areas. Municipal by-laws must align with provincial laws, and the provincial laws have the authority to mandate municipalities to change what has been unlawfully "allowed or not allowed" "for many years" [more of the editor's words from his note] by their municipal by-laws.

It is ethically and morally imperative for dog owners to take responsibility for their pets and keep them on a short leash, both literally and figuratively, in all public areas. Anything less poses a danger to everyone sharing the sidewalk.

DIANA HERNANDEZ, ST. CATHERINE ST.

STRICTER LEASH LAWS NEEDED FOR SUMMIT WOODS

I was relieved to read about the latest development in the Summit Woods controversy, i.e. "Province replies to Cllr. D'Amico: Off-leash dogs must be 'enclosed'" (April 23, p. 1).

I was savagely attacked by a dog on the summit in December 2023 while its owner,

totally helpless, stood by along with numerous horrified witnesses. First the dog came up from behind and grabbed onto my arm with its teeth.

If that wasn't enough, it then ran past me, turned around and glared at me, planning its next move, totally oblivious to shouts from its owner.

Once it had picked up a head of steam, it ran towards me. Realizing that it was headed to attack my face, I turned my back. The dog jumped on my back, grabbed onto my coat and hung there. If it had been summer and I wasn't wearing a thick shell and a number of layers underneath, there would have been bloodshed.

I was far too shaken to even think of taking a photo of the dog and its owner. A few days later, I called Public Security to report the incident.

I am a former dog owner who enjoyed the Summit Woods with my dogs for 20 years. Now that my dogs have passed on, I want to continue my walks in Summit Woods, which I might add, deteriorates with each passing season. I still go, but it is with sadness and trepidation.

I wholeheartedly support measures to ensure the environmental integrity of Summit Woods and the safety of human beings who want to enjoy it.

COLLEEN GRAY, VICTORIA AVE.

LET'S HEAR FROM COUNCILLORS/ COMMISSIONERS ON SUMMIT WOODS

In her column in the April 16 issue (p. 10), Mayor Smith says she wants "to assure you council has heard the concerns raised by residents."

Anyone watching the tapes of the April 8 and the March 18 city council sessions will see a very dismissive and impatient attitude on the part of Mayor Smith. Twice in the March meeting, residents took to the microphone to ask her why she was being so antagonistic towards us – supporters of keeping Summit Woods as a botanical and bird sanctuary and not redefining it as a

dog park.

Her attitude was also noticed in her impatience and lack of acknowledgement of Councillor D'Amico's comments and arguments. His comments deserve to be addressed by the mayor in public. All the other council members acted like minions to Mayor Smith, void of their own opinions and lack of responsibility to their portfolios.

We must hear from Councillor Roux, who heads up local heritage, of which the Summit Woods is one; from Councillor Aronson, who heads up climate and the environment, of which Summit Woods is one, and from Councillor Kez, who heads up Public Security. All of these portfolios are affected by the proposed by-law re-defining Summit Woods as a dog park. Why have they not tabled their analysis and positions?

Democracy did not come to Westmount to die! This issue deserves more public consultation.

B. CHAMANDY-COOK, OAKLAND AVE.

WHERE'S THE CONSULTATION ON SUMMIT WOODS?

Summit Woods, a key part of the Mount Royal Heritage Zone, makes up 58 percent of Westmount's parkland. The city plans to convert\* this green space into a dog run, raising serious concerns. The proposal is set to proceed in just seven days without environmental studies, heritage assessments or public consultations. Considering the potential impact on our natural and cultural heritage, does this seem acceptable to you? Does the mayor and your city councillor support turning our heritage into a dog run? Your voice matters – make it heard!

VAHID ABBASI, SUMMIT CIRCLE

*\*Editor's note:* As I noted last week, I don't think that Summit Woods is being "converted" into anything. The proposed legislative changes explained our April 16 article (p. 4) are enshrining what has been allowed, and not allowed, there for ages. – DP.

INDEPENDENT'S ARTICLE OVER-SUMMARIZES PROVINCE'S LETTER TO CLLR. D'AMICO

People are biased. People are often close-minded to whatever does not fit into their model of the world. Sometimes they present "alternative facts." City elected officials ideally see their role as one in which they seek to understand various conflicting positions, and work to support the community as a whole. It is not ideal when they align with a few citizens who share a personal pet peeve, and proceed to do whatever it takes to get their way.

Perhaps even more important is the role of a community newspaper, ideally a source of accurate information that people

rely upon, especially regarding contentious issues. In the rigorous pursuit of truth, good journalism attempts to mitigate bias by presenting corroborating evidence to support the claims of those who make them. And by including more than one point of view.

My concern here is the accuracy and completeness of the recent article entitled "Province replies to Cllr. D'Amico: Off-leash dogs must be 'enclosed,'" discussing Councillor D'Amico's questioning of the legality of off-leash walking in Summit Woods.

The title itself is misleading as it implies that this reply is specifically referring to dogs at the summit, which it does not appear to be. And we don't even know who replied from "The Province." The article ambiguously cites personal communication between Councillor D'Amico and unnamed Quebec representatives about "whether a fence is required" without clarifying the specific query, a critical omission that casts doubt on whether the provincial response actually pertains to Summit Woods.

Significant existing documentation that should have informed both the Councillor's inquiry and your reporting such as the province of Quebec's detailed "Guide d'Interpretation" for the Act to Promote the Protection of Persons by Establishing a Framework with regards to Dogs (P38.002) offers crucial context and guidelines – guidelines that the mayor is fully aware of, and with which the city of Westmount is in compliance.

Some local residents would rather not have outsiders parking and hanging out in their neighbourhood, and an all-out ban on off-leash walking at the summit is what they are seeking. Since the fence question is not going to work, they are now trying to make a case that this is all about preservation of nature, with zero true evidence to support their claims. Their disingenuous petition in ads running in your newspaper, falsely titled "Save Summit Wood" to entice people to sign it without really reading it, offers a very drastic solution to a problem that doesn't exist.

However, in a positive, community-minded response to the concerns of this small group of citizens, the city is allocating more resources to increasing Public Security at the summit and raising fines, which those of us who regularly walk our dogs up there completely endorse.

Strangely, instead of supporting effective governance, Cllr. D'Amico seems hell bent on continuing his crusade – with your help.

I urge the *Independent* to revisit this topic to provide a more holistic view that can only benefit all concerned.

PAULA ENGELS, NDG

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (SUMMIT WOODS DOG RULES)

## ARTICLE ON PROVINCE'S LEASH LAW OMITS KEY INFORMATION

As a Westmount resident and dog owner who frequents Summit Woods regularly, I am writing to express my concerns about the accuracy and completeness of the recent article entitled "Province replies to Cllr. D'Amico: Off-leash dogs must be 'enclosed'," which discusses Councillor Antonio D'Amico's efforts to undermine municipal autonomy in relation to the off-leash area in Summit Woods.

The article neglects to mention that the province has already published a detailed "Guide d'Interpretation" that provides additional context and clarification in relation to Quebec Regulation P-38.002, R.1 concerning dogs. The "Guide d'Interpretation," which is freely available online, further supports the city's position that implementation details of public off-leash dog areas are left to the discretion of municipalities.

This is a serious journalistic omission in an article that focuses instead on personal communications between Councillor D'Amico and unnamed provincial representatives.

KAROLINA VICTORIA JEZ,  
MOUNT PLEASANT.

**Editor's reply:** We know that the Summit Woods dog leash debate is getting bitter now. Your opponents score a point? What do you do? Blame the press!

In doing so, however, you seem to be mistaking a news article about a recent development (an elected municipal official dialoguing with the province) with a legal brief. Even if our reporter had unearthed your "Guide d'Interpretation," what would that have proven?

(And "online" – your word – is a vast place. I, for instance, found a "Guide d'application" without any knock-out potential quotations for your side. Same document that you intend? Dunno. Maybe there is a knock-out punch online somewhere. You are welcome to quote from "your" document or "mine" in a future letter.)

But what could that prove at the most? That the province has two contradictory positions on this issue (i.e. one in a "Guide," and another in the letter to D'Amico)? Given the provincial government's size (and other factors), such a situation would hardly be surprising. Unless this controversy goes to court, and a tribunal with final authority pronounces, we are unlikely to know, with finality, which interpretation prevails legally.

Such a court case is possible, perhaps even probable at this point, but until that happens, we are left in the fuzzy world of democratic, tit-for-tat politics – and reporting on it. – DP.

## ARTICLE MISLEADS ON PROV. LEASH/DOG-RUN RULES

I am writing to take issue with Laureen Sweeney's article outlining Cllr. D'Amico's position with respect to provincial policy governing off-leash dogs. The article, which selectively paraphrases information that Cllr. D'Amico obtained from unnamed provincial sources, has been framed in a misleading way. Importantly, Cllr. D'Amico neglects to mention a number of key points in relation to Quebec regulation P-38.002.R1.

Firstly, provincial legislation for dog-run facilities and use of leashes (in Division IV of the regulation) indicates that implementation standards for off-leash areas are delegated to municipalities. There is simply no provincial requirement for fencing or leashing in dog-run facilities. That the municipality has decided to strengthen the rules with tougher enforcement, and formally recognize what has long been a dog run even before becoming a bird sanctuary, is commendable in establishing harmony.

Secondly, the article seems to conflate the requirements related to dogs deemed dangerous (Sec 24) with those pertaining to a public dog-run facility in a wooded area (Sec 20).\*

Having started a transparent petition (with more than 1,800 signatures) for citizens to voice support for off-leash access, I further take issue with the disingenuous counter-petition, claiming to "Save Summit Wood," which seems like a thinly disguised effort to end this long-standing tradition. The statement that there is a transformation from a bird-sanctuary to a dog run is utterly misleading.

The brandishing of "provincial law" to make their claim? False.

Photographs showing ice storm damage and attributing this to dogs? False.

That the gasoline leaf-blowers used by nearby residents disturb nesting birds? No mention – it [the counter-petition] is just about dogs.

Their counter-petition and advertisement lack transparency, and it is disappointing that the *Westmount Independent* has printed content that only serves to mislead and divide our community.

DANA EVEN, SHERBROOKE ST.

**\*Editor's reply:** The article makes no mention of, or the vaguest allusion to, Section 24. It was the letter from the province that got into signs and fences. See it at right. – DP.

## LET'S HAVE FEWER RESTRICTIONS ON DOGS, NOT MORE

I have noticed several letters about dogs in Westmount parks, going so far as to suggest (heaven forbid) keeping dogs on leash

all the time, everywhere.

As a dog owner myself, I rejoice in seeing my dog running freely in the park – sniffing at any and every plant, blade of grass, log, rock, minding her own business, just happy to be free to run and roam – like a dog.

Sure, there are some unruly dogs (and dog owners) and I, as well as my dog, have avoided crossing their paths at times – but does that mean I wish ALL dogs to be on leash at ALL times in ALL places?

I visit Italy, France and UK, where dogs are often off leash on streets, in public parks, restaurants and on public transport. No problems, no issues; happy people, happy dogs.

In my opinion, a dog kept leashed, tethered and forbidden to run free will inevitably bottle up copious amounts of repressed energy. After all, dogs have to be allowed

## Editor's note

## The province's letter to Cllr. D'Amico, unedited

There have been objections by supporters of the Summit Woods regulatory dog-leash status quo to our p. 1 story of last week ("Province replies to Cllr. D'Amico: Off-leash dogs must be 'enclosed'"). For this reason, we include the whole original text of the provincial Agriculture department's letter to him and a fairly literal translation by me, so readers can judge for themselves. – DP.

\*

La loi qui encadre les chiens dans un objectif de sécurité publique est la *Loi visant à favoriser la protection des personnes par la mise en place d'un encadrement concernant les chiens* (RLRQ, chapitre P-38.002). Le Règlement d'application de cette Loi vient préciser les modalités de cet encadrement. Les normes d'encadrement des chiens exigent la tenue en laisse sous le contrôle du gardien ou propriétaire dans un endroit public afin d'accroître la sécurité de tous les citoyens et de prévenir les incidents, dont des morsures. Ainsi, l'article 20 du règlement d'application mentionne que «Dans un endroit public, un chien doit en tout temps être sous le contrôle d'une personne capable de le maîtriser. Sauf dans une aire d'exercice canin... un chien doit également être tenu au moyen d'une laisse. ».

Ni le règlement ni le guide d'application ne précisent ce qu'est une aire d'exercice canin. Toutefois, il est généralement reconnu que ces lieux sont aménagés pour cet usage afin que les chiens puissent jouer librement sans laisse et socialiser entre eux. Ce pourrait par exemple être un terrain clôturé désigné par un affichage apposé par la ville indiquant qu'il s'agit d'un endroit où

to run a lot.

A well run and exercised dog is a happy dog. A dog deprived of letting off its daily steam is an anxious, stressed and, more likely, aggressive dog.

Although a good initiative, dog runs are really only glorified dog toilets with a little run included.

Rather than proposing yet another restriction in our increasingly restricted lives, I would suggest the opposite – let dogs have more freedom. Let dogs be dogs. And on that matter, letting a dog run loose on Murray Hill in the evening when the park is empty should not be a reason for a hefty ticket.

Live and let live! Make dog owners completely accountable for their dogs' behaviour! Let's promote a pleasant society of trust rather than restrictions.

ARIANNA MINA, ANWOTH RD.

il est possible de laisser les chiens en liberté sans laisse. Les personnes sont ainsi avisées de la présence possible de chien à cet endroit et les clôtures empêchent les chiens d'en sortir sans supervision.

En vous remerciant pour votre souci de la santé et de la sécurité publique, [signature]

\*

The law concerning dogs and public safety is the Act to Promote the Protection of Persons by Establishing a Framework with regard to Dogs (RLRQ, chapitre P-38.002). The applicable regulation of this law makes clear how it should be implemented. The rules for dogs require that they be held by a leash and under the control of a guardian or owner while in a public place so that the safety of all citizens is increased and to prevent incidents, including bites. As a result, Article 20 says, "In a public place, a dog must at all times be under the control of a person capable of mastering it. Except in an area for canine exercise, a dog must equally be held by a leash."

Neither the regulation nor the application guide specifies what a "canine exercise area" is. All the same, it is generally recognized that these locations are equipped so that dogs can play freely unleashed and socialize among themselves. This could, for instance, be a fenced area designated with a sign by the city indicating that it is a place where it is possible to allow dogs to be unleashed. People are thus advised about the possible presence of dogs at this location and fences keep the dogs from leaving without supervision.

Thanking you for your concern with public health and safety, [signature]



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ECOWatch  
HEATHER BLACK

While much of the discussion at recent city council meetings has been centred on dogs and dog runs, the key issues regarding Summit Woods are park overuse and conservation for future generations. As Summit Woods is within the Mount Royal Heritage Site, compliance with the provincial Cultural Heritage Act and relations with the greater Montreal community are also at stake.

*Are citizens willing to support conservation for future generations?*

Summit Woods – the second largest wooded area within Mount Royal Heritage Site – was purchased from McGill University by Westmount in 1940 as a nature reserve or parkland “in perpetuity.” Current park overuse threatens species survival and dogs, off trail in particular, trample delicate flora or low nesting sites. Council’s proposed amendment to By-Law 1522 to preserve the regulatory status quo and allow dogs off leash will exacerbate the loss of biodiversity.

Summit Woods: Rally for conservation and heritage status

As Summit Woods’ flora, fauna and land use are protected under the Cultural Heritage Act, residents’ request for dogs on leash at all times is reasonable. Not only does this reduce damage by dogs and the number of park visitors, it also corresponds to Mount Royal Park’s regulations to ensure “the safety of pets, as well as the safety of visitors and other animals in the park.”

However, as dog scent prevents nesting (Gompper 2014), conservation necessitates a quiet “nature reserve” of dog-free trails along Warbler’s Walk in the southwest corner. This would respect the International Migratory Bird Act, encourage nesting – birds nest facing south – to help restore declining bird numbers. With citizen well-being related to bird song – and number of species – a dog-free zone would be welcomed by birders, forest bathers and young families who currently avoid the park due to the presence of dogs.

*Are citizens willing to support Summit Woods as a heritage site?*

A “nature reserve” – and dogs on leash – would also support Mont-Royal Heritage

Site conservation by Les amis de la montagne. Their efforts are appreciated by Westmounters – in 2017 many signed Montreal’s submission *Paysage du Mont Royal* to Parks Canada for UNESCO World Heritage consideration. Now on Canada’s tentative list, citizens want this extra layer of conservation oversight to prevent park overuse.

As Westmount has a seat on the governing *Table de concertation du Mont-Royal* (TCMR), cooperation is essential with other stakeholders including the city of Montreal and its boroughs of Ville Marie (downtown) and Côte des Neiges-NDG. Some dog owners are concerned that – as non-residents must purchase a Westmount dog licence – they would require one from Montreal. Others suggest that Westmount issue a special summit dog tag to ensure access by all neighbouring residents.

This approach reflects the inclusive spirit of the Mount Royal Heritage Site. Interviewed in *Héritage Montréal*, Claude Corbo, TCMR chair from 2005 to 2020, described the site as belonging to all Quebecers as well as visitors. I worked as a designer in Parks Canada’s Interpretation Division and, although most citizens are not aware, natural and/or heritage sites are legal designations. As violations incur fines, city council has an obligation to communicate changes to conservation law before amending Summit Woods’ status.

*Protect Summit Woods in perpetuity*

Westmount’s founders envisioned parklands as nature reserves brimming with flora and fauna. But for Summit Woods to survive for future generations, citizens and councillors must take the long view, encourage conservation and respect heritage designation.

The petition “Save Summit Wood” is online at [change.org](http://change.org).



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WESTMOUNT



**CHANGEMENT DANS LES COLLECTES DÈS  
Mercredi 1<sup>er</sup> mai 2024**

La collecte des matières résiduelles se fera uniquement en bordure de rue ou le long des voies accessibles (pas de collecte dans les voies inaccessibles aux camions de collecte). En ce qui concerne les immeubles résidentiels de 9 à 29 unités, la collecte des déchets se fera une fois par semaine, avec une participation obligatoire à la collecte des déchets alimentaires (compostage).

De plus amples détails et une foire aux questions concernant ces changements sont disponibles sur la page de projet de l'initiative Clean Westmount à l'adresse [engage.westmount.org/westmounteco](http://engage.westmount.org/westmounteco), qui fournit des liens utiles et une plateforme interactive pour les questions et les opinions. Veillez à ce que vos déchets soient sortis avant 7 h le jour de la collecte, les bacs pouvant être placés à partir de 20 h la veille.

**WASTE COLLECTION CHANGES AS OF  
Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

Waste collection will occur street side or along accessible lanes only (no collection in lanes inaccessible to collection trucks). As for residential buildings with 9 to 29 units, garbage collection will be once weekly, with mandatory participation in food waste collection (composting).

Further details and FAQs regarding these changes are available on the Clean Westmount Initiative project page at [engage.westmount.org/cleanwestmount](http://engage.westmount.org/cleanwestmount), providing useful links and an interactive platform for questions and opinions. Ensure your waste is out by 7 a.m. on collection day, with bins eligible for placement starting at 8 p.m. the evening before.

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*REFERRED FOR A REASON*

**Children’s sports**

- Eva Clark is March’s hockey player-of-the-month, p. 14
- City awards young athletes at sports banquet, p. 14

**Social Notes:**  
Douglas’ Open Minds, p. 21

**Art: Dawson’s**  
‘Artists in Bloom,’ p. 23



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471 AV. LANSDOWNE, WESTMOUNT  
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5179 AV. BRILLON, CDN/NDG  
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433 AV. WOOD, WESTMOUNT  
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4700 RUE STE-CATHERINE O. #613, WESTMOUNT  
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200 AV. LANSDOWNE #605, WESTMOUNT  
1 BED, 1+1 BATHS | **\$645,000**



Citing travel time, inspector Chris Rogers says farewell

# Well-known city veteran leaves Urban Planning department

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Christopher Rogers, who has met hundreds of residents over his 19-year career doing Urban Planning inspections, leaves the city at the end of this week as division head for Permits, Inspections and Applications. For much of his career, he was chief inspector and head of the board of inspections.

Spending an hour and a half battling traffic back and forth to Westmount from his home on the South Shore would be “time better spent with my growing family,” he told the *Independent* last week. He is starting to work with “colleagues in St. Lambert,” he said.

“I love Westmount,” he added. “I will always be there to support them. We’ll see what the future brings.”

Rogers, who knew regulations and the status of projects so well, was usually available to explain details of projects big and small, whether it was the contentious project at 500 Claremont or aspects regarding summer terraces.

At the time of his 2021 appointment as



Christopher Rogers in 2016.

division head, he told the *Independent* he was “super proud to be given this honour.” He saw it as providing him with more time to put into the permit process (see story January 19, 2021, p. 6).

# Selwyn students explore history, biology, chemistry in one go



City Views

VERONICA REDGRAVE

learnt a bit about history, but also the science of pigments, pH, colour, light absorption and emission.

Grade 9 student Spencer Roiter added a few drops of cochineal to his red cabbage concoction. With soda ash, he changed the colour to green (pH of 9 or 10).

Looks like colourful fun.

It was a day of primary colours when I visited Selwyn House. Yellows bloomed (forsythia) under blue (cloudless sky), and I learnt about red.

Who would have thought that Westmount’s prestigious private boys’ school would offer lessons on natural dyes – red in particular.

Teachers David Grier (chemistry) and Julian Geisterfer (outdoor education coordinator) discovered this theme at a sustainability and regeneration conference, the Unconference of Hope and Bold Climate Action. There, teachers from Lakefield College School ran a workshop on eco-printing.

“This inspired us to run a similar learning exercise,” explained Geisterfer.

### Dyeing’s ancient roots

The duo opted to try a dyeing technique using red cabbage and cochineal. (A source of red for centuries, cochineal is a small insect originating in South America. First coveted by ancient indigenous civilizations, once discovered by explorers, the cochineal helped the Spanish crown to finance its empire for two centuries – but, as usual, I digress.)

“In defence against a predator, the insect produces carminic acid. This acid, when mixed with solutions of differing pH levels, will generate beautiful dark reds, violets and orange hues,” explained Grier.

The students processed the cochineal into a sort of tea, and then with vinegar or soda ash, altered the pH of the mixture to change the colours.

“Red cabbage also produces a wide range of reds as well as blues and even greens depending on the pH factor.”

Dipping twisted organic cotton cloth into the dyes, the boys created a kaleidoscope of fun bandannas. They not only



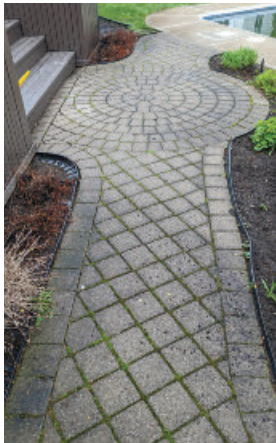
Grade 9 Selwyn House student Spencer Roiter.



► Selwyn House teachers Julian Geisterfer and David Grier



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What to look for if you're concerned about melanoma

Fun in the sun is part of what makes the great outdoors so enjoyable. Though everyone can safely enjoy such recreation, it's important that people exercise caution when spending ample time in the sun.

A lack of caution when soaking up some sun can increase individuals' risk for skin cancer, including melanoma.

The Melanoma Research Alliance notes that melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. Melanoma affects pigment-producing cells called melanocytes, which give the skin its colour.

The MRA notes that melanomas can develop in various parts of the body, but most originate on sun-exposed skin.

Melanoma is unique among skin cancers in more ways than one. Among the more unique characteristics of melanoma is that rates of the disease are rising rapidly, and the MRA notes that's especially so among younger individuals. Though anyone can develop melanoma, higher rates of the disease among younger individuals underscores the need for greater education on how to

protect the skin when spending time in the sun.

The MRA also notes that melanoma can spread widely to other parts of the body, which is not typical of other skin cancers.

Melanoma is unique among skin cancers, but it produces some common signs. The MRA urges individuals to learn the ABCDEs of melanoma, which is a simple system of characterizing symptoms that can help people recognize what to look for if they are concerned about the disease.

- A (Asymmetrical): Moles or growths that are asymmetrical or uneven may be indicative of melanoma and should be discussed with a physician immediately.
- B (Border): Moles or growths indicative of melanoma will have an irregular border.
- C (Colour): Moles or growths resulting from melanoma exhibit changes in colour.
- D (Diameter): A mole

continued on p. 4



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# How to prevent damaged, brassy summer hair

A new haircut or a colour change can align perfectly with the carefree spirit of summer.

Summer may be an opportunity to experiment with lighter hues or highlights to complement the natural changes to hair that come with exposure to the sun and surf.

Hair care routines after changing colours may require a few additional steps, as weather or styling conditions can contribute to less-than-desireable results, including brassy tones.

According to the hair experts at The Matrix, everyone's hair has warm colours within. Whenever hair is lightened, underlying gold or red tones become more visible. Hair also may turn brassy because the follicles are porous and can soak up everything from minerals in shower water to pollution or chlorine.

Exposure to chlorine and summer sun can contribute to brassiness, making hair more vulnerable to damage and breakage.

Many people may not know that some hair care products also can contribute to brassiness or bland colour. The beauty

product review source Beauty Mag warns that shampoos that contain silicones, sulfates, parabens, and colouring can contribute to the problem.

Avoiding hair damage and unwanted colour changes comes down to prevention and correction. These tips can make a difference in hair health.

- Wear a swim cap before going into the pool or the ocean to protect against chlorine or salt water, which may leach into hair shafts and cause brittleness and brassy hues. Specialty hair masks to coat tresses also can be effective.
- Stick to the shade when outdoors to avoid having hair fried by exposure to the sun's UV rays. If that's not possible, wear a hat or hair products that contain UV protection.
- Determine if the water in your home is "hard," which means it has high levels of chlorine, metals and minerals in it. Water-softening systems and filters can help mitigate hard water issues. Also, there's no need to wash hair multiple times a week, which can cause

continued on p. 4

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# Daily dental hygiene tips for optimal oral health

Dental health is an important component of daily life. Although clean teeth and gums make for a healthy mouth, oral health also is tied to general health throughout the body. Guardian Insurance indicates that, if left unaddressed, bacteria in the mouth can multiply and spread elsewhere through the bloodstream. Gum disease has been linked to diabetes, respiratory ailments, heart disease, and even Alzheimer’s disease. As a result, it is essential to maintain proper dental hygiene.

Best practices for maintaining healthy teeth and gums involve various techniques. Here’s how to brush up on maintaining a healthy mouth.

### Brush at least twice per day

Utilizing toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush, be sure to brush teeth each morning and night. Be sure to brush all tooth surfaces, including the backs and the sides. Brushing after every meal also can be done to keep teeth even cleaner.

### Brush correctly

Position the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle toward the gums. This will help sweep away plaque and bacteria at the gum line, according to the Cleveland Clinic. Do not use a medium- or hard-bristled brush, which can damage the

gums and tooth enamel. Move the toothbrush in gentle, circular motions to remove plaque.

### Don’t neglect your tongue

Bacteria also can build up on the tongue, leading to bad mouth odour and additional oral health problems. Gently brush the tongue along with the teeth.

### Use toothpaste with fluoride

Fluoride has come under scrutiny due to its potential effects on overall health. However, fluoride is a leading defender against tooth decay. It fights the germs that can lead to decay and provides a barrier for the teeth.

### Use an antibacterial mouthwash

Use an antibacterial mouthwash each day to help reduce oral bacteria. This helps wash away food and debris, and also can help reduce the build-up of plaque.

### Avoid smoking and tobacco

Smoking is a leading cause of gum disease and oral cancer. Quit smoking and do not use other tobacco products to improve mouth health.

Oral health is vital to overall health. Daily attention can improve tooth and gum health. – MCG

### Melanoma, cont’d from p. 2

or growth that develops because of melanoma may have a diameter larger than the size of a pencil eraser.

- E (Evolved): Moles or growths resulting from melanoma evolve in size or thickness.

Many people, adults and children alike, are familiar with the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale “The Ugly Duckling.”

That beloved story is one to remember when thinking of melanoma. According to the MRA, a mole that does not look like the rest of the moles on an individual’s body could be indicative of melanoma.

Melanoma is potentially deadly and rates of the disease are on the rise. The presence of any the aforementioned signs should be brought to the attention of a health care professional.

More information about melanoma can be found at [curemelanoma.org](http://curemelanoma.org). – MCG

### Hair care cont’d from p. 3

hair dye to fade more quickly.

- Consider highlights over all-over hair lightening/colouring. With highlights, there will be fewer coloured portions of your hair and less opportunity for lightened hair to turn brassy. Stylists can add enough highlights to make the total effect appear much brighter.
- Use a toner or correctional “purple” shampoo. Toning products rely on colour wheel technology. Opposite colours on the wheel cancel each other out. Orange and yellow (brassy) hues are opposite blue and purple. Therefore, using special shampoos that contain blue and purple pigments will offset brassy hues. Don’t worry, your hair won’t turn violet with recommended use.

Summer hair can retain its vitality and colour with some easy steps. Speak with a local stylist about other ways to maintain beautiful hair colour all summer long. – MCG



# 5 foods that promote eye health

A nutritious diet is often touted in relation to its link to maintaining a healthy weight and reducing risk for chronic disease. Though healthy foods certainly provide each of those benefits, a nutritious diet also can protect vision.

The World Health Organization estimates that at least 2.2 billion people have a near or distance vision impairment, and roughly half of those instances could have been prevented or have yet to be addressed. Vision loss is often characterized as a natural byproduct of aging, and the National Institute on Aging notes that it's normal for individuals to notice changes in their vision as they age. But it's a mistake to think there's little people can do to protect their long-term vision. In fact, a nutritious diet can be a great ally as individuals aspire to protect their long-term eye health. According to the Optometrists Network, a collective that includes clinical optometrists and respected researchers, the following are five foods that can help people protect their eyes.

1. Fish high in omega-3 fatty acids:  
Omega-3 fatty acids help with vision development and can reduce a per-

son's risk of developing dry eye, a condition marked by chronically dry eyes that either don't produce enough tears or produce tears that cannot adequately lubricate the eyes. Various types of fish, including salmon, anchovies, herring, and trout, among others, are high in omega-3 fatty acids. Individuals who don't like eating fish can consider various nuts and legumes, such as walnuts, lentils and peanuts, which all contain omega-3 fatty acids as well.

2. Seeds: Flax seeds, chia seeds, hemp seeds, and sunflower seeds contain either omega-3 fatty acids or vitamin E, which the Optometrists Network notes can help to prevent age-related macular degeneration and cataracts.

3. Leafy green vegetables: WebMD reports that lutein and zeaxanthin are potent antioxidants that can help to prevent age-related eye disease and protect the eyes from the harmful effects of exposure to ultraviolet rays in sunlight. Leafy green vegetables such as collards, kale and spinach are high in lutein and zeaxanthin.

4. Sweet potatoes: Though their popular- *continued on p. 6*

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- Hand: Private hand surgery (Non RAMQ)
- Ophthalmology: Laser vision correction



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OUR DOCTORS



# What causes eating disorders?

Eating disorders are serious conditions that can negatively affect an individual's overall health. These persistent eating behaviours affect emotions and various systems of the body by creating nutritional deficiencies that put individuals' overall health in serious jeopardy. The heart, digestive system, teeth and bones all can be affected by eating disorders, and malnutrition may lead to other diseases. The Mayo Clinic notes that common eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder. Anorexia is characterized by not eating enough and excessively limiting calories. One also may use laxatives or dietary aids to shed pounds. Bulimia involves dangerous episodes of bingeing and purging, as well as restrictive eating during the day. Individuals with binge eating disorder eat quickly and consume more food than is necessary. Some continue to eat long after being uncomfortably full. No one fully understands what contributes to the formation of eating disorders. However, Psychology Today indicates eating disorders may emerge from a complex relationship between

personality traits, genes, childhood experiences, stress or traumatic events. Here's a closer look at some additional factors that may contribute to eating disorders.

### Cultural beauty standards

Men and women may believe they have to look a certain way to be considered attractive or accepted in society. Feeling the need to be a certain weight or body shape may influence how one eats or exercises to the point of extremes.

### Family history

Better Help, a mental health wellness site, says having a close relative with an eating disorder may be a risk factor for eating disorders. Prior history of constant dieting and dissatisfaction with body image are additional risk factors.

### Mental health issues

Another potential cause of eating disorders is a medical history that includes another mental health problem, including anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and drug abuse.

### Genes

The health and wellness resource New Health Advisor says studies have shown that genetics contribute to eating disorders. People with specific genotypes are at a higher risk of developing eating disorders.

### Personality traits

Individuals with certain personality traits may be at risk for eating disorders. Excessive persistence and rigidity, impulsivity, neuroticism, harm avoidance, perfectionism, and obsessive thinking are traits often seen in people with eating disorders.

### Stress

The Mayo Clinic says stress also can contribute to the formation of an eating disorder. Big stressors, like getting a new job, starting a family, leaving for college, or a loved one's illness, can increase risk of an eating disorder.

Eating disorders can have life-threatening complications. It is important to seek help immediately if any signs or symptoms become noticeable. – MCG

### Eye health, cont'd from p. 5

ity spikes in fall, sweet potatoes are available year-round. That's good news for sweet potato aficionados hoping to use diet to protect their eyes, as the Optometrists Network reports that sweet potatoes are high in beta carotene, which helps the eyes adjust to darkness. Sweet potatoes also are high in vitamin C, which may help individuals reduce their risk for cataracts.

5. Eggs: Like leafy green vegetables, eggs are high in lutein and zeaxanthin. The Optometrists Network also reports that eggs are rich in vitamins C and E and a good source of zinc. The presence of zinc is notable in relation to eye health, as it's been shown to help the body utilize lutein and zeaxanthin found in the yolk. Zinc also has been found to protect the retina from potentially harmful blue light and helps to increase the amount of protective pigment in the macula.

Many benefits associated with a nutritious diet are widely known. But even the most devoted healthy eaters may not recognize how much certain foods are helping to maintain their long-term eye health. – MCG

## WEI LI – ACUPUNCTURIST

*feel calm, less stress*



Wei is treating 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Medalist Madison Hubbell

Wei Li is an acupuncturist. Her training is extensive. Not only did she study medicine (she was a MD in China), she has her Bachelor-Masters in Chinese Medicine from Beijing University of Chinese Medicine, and she has a Ph.D. in Physiology and Endocrinology (Université Laval). Today, she treats issues ranging from sleep challenges, allergies, menstruation, infertility, menopause, PMS and sports injuries. She worked for athletes who went to the Beijing and Pyeongchang Olympics. Many of her clients come for 'wellness.' She explained that "acupuncture is the insertion of very thin needles through your skin at strategic points of the body. A way of balancing the flow of energy, it is based on the belief that the life force (qi/chi) circulates within the body in lines called the meridians."

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# Cabot Square entrance to Atwater Metro station closed 'to ensure safety'

By JENNIFER BALL

The Atwater Metro entrance in Cabot Square has been closed for security reasons until April 30, after the *Independent's* press time.

The Metro entrance is found in Cabot Square at the corner of Atwater Ave., and St. Catherine St., and is east of Westmount's border with downtown.

The Montreal Transport Company (STM) told the *Independent* that it has now closed it to safeguard Metro users and its staff.

Amélie Régis, a public affairs representative at the STM, told the *Independent* on April 23 that "...due to the current social context and the latest measures put in place to ensure the safety of its staff and customers, the STM has decided to authorize the temporary closure of the Cabot kiosk. This closure is in effect at all times up to and including April 30. Atwater station remains accessible from the main entrance [in/near Alexis Nihon Plaza].

"This closure will help reduce the incidence of mischief and undesirable or dangerous behaviour, such as intimidation and drug use. The safety of our customers and staff, as well as the integrity of our infrastructure, remains our primary duty as a common carrier."

The statement was provided in French and was translated using DeepL.

A spokesperson for the Montreal police's Station 12 on Stanton St. said "the closing of the Metro was an STM decision.



A sign on the Atwater Metro station doors photographed April 24 showing it as closed. This entrance is found in Cabot Square at the corner of Atwater Ave. and St. Catherine St.

We did not ask for it...

"For Square Cabot, it's generally known that there's a lot of a lot of vulnerable people that hang out in the area because the number of resources that are there."

The police spokesperson said "...the majority of our clientele is usually from Chez Doris and Resilience..."

The Metro entrances on de Maisonneuve and via Alexis Nihon remain open.



The Atwater Metro station in Cabot Square on April 24.



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Hockey player-of-the-month for March  
Eva Clark pushes herself  
to be best she can on the ice

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

This season, the U11A girls' Westmount Wings hockey team had "quite a run," according to Andrew Maislin, president of the Westmount Minor Hockey Association and the city's operations manager for the Westmount recreation centre (WRC).

The team finished sixth out of 13 teams in La ligue interrégionale de hockey féminin (the Interregional Girls' Hockey League) in which the Westmount Wings play as part of the Lac St. Louis region. And, he added, "a big part of the team's success can be attributed to Westmount's player of the month for March," he explained. This is Eva Clark.

"Eva is one of those players who always pushes herself to be the best she can be on the ice," he explains. She is an all-round player who "works hard to ensure she always knows where the puck is on the ice and always seems to be in the right position regardless of how the game progresses."

Both of the team's two games played in the Lac St. Louis Regionals went to a shoot-out and Eva "played a vital role in getting them to that stage."

**Earned respect**

Eva has been involved with Westmount's minor hockey girls' program since its inception three years ago. By playing on the competitive teams, she has developed into a strong player with "tons of resolve," Maislin explained. "She has earned the respect of her peers, coaches and administration as a result of her hard work."

The city's player-of-the-month recognition program for young players was initiated by Maislin in 2019 (see November 19, 2019, p. 1). Its objective was to highlight player contributions and acknowledge the



PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT SPORTS AND RECREATION.

opportunities and skills that minor hockey, and sports as a whole, can offer young people in developing sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline.

These, he explained at the time, can be transferred into other areas such as academics and community service.

City of Westmount's Semi-Annual  
Awards Night – spring 2024

Wednesday, April 17 at Victoria Hall  
For photos, see April 23, p. 10

**Most Improved Skating Participants:**

**Beginner** – Jaclyn Werbitt,  
Beatrice Veil-Flores, Vincent Yanzhi Hu,  
Sota Fujii  
**Intermediate** – Benjamin Errunza-Bhat,  
George Hao Cheng Wang  
**Advanced** – Zoey Jadoul  
**Powerskating** – Caroline San Gregorio

**Indoor Soccer Sportsmanship Awards:**

**Boy's Soccer** – Hugo Chemin,  
James RH Brown, Felix Jacot  
**Girl's Soccer** – Aya Karam Okawa,  
Yanlin Huang

**Basketball Sportsmanship Awards:**

Leo Dalfen, Alex Barbarosie-Tsang,  
Adelaide Lumbroso

**Girls Instructional Hockey  
Most Improved Player Award:**

M13/M15 – Elizabeth Colby

**Boys Instructional Hockey  
Most Improved Player Award:**

M9 – Jacob Tashis Trudeau  
M11 – Jude Guyot  
M13/15 – William Depow

**Westmount Minor Hockey  
Players of the Month:**

**October:** Luca Robinson – M13-B  
**November:** Mason Kaine – M9-3  
**December:** Jasper Brandt-Synnott –  
M13-B & M15-B  
**January:** Isaac Urman – M11-B  
**February:** Noah Vadish – M15-A  
**March:** Eva Clark – M11 AF  
**April:** Stella Morganstein – M13 BF

**Junior A Inter-City Sportsmanship  
Award:** Jerome Claux

**Junior A Inter-City Most Improved  
Player Award:** Teva Cooperstock

**M18 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:**  
Ayden Dorey

**M18 Inter-City Most Improved Player  
Awards:** Spencer Kaplan

**M15 Inter-City Sportsmanship Award:**  
William Lovi-Brosseau, Prince Zhang

**M15 Inter-City Most Improved Player  
Award:** Calvin Ho, Ethan Lubarsky

**M13 BF Inter-City Lac St Louis  
Finalist Banner:**

Anabel Abou Nassar, Astrid Goth,  
Elizabeth San Gregorio,

Eloise Rodriguez, Emanuelle De Louya,  
Keiran Martin, Kum Ying Chloe Ho,  
Naomi Abikhzer, Reagan Webster,  
Rose Niunka, Stella Morganstein,  
Alice Wilner, Annalynn Samisack,  
Hazel Wilner, Stella West,  
Zoe Juliette Lamontagne.  
Coaches: Franco, Caroline,  
Stephanie, Melodie and Adrien

**M13 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:**

Elizabeth San Gregorio, Lincoln Sala,  
Rain Wang

**M13 Inter-City Most Improved  
Player Awards:**

Astrid Goth, Benjamin MacDonald,  
Cameron Mossop

**M11 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:**

Sophie Mantha, Noah Fox,  
Nathan Kum Sum Ho

**M11 Inter-City Most Improved  
Player Awards:**

Kiara Francescucci, Shams Ahmad,  
Sutton Castle

**M9 Inter-City Sportsmanship Award:**

Angela Dong, Austin Zhang,  
Mathys Mossop, Walter Sala

**M9 Inter-City Most Improved  
Player Award:**

Sophia Zarrabian, Augustin Caron,  
Vincent Oberto, Lucas Fontaine

**M9 Inter-City Medal Presentation:**

**M9-1 Wings**  
Augustin Caron, Austin Zhang,  
Cenxu Wang, Jeremy Fattal,  
Kieran Tinker, Levi Nadler, Liam Haffar,  
Luca Martelli, Lucas Matthews,  
Shawn William Quinn-Iserhoff

**M9-3 Wings**  
Guanqiao Wang, Harrison Zilberberg,  
Hendrix Durocher, Lucas Fontaine,  
Mason Kaine, Peter Black, Trafford How,  
Walter Sala, Xavier Ince-Cushman.

**M9-2 Wings**  
Felix Plante, Jasper Iserhoff,  
Liam Zimmerman, Lucas Guilbert,  
Mathys Mossop, Milan Haffar,  
Solomon Prupas, Vicente Oberto,  
Yul Kim, Michael Ashafa

**M9-3F Wings**  
Alice Dodd, Angela Dong,  
Emma Khazzam, Hayley Frenkiel,  
Laurie Beaupré, Mila McConnell,  
Morgan Piccioni, Sofia Zarrabian,  
Varya Voytsekhovskiy



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## Bonnet and Beret kittens

Born in October 2023 in a barn from a feral mother, these two kittens are presently in foster care through Moustache Adoption de Chats cat rescue group volunteers.

Aptly named for their dark head markings that are like original little hats, Bonnet and Beret are affectionate and playful. They are purring-and-cuddling machines who have brought great happiness to their foster family.

At a little less than seven months old, these beautiful kittens are memorable for their sweetness and original antics. It is good to have two sisters together. They got along from the start and they will help each other integrate in the new forever family dynamic.

Bonnet and Beret are very healthy bundles of joy, up to date with their kitten inoculation program and are spayed.

Please do not hesitate to contact the adoption volunteers through their Facebook and Petfinder presence.



Westmount  
A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

## Young Miss Picotine

How to resist this young miss? Picotine is just about a year old, an adorable terrier type with spunk and curiosity.

She is presently at the Montreal SPCA kennel, hoping that you will come by for her. Picotine was born deaf, as some white dogs or cats are as well. With a sensitive, affectionate interaction and a use of visuals in training environment, she could catch on to the home routine in a jiffy.



Bonnet and Beret are cross-referred on the Moustache Adoption de Chats Petfinder website at Bonnet's identification number, 70554680, where you have additional photographs of them both.

Please do not hesitate to fill out the application form on the information page

or write to them directly at their email moustacheadoptiondechats@outlook.com. As kitten sisters and companions, Bonnet and Beret adore each other and are happy together. Please apply to have them join your family and bring them home.

Your neighbour, Lyssanne



Picotine is very healthy, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped.

Please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, scroll to Picotine's information page from her identification number, 2000080056, then plan a visit by taking note of their opening hours daily, from Monday to Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm

and Saturday and Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. It is located at 5215 Jean Talon St. West in Côte des Neiges, H4P 1X4.

Picotine has a beautiful personality and will enjoy family life with you. Please do not hesitate to drop in to visit her and discuss adoption with the coordinators.

Your neighbour, Lyssanne

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Police Report

Retail burglars strike again on Sherbrooke St.

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Crime prevention officers at the Montreal police’s Station 12 on Stanton St. are hoping to come up with a new deterrence strategy following a string of break-ins at high-end fashion boutiques on Sherbrooke St. between Claremont and Victoria where owners are dealing with mounting burglary losses.

In the latest incident, according to Station 12 community relations officer Constable Mike Yigit, a suspect arrived outside the rear entrance at the Arc’teryx outdoor clothing boutique at 4868 Sherbrooke around 5 am on April 24.

After breaking a window and entering, the suspect spent up to 15 minutes inside, then left with an unspecified amount of merchandise.

The perpetrators even planned their get-

away. “There was a car waiting for them in the back,” said Yigit, adding that it was the second time the Arc’teryx store was burglarized recently.

This was the latest in a recent series of burglaries on the Sherbrooke St. commercial strip.

As previously reported, there was one on April 12 at 4912 Sherbrooke. Nearby residents reported hearing a banging noise around 4 am. When police arrived, they found the boutique’s front glass window had been smashed and merchandise was stolen.

A few weeks earlier, and as previously reported, on March 23, two male suspects pulled off a heist in broad daylight.

Around 3 pm, they walked briskly into another nearby high-end retailer, grabbed clothes off the hangers and walked out with nearly a dozen designer women’s

bathing suits with a value of around \$400 each.

Yigit said he and another Station 12 officer were on the scene of the incidents last week checking security cameras for video evidence of the suspects as well as the vehicle that was used for the getaway.

So far, there’s been no spillover onto Westmount’s second high-end shopping area along Greene Ave., he added.

Shoplifter detained  
by 5 Cinq Saisons staff

Greene Ave. hasn’t been completely incident-free though, according to Cst. Yigit.

He said that around 5 pm on April 19, staff at Les 5 Saisons food store on Greene detained a shoplifting suspect who was alleged to have stolen a bottle of wine.

Police from Station 12 arrested and processed the suspect, who was released pend-

ing a later court hearing.

Vespa joy-rider nabbed

An Upper Lansdowne homeowner away for the weekend and whose garage isn’t connected to the house didn’t notice when someone broke into the garage sometime between April 19-20 and stole a Vespa scooter.

The theft might have gone unnoticed longer than it did. However, two Montreal police officers in Montreal’s Plateau-Mont Royal district stopped the Vespa to check the driver’s licence and registration papers.

After verifying the vehicle’s licence plate, they determined that the owner wasn’t even aware the scooter was missing. While the owner didn’t know the suspect, the police initially believe it was a case of “joy-riding,” rather than the work of organized vehicle thieves.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (GENERAL MAIL)

WESTMOUNT GROWS BANANAS,  
BUT WHERE TO THEY GO?

Deep in the Westmount greenhouse lies a marvelous banana tree. Early last week, I overheard a little boy asking his dad if he could eat one of the bananas. Eventually, this made me wonder: what happens to the Westmount bananas?

Zooming over to the librarian to ask, they informed me that Public Works, which manages the greenhouse, would have the answer to my question. Needless to say, I called them, and was instructed to speak with a member of the horticulture department.

Upon leaving a voicemail, I waited patiently for their response. The coming days felt like an eternity, and my question is still unanswered.

Secrets surround the Westmount banana tree, and so I reach out to you, readers of the *Independent*, amateur detectives, and ordinary citizens alike, to help me unpeel this mystery...

ANDRES CABRERA RUCKS, SHERBROOKE ST.

ENGLISH IS NOT A THREAT –  
AND FRENCH IS NOT  
THREATENED

Many politicians and political commentators have maintained that the French language in Québec is threatened. Is this correct? Let us examine the premises on which this conclusion has been reached...

(1) Premise #1: **The use of English is a threat to the French language.** This prem-

ise seems logical, but is it backed up by facts? The experience of small nations that have high English literacy rates (source: Wikipedia) and have nonetheless been able to maintain flourishing native languages is illustrated below:

Country	Population (millions)	English Literacy
Austria	9.0	73%
Belgium	11.6	61%
Denmark	5.9	86%
Finland	5.5	70%
Netherlands	17.7	90%
Norway	5.5	88%
Sweden	10.7	89%

The key take-away from these statistics is that embracing the English language does not detract from maintaining thriving native languages. This issue has recently been raised in the excellent book of essays, *Le français en déclin? Repenser la francophonie Québécoise* (under the direction of Jean-Pierre Corbeil and Victor Piché).

(2) Premise #2: **The French language in Québec is in decline.** I have lived most of my life in Québec and I would say that the status of French has never been higher and the historical data backs this up. In 1971, 80 percent of Montrealers spoke French. By 2021, the numbers had dramatically increased to 90 percent (source: Statistics Canada).

(3) Premise #3: **Quebecers are very concerned about the status of French.** Again, this is very misleading. A recent Jean-Marc Léger poll (source: *Le Journal de Montréal*, August 26, 2023) asked respondents what

topics they discussed with their entourage. Social issues figured prominently (1. Price of food; 2. Extreme meteorological events; 3. Price of gas; 4. Interest rates; 5. Road construction and congestion). Only eight percent of people indicated that “*La situation de la langue française au Québec*” was a subject of discussion with friends and family!

As well, another of the essays (authored by Steven Therrien and Richard Marcoux) in the book, *Le déclin du français?* indicated that the phrase, *le déclin du français*, was not prevalent until 2019. Since then, media articles and references to this phrase have skyrocketed, up 100-fold! The Legault government was elected in 2018. I will let you draw your own conclusions on that...

Having said all that, are there other lessons that can be learned from all this? Yes, in my view, we should embrace learning English as other countries have done (Norway starts English instruction in grade one) to meet the challenges of the future workplace.

Let me give you a good example of bilingualism in action. Two brothers who studied medicine went to the USA to further their medical specialties. After acquiring these expertises, they both came back to Québec where they both rose to very eminent positions in Québec’s medical system. If they had not been bilingual, they would not have been able to go to the USA and Québec would have been much the poorer.

Lastly and as a philosophical comment:

what is the purpose of government? In my view, it is to create an environment in which each of its citizens reaches his/her full potential and aspirations. Thereby, Québec society benefits. To reach its full potential in a world where the international language is English, the Québec government should take steps to educate everyone in French and English. Embrace English. It is not a threat, but a key to a prosperous future.

I believe that we should encourage our federal and provincial representatives to question the premises on which the narrative that the French language is threatened is based.

We have to support and promote French so it can meet the challenges of an increasingly English world, but putting up barriers is not the right solution ...

DAVID TAIT, ST. MARGUERITE

IMBUED WITH MEANING

Your Police Report (April 2, p. 10) language was perfectly fine. Webster’s considers robbery, theft and stealing as synonyms. And the SPVM Station 12 stats show serious increases between 2012 and 2021 in “*crimes contre la personne*”, “*voles de fait*”, ... , and also between 2019 and 2021.

PDQ12\_Profils\_criminalité\_2021.pdf (spvm.qc.ca)

It is Henry Olders’ crime-friendly language policing (letter, April 16, p. 6) and conservative-voting scaremongering that are unwarranted.

ALEX SIMONELIS, SHERBROOKE ST.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (GENERAL MAIL)

### IDLING TRAINS IN RESIDENTIAL AREA UNACCEPTABLE



The fire alarm went off in our building recently. I didn't hear it. The building was evacuated. I did not hear the commotion. Three fire engines pulled up and the firefighters entered the building. Perhaps they banged on my door, but I did not hear a thing because my ears were snugly encased in a noise-cancelling headset. I did finally hear about this possibly life-threatening event the next day.

Why the earphones?

I live on Hillside and the EXO trains' engines' roofs sit level with my apartment, so I get maximum effect of both noise and fumes. From the time of the first train arriving at 7 am until the last departure at 10:30 am, and then again in the afternoon from 3 pm until 7 pm, and on a different

but equally disruptive weekend schedule, a steady progression of EXO trains are "parked," noisy engines running and spewing noxious diesel fumes, immediately behind St. Margaret's long-term care facility, the seniors residence at 80 Hillside and the multiple residential units stretching to Abbott (see photo).

Surely this violates environmental regulations regarding noise pollution and air pollution.

Why are they not already employing electric engines to diminish noise and pollution along a residential route?

We need a better solution for Westmount other than registering complaints and concerns.

CHRISTINE DOWNS, HILLSIDE AVE.

### WHAT ABOUT NUNAVUT ON CENTENNIAL MONUMENT?



The 1967 centennial monument in Westmount Park celebrates the 10 provinces and then two territories of Canada. I know I have been banging on for years without success for the inclusion of our third territory. Perhaps this year's 25th

anniversary of the foundation of Nunavut is the occasion to give it another try. There is a convenient space at the eastern/right end of the monument for the addition of a 13th emblem (see photo).

CHRIS LYLE, DE MAISONNEUVE

### ECLIPSE DAY, 2024

April 8, 2024 was a beautiful and sunny day, the day we were made aware of how dependent we are on two celestial masses, seen from our perspective as spheres in the sky.

We take them for granted, we love them, sing about them, write about them, seek them out and fear them, and study them without thinking much about how we would not be able to exist without them. In some languages, we even assign them a gender.

And every so often, they do something spectacular to be witnessed in different parts of the world. Something that looks to the poetic eye like an elegant dance. Something that astronomers, meteorologists and amateur sky watchers explain in great length as a natural, scientific phenomenon. Something that sends enthusiasts to travel far and wide, something that leaves us in awe.

A total solar eclipse.

The sun and the moon.

The information about this coming event was abundant, what we can expect to see, how to construct devices to see it safely, its path of travel and where to experience it. Large crowds were expected, telescopes set up. And then the questions: Will we even see it? What if the sky is covered in clouds?

I did not pay a lot of attention to all of that, and I did not purchase the special viewing glasses. But the evening before, I emptied my box of cereal and constructed a viewing box according to instructions on the internet. Tomorrow was going to be a cloudless, blue sky.

So, April 8, in the early afternoon, equipped with my cereal box and a warm sweater (they said it was going to be cold). I took the elevator up to the rooftop on the tenth floor of my building.

There were already two neighbours there, we shared a picnic table and engaged in friendly conversations. Slowly, more and more people arrived, a family made a picnic out of it, and soon there were around 200 of us on the rooftop.

I am sure there were just about all the colours and ages of this world represented. There were children, Millennials, Gen Xers, Zoomers..... and the three of us who were first to arrive.

There was beer, some vaping, somebody offered dried fruits and nuts all around, some had extra viewing glasses to give away. (They did work better than the cereal box.) Lots of conversations, laughter, happy anticipation, a party.

Here we are, a mixed group of humanity, assembled on the rooftop, in West-

mount Quebec, Canada, on the sphere called earth. The sphere where we live, where we ignore each other, support each other, and compete with each other for just about everything one can compete for. Where we despise each other, love each other, fear each other, and embrace each other.

But for a few moments, on this rooftop, we witness together this incredible spectacle of the moon passing before the sun.

As the black disc of the moon slowly and steadily traverses, it is getting cold. Somebody gives someone a shawl. It is getting dark, and darker, the ring of light can be seen on the horizon. We all stand. It feels eerie, it is quiet.

And then, clapping, cheering, an ovation.

We have witnessed the total solar eclipse in our corner of the world. We have watched from our sphere of earth the spheres of the sun and the moon passing one another.

As the cold wind dies, and the sun shines warm and bright again, we leave the rooftop, picking up where we left, ignoring each other, supporting each other .....

But perhaps we will reflect on how small we are in relation to this awesome power our universe and yet, how big we are to have the power to bestow such indescribable sorrow and also happiness upon each other.

Maybe we will remember and cherish that moment, April 8, 2024, on a rooftop in Westmount – where, for a short time, we all stood in wonder, together.

HEIDI VERMEULEN, METCALFE AVE.

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WHA lecture

# Montreal, the centre of Canada’s railway evolution

By RALPH THOMPSON

The Westmount Public Library continued its 125th anniversary activities by hosting David Hanna April 10 in the Westmount Room.

The lecture was completely sold out days beforehand, but that didn’t stop several people from lining up in the hopes of attending. Everyone was able to squeeze in and 65 people attended.

The lecture entitled “Montreal: A Magnet for Railways 1836-1915” gave a small glimpse into the complex and captivating history of Canada’s railway system as it relates to Montreal – without digging into the tram networks, “that’s a whole other lecture” quipped Hanna.

The one-and-half-hour presentation was full of fascinating facts and humour, and stories of intrigue and tragedy.

Hanna’s background

Hanna’s broad qualifications include studying at Collège Stanislas and then urban planning at McGill University, where he earned a PhD. He is a retired UQAM urban planning professor and has a vast knowledge of history and geography. He is also a member of Westmount’s Planning Advisory Committee (PAC).

Hanna underscored the very important role that the railway system played in the development of the economy in the 19th and early 20th century. The sometimes arbitrary decisions to expand a precarious railway network across Canada and into the USA were juxtaposed with a highly competitive and ruthless competitive approach.

The Grand Trunk Railway, managed out of London, England, initially chose the imperial track gauge, which would later require an extensive upgrade to the US standard gauge tracks (4’ 8½”). The Grand Trunk built the Victoria Bridge in 1854, the



Guest speaker David Hanna is presented with a bottle of the city maple syrup by Westmount Public Library staff member Daniel Míguez de Luca.

longest bridge in the world at the time. Its granite support piers are still in place today.

The original bridge was a single-track metal covered bridge that was upgraded to today’s double-track configuration in 1898 by building on top of the old tracks without missing one day of operation.

Trains at the time had no automated braking system. An individual had the incredibly dangerous task of operating each brake with a manual crank while standing on the top of a carriage.

Signalling was crude, leading to many accidents, including a tragedy not far from Montreal, when a train missed an “open drawbridge” sign and plunged into the Richelieu River, killing 100 German immigrant passengers.

By 1875, immigration, mainly to the USA, was big business for Montreal and the introduction of electric lights enabled the port to operate well into the night.

The Quebec government introduced

competition in 1874 with the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway opening up the first tracks to Ottawa, north of the river. It innovated by laying railway tracks across the ice on the St. Lawrence River in winter, something that could not be done today.

Enter the CPR

In the meantime, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald and mining magnate Alexander Galt launched the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) to unite the newly established confederation with a transcontinental railway.

After a slow start, the government recruited William Van Horne to develop a coast-to-coast railway, which he miraculously completed in five years between 1881 and 1886. Van Horne went on to become the president of the CPR and chairman of the board.

He expanded its transportation network to include trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific

ship lines, and grand French *château*-style hotels like the Château Frontenac in Quebec City and Banff Springs Hotel in Alberta.

The carriages and hotels were lavishly decorated and passengers experienced extravagant luxury. All this at a time when most communication was mail transported by land and sea.

The CPR also established the Angus yards to manufacture and repair the railcars, employing as many as 5,000 people in Montreal.

Grand Trunk falters

The London-based Grand Trunk was now falling behind, so in 1895 an American, Charles Hays, was brought in to manage it. He demanded full authority and quickly became a hated person by his employees.

He expanded its network across Canada and established lavish hotels to compete with the CPR. But in 1912, Hays became one of the victims of the *Titanic* sinking and eventually the Grand Trunk ran into financial difficulty, was nationalized and became Canadian National Railway (CNR).

Hanna finished his presentation by quickly describing Canadian Northern Railway, which became another competitor in 1899. It originated in Manitoba in the 1880s and was egged on by provincial governments and in particular by Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier, who wanted transcontinental competition to the CPR and its American counterparts.

To access downtown Montreal, Canadian Northern had to tunnel under Mount Royal, a daunting and expensive task that it hoped to fund by developing a modern garden city, now the Town of Mount Royal. But in 1916, the money ran out and it went bankrupt.

The audience had lots of interesting questions for Hanna. Daniel Míguez de Luca, librarian – programming and outreach at the library and organizer of the event, thanked Hanna and gave him a bottle of the city maple syrup to finalize an interesting and educational evening.





Thanks, April

# Dawson's sprinklers make for attractive icicles, icy sidewalk

By JENNIFER BALL

The temperature was below zero the morning of April 22, when the Dawson College water sprinklers went off to water the grass and shrubbery. The garden care caused some slick, icy sidewalks on the east side of Wood Ave. and the north side of de Maisonneuve.

By noon, the temperature had risen to 5°C. The sidewalk ice melted but not the ice on the grass or the shrubbery near the CEGEP's western perimeter fence.

Typically, late April weather in Montreal fluctuates between one degree and 12 degrees, according to weather and climate.com.

► Icicles on the shrubbery and ice on the grass by Dawson College's western perimeter fence, as seen April 22.



## Grants, cont'd from p. 1

by Dave Lapointe as director of the city's new division of Culture, Sports, Recreation, Culture and Social Development created at the council meeting December 18 last year (see story January 16, p. 7).

"This is part of my mandate, reaching out to the community and developing 'relationships' with local organizations and associations," he confirmed last week to the *Independent*.

Details of this partnership are expected to follow at next month's council meeting. Last year's Contactivity amount was \$82,400, preceded in 2022 by \$75,000. As

a result, it is the Atwater Library and Computer Centre that topped the approval list for 2024 so far.

According to the resolution moved by Councillor Elisabeth Roux, the recreation and cultural grants result from applications seeking support and reviewed by the administration in accordance with the city's policies on financial support for recreation and culture.

This year's grants in alphabetical order are followed by those approved for 2023 in parentheses:

- Atwater Library and Computer Centre: to help with its operating costs, \$37,500 (\$37,000);

- Centre Greene (the Greene Avenue Community Centre): to help finance its operating costs \$13,500 (\$13,000);
- Contactivity Centre: amount pending development of a partnership agreement (\$82,400);
- Visual Arts Centre: for services to the city \$6,000 (\$5,000);
- Westmount Battery artillery re-enactment group: \$2,000 (\$2,500);
- Westmount Historical Association: \$3,500 (\$3,500);
- YMCAs of Quebec – Westmount: \$20,000 for programs provided to the city (\$12,000).

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Students from The Study host (eco) leadership conference, visit Garderie Les Petits Anges



The Study hosted its annual All Girls Leadership Conference April 19, “an event that not only enriches our local Westmount community, but also resonates across the province,” according to Sarah Binns, the school’s director of communications and marketing. Over 300 grade 5 to 8 delegates from 18 schools in Quebec and the US attended this year’s rendition, which was entitled “Leading the Way to a Greener Future.” The conference is entirely conceived, organized and executed by students, Binns added.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE STUDY.



From left, The Study grade 7 students Elise Morin and Clementine Castle.

According to a school press release, “In a heartwarming initiative, The Study’s grade 6 and 7 student ambassadors visited La Garderie Les Petits Anges de Wesley [on NDG Ave. near Royal] to share their love of French through a reading buddies program called Les Amis de Lecture.” The release continued, “The Study is dedicated to nurturing bilingualism from the ground

up. The school believes in planting seeds of curiosity and cultural appreciation even in the youngest learners to foster early literacy and confident voices. This type of collaborative effort not only enriches children’s learning experience, but also cultivates empathy and leadership in the student volunteers, showcasing the power of community-driven education initiatives.”

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# Douglas' Open Minds raises \$530k for mental health research



## Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

The Douglas Foundation's Open Minds 2024 was held at Théâtre Paradoxe, blooming with tulips donated by Westmount Florist.

Gala chair was **Lisa Giannone**, CEO BFL Canada. Organizing committee members were co-chairs **Sarah Ivory** and **Louise Chagnon-Buchheit**, working with **Caroline Dillon**, **Susan Doherty**, **Marisa Giannetti**, **Alicia Hamilton**, **Leena Lakdawala**, **Marion Lefebvre-Buchanan**, **Laura Osborne**, **Michèle Plourde**, **Aphrodite Salas**, **Nancy Spafford** and **Jeannie Vondjidis**.

Doctors and researchers present from the Douglas included **Martin Lepage**, **Geneviève Sauv  **, **Mallar Chakravarty**, **Sylvia Villeneuve** and **Johan Cohen**.

The sold-out crowd listened to presentations from the Douglas Foundation's **Laura Fish**, CEO, and board chair **Maude Leblond**, as well as **Lisa Giannone**.

Beatrice Ristorante catered, offering its fabulous always-praised menus. Noted



Laura Osborne, Marisa Giannetti, Jeannie Vondjidis Miller, Aphrodite Salas, Caroline Dillon, Alicia Hamilton, Sarah Ivory, Nancy Spafford, Maude Leblond, Laura Fish, Marion Lefebvre-Buchanan and Marianne Couture.

guests included **Andrew Lassner**, CEO, Braincloud; **Ted Kalil**, senior portfolio manager, RBC Dominion Securities; **Dan Gabay**, CEO Montr  al West Island CIUSSS; and **Sarah Ivory** and **Guthrie Stewart**.

Douglas Foundation board members

present included **Brett Miller**, CEO of Canderel Group, along with his wife **Jeannie Vondjidis Miller**, partner Ascendis Consulting; **Phillipe Fortier**, chief legal officer and corporate secretary WSP and his wife **Nakin Plaski**; and **Natacha Zenie**, CEO/

CIO Eclix Family Office with her husband **Jean-Francois Marcoux**, managing partner White Star Capital.

Also noted were **Geoff Molson**, CEO of Group CH and **Kate Molson**; **Steve Kelly**, partner

continued on p. 22



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Laura Fish and Aphrodite Salas.



Philippe Fortier and Dan Gabay.

**Social notes, cont'd from p. 21**

Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP and his wife **Lindsay Matthews**, general counsel/corporate secretary at Nuvei; **Mary Gallery**, Westmount city councillor and **Tom Godber**, principal capital markets group Avison Young; **Aphrodite Salas**, the evening's MC, associate professor department of journalism Concordia University;



Guy Laframboise, Alicia Hamilton, Doug Hamilton, Frank Heidemann, Charles Porteous and Nicole Small.



Douglas Foundation board of trustees Caroline Côté, Philippe Adam, Roxanne Williams and Valérie Durand.



Andrew Lassner, Geoff Molson and Ted Kalil.

**Marissa Giannetti** and her husband **John Valentini** CEO Fiera Private Alternative Investments; **Scott Jones**, CEO Nova Steel; and **Tim Anderson**, senior portfolio manager BMO Nesbitt Burns and **Karen Anderson**.

Among the committee members present were **Alicia Latkovski** and **Doug Hamilton**, **Nancy Simard** and **Pierre Simard**, president/managing partner Champlain Financial Corporation, an event sponsor as was Rempart Asset Management repre-

sented by president **Doug Buchanan** with **Marion Lefebvre**.  
The Open Minds '24 evening raised \$530,000 to support cutting-edge mental health research at the Douglas Institute.

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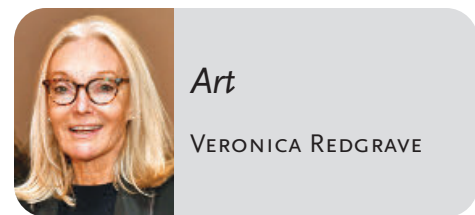
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\$160k raised since inception

# ‘Artists in Bloom’ raises money for Dawson athletes



Art

VERONICA REDGRAVE



Laurie Bussi res Cloutier’s frog piece sold for \$1,200!

annual event is held to raise funds for students. This year, proceeds will benefit the Dawson athletics department, supporting student-athletes. Over the past 26 years, Artists in Bloom has raised almost \$160,000 for various charitable initiatives.

No gold-gilded frames here. Rather, promising wide-ranging artistic adeptness for the 21st century art market.

My first feeling entering Dawson College was amazement. It is massive. Many floors. Many, many rooms.

Among the 1,100 students, it houses a “United Nations” troupe of talent. I saw their abilities first hand at Artists in Bloom, an exhibit featuring students from Dawson’s illustration, visual arts and 3D animation and computer-generated imagery programs.

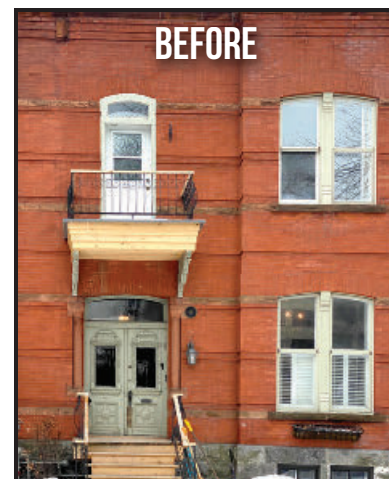
The artists created fabulous fun pieces. Their work premiered live as they painted and drew for two hours. Guests watched – and bought.

The event had great energy, thanks to workers including Christina Parsons, Megan Ainscow and Carey-Ann Pawsey. The works were auctioned off by Donna Saker from The Beat 92.5.

Laurie Bussi res Cloutier’s frog piece raised the highest bid of \$1,200. The



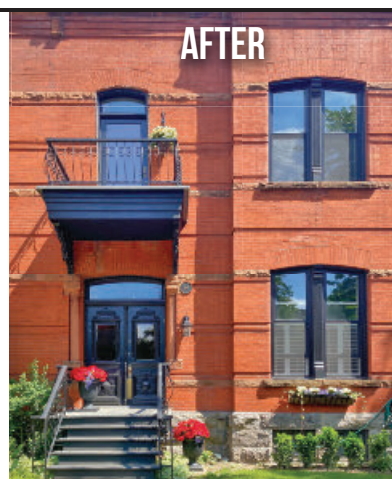
Dawson artists at work Artists in Bloom.



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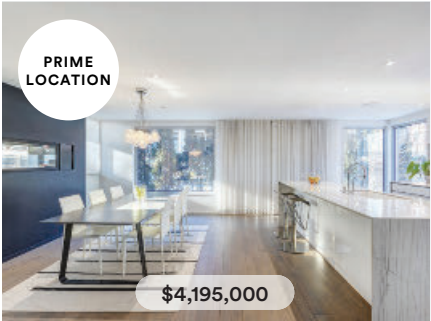


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