

# WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly

Vol. 18 No. 6a

We are Westmount

June 4, 2024



## Reconnecting



## Flipping over

The city of Westmount's Family Day took place in Westmount Park on a sunny May 25, giving people opportunities to reconnect. Left photo: Michael Tomiuk, left, is often noticed for his height: 6'5" – or "6'7" with his hair," according to his father. On the other hand, librarian Faith Holness, right, remembers him frequently reading at the Westmount Public Library, when he was presumably shorter. Right photo, two long lines stretched across the lower field for most of the day for the two Eurobungee stations. See p. 6-7 for more coverage.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.

*Expanded activities provided by banks, realtor*

## Plans set for Victoria village street festival June 7-9

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A line-up of features for the Victoria village merchants' festival and sidewalk sale Friday through Monday, June 7 to 9, includes several new attractions owing in part to added participation and sponsorship from three of the district's banks and a real estate group.

Among the scheduled attractions reported by event organizer Cynthia Lulham will be musicians, magicians, a circus act, dance group, face painting, dog activities, bubble booth and "fun" photo booths. The festival takes place 10 am to 5 pm on Friday and Saturday and from 11 am to 5 pm on the Sunday.

On the Saturday, a *continued on p. 26*



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Ville-Marie | 4100 Ch. de la Côte-des-Neiges, apt. 16 | \$950,000



# Season of heavy winds brings calls to Public Security, hydro crews

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Heavy wind May 27 caused wires to spark on Lansdowne and a branch to fall on Kensington, according to Public Security reports. This follows more wind a week earlier that brought down a large section of a tree on Dorchester (see story May 28, p. 4).

In the recent reports, Public Security officials said that a call had been received by the fire department for the sparking wires. No fire occurred but emergency crews from Hydro Westmount were called in to replace insulation on the wires that had “shifted” due to the high wind.

Also on the same date, a large tree branch from a neighbour’s tree fell into the

backyard at 252 Kensington, officials said. Hydro crews identified the wires as telecommunication wires.

## Two cars collide at Sherbrooke and Victoria

A city parking inspector reported May 28 that two cars had collided at Sherbrooke and Victoria.

This brought out public safety officers around 1:10 pm, Public Security officials said. On scene, officers found that south-bound traffic had been blocked by the mishap.

One was described as a BMW, whose front tire was severely damaged. The other was a Jeep. Both had been heading south.

# Family Day 2024 – most well attended ever?

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Westmount’s 47th annual Family Day in Westmount Park May 25, also part of the city’s 150th anniversary celebrations, was as popular as ever, bubbling over with community spirit and perfect weather.

Long lines accompanied most of the inflatable games, the Eurobungee stations, the pony and train rides, and the face painting booth set up in the gazebo.

### Petting zoo

The petting farm echoed with effervescent laughter and those serving hamburgers, candy floss and soft drinks were kept busy all day long.

The police and Public Security were peppered with questions while those who had received parking tickets could dole out

revenge by dunking a public safety officer.


The traditional and novelty races were a riot, starting with the three-legged sack race making good use of re-usable shopping bags, the (human) wheelbarrow race, the “cup of water on the head” race, the demanding egg-and-spoon race and the tug-of-war – all very competitive but good fun.

### Tossing eggs

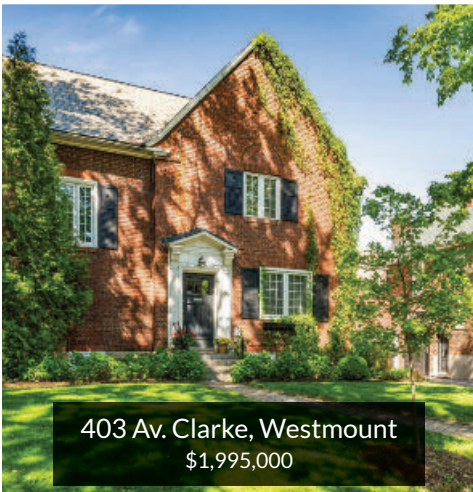
Lots of people were scrambling to participate in the challenging toss-the-egg competition where the distance between partners was increased until finally all the eggs were broken.

Former city councillor Patrick Martin commented that it was the most well attended Family Day ever. The *Independent* concurs in this estimate.


See photos on p. 6-7.



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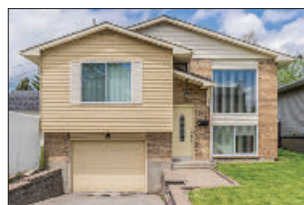
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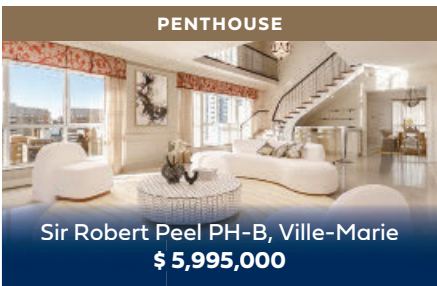
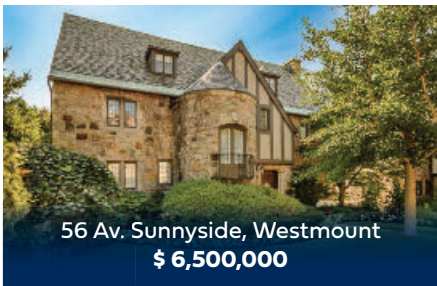
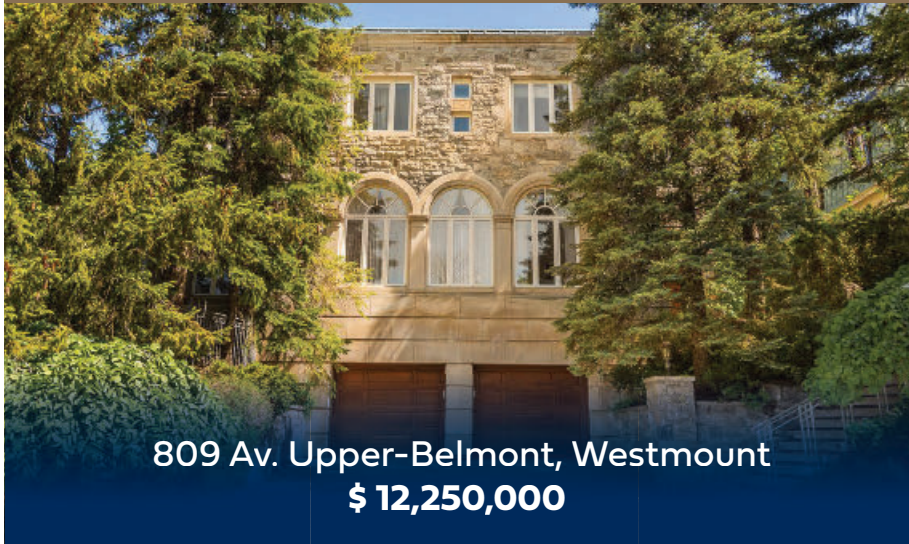


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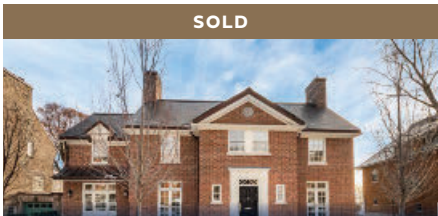
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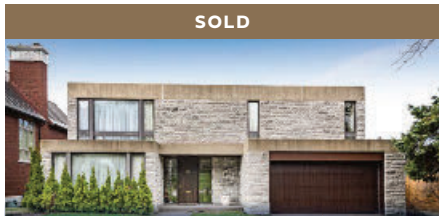
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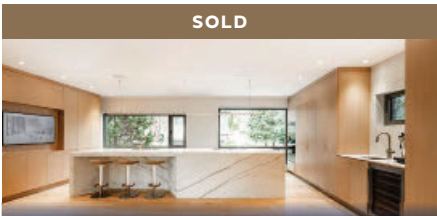
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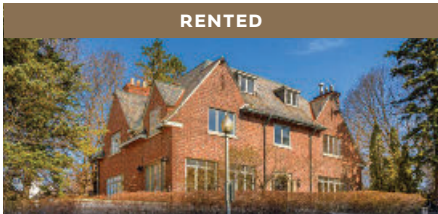
Crois. Summit Westmount

SOLD



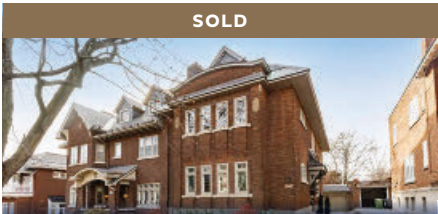
Av. Montrose, Westmount

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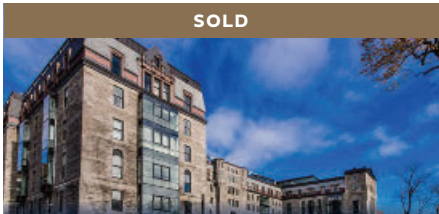
Av. Shorncliffe, Westmount

SOLD



Av. Murray Hill, Westmount

SOLD



M sur la Montagne, Ville-Marie †

SOLD



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# Family Day means municipal government, kids & animals!



Left photo: The Westmount Public Library and Community Events teams were sporting lots of cheery smiles and showing off their space-themed photo booth. From left: back row, Wendy Waying, library mascot Findlay, Daniel Míguez de Luca and Faith Holness; front row, Mélissa Denis-Daigneault, Rachel Conover, Zoe Morin and Emily Gamble. Right photo: Members of Westmount's environmental team, from left, Adeze Chukuou, Samuel T. and Julie Lagiorgia, had lots of information to hand out from garbage collection to green grants.



Left photo: Adrian was having fun on the donkey ride, even if it was only going around in a circle. Right photo: Three-year-old Ayla-Eloise clearly loves animals. She was fascinated by all the four-legged creatures in the petting farm.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.



## Family Day means traditional 'field day' games!



Left photo: Harper and Caroline sweep ahead of the pack in the three-legged bag race. Right photo: A very competitive wheelbarrow race.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.





EDITORIAL

BRAVO TO POLICE FOR SOLVING JEWISH SCHOOL SHOOTING – PLEASE CONTINUE!

Bravo to the Montreal police for making an arrest in connection with the three November 2023 shootings into the buildings of Yeshiva Gedola school (twice) and Talmud Torah Elementary School (once) in Côte des Neiges.

Reports vary as to whether the arrest is in connection with all three of these incidents, or just one or two.

Sadly, as police and all of us know, crime doesn't stop, including ones in this serious and upsetting category.

Just last week it was deduced that there were shots fired into the building of the Belz school at the Young Israel of Montreal synagogue in Côte des Neiges sometime before May 30.

I encourage Montreal police to solve this new case with the same speed and efficiency as the other, plus continue the no-doubt difficult work of solving remaining aspects of the school-building shootings and other similar unsolved crimes (e.g. firebombing of a synagogue in Dollard des Ormeaux November 6-7).

The upward trend in these incidents across the country is bad and worrying. I encourage all the relevant authorities (federal, provincial, agglomeration and municipal) to increase their vigilance.

David Price is the editor of the Westmount Independent.

NEW GARBAGE COLLECTION METHOD BAD NOW – WINTER WILL BE WORSE

No doubt those seniors among us who have mobility issues or cardio-vascular issues or pulmonary issues are very encouraged by Westmount's new garbage collection routine, which commenced on May 1. My neighbour, an 81-year-old who walks with the assistance of a cane, must be so very pleased that now he has to lug his garbage bag from the back of his house to the curb, and this in summer weather. What about in the winter? There will be ice and snow everywhere, and garbage collection only every two weeks, which means two bags, or in the case of my neighbour, two trips.

Prior to this so-called environmentally friendly move, which in reality is more economic than environmental, the garbage was picked up by the contractor who went to the back of our houses to collect the garbage. No longer, and I sincerely hope that this questionable new policy will not cause any danger or harm to those citizens who are at the highest risk.

JOE RUSSO, SHERBROOKE ST.

AS 'WYO' CONTINUES TO THRIVE, ACCOLADES NOW FALL OUTSIDE WESTMOUNT

It is with a large measure of satisfaction that past musicians, conductors, and parents have discovered that the "Westmount

Youth Orchestra" will be at Carnegie Hall this June. It has been invited to participate in the Viennese Masters Invitational Festival. This marks the first appearance of a Quebec youth orchestra at this prestigious event. It will perform alongside three other renowned youth orchestras from North America.

The one hitch is that this is the former Westmount Youth Orchestra. As readers might remember (see August 14, 2018, p. 1), the present mayor asked the orchestra to leave Victoria Hall following a city resolution that required 50 percent Westmount participation in all Westmount cultural activities.

This decision ended the orchestra's 23-year history of rehearsing in the community hall. It moved just across the border into Montreal to become the Orchestre des Jeunes de Mont Royal. Thus Montreal added to its repertoire of two symphonic orchestras, an opera company, a conservatoire, innumerable ensembles and festivals, music schools at all levels, and many performance spaces.

It was a short-sighted and hurtful decision to young musicians who had brought much recognition to Westmount at many music festivals and a tour in Germany. It exposed a blinkered appreciation of how a classical orchestra is formed.

Bravo to the orchestra and its director, Jean MacRae, for being able to regroup after this terrible setback. They deserve all accolades, while Westmount is certainly diminished.

ROGER JOCHYM, LEWIS AVE.

ROBERGE WORKS TO SHAME ANGLOS WITH INCORRECT STATEMENT

This press release was received by the Independent May 30

"If we give Minister Roberge the benefit of the doubt, then he made a mistake no minister should make. Either that," says Canadian Party of Quebec leader Colin Standish, "or, he is mendaciously misleading the public. And that, too, is unacceptable."

Earlier this week, Minister Roberge suggested that some anglophone students graduate high school and move onto CEGEP without knowing enough French. That line of argument flies in the face of the fact that, as statistics show, anglophone high school students score higher in French exams than actual French-speaking students do.

"That is a fact Roberge should be aware of," says Standish.

This is not the first time Roberge has been accused of lying. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when Roberge was Educa-

tion minister, he allegedly claimed that the public health authority signed off on his ministry's classroom air quality report, when in fact they had not.

"Now here he is scapegoating the anglo community to justify the government's heavy-handed language restrictions," says CaPQ president Liz Campbell.

"Clearly his current role requires him to change tack, sacrificing integrity for the party line," Standish says, arguing that the minister espouses different views as French Language minister than he did as Education minister.

"If the Quebec government believes that French is in decline, perhaps they should look to their own community's education," Standish says. "Anglophones seem to be doing just fine in French, and we have the numbers to show it."

Too soon?



As seen May 24 at St. Catherine, Dorchester and Clarke. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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# Light installation in Westmount Park puts ducklings, heritage value at risk



**ECOWatch**

HEATHER BLACK

On May 27, the city's Public Works department drained the pond in Westmount Park to install lights on the waterfalls. As this action has left ducklings high and dry, it is contrary to the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994. As lights and other changes also disregard heritage guidelines, many citizens are questioning city council's values.

## **Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994**

Children visit our much-loved Westmount Park ducklings daily. It is well known that preschoolers who bond with

nature are more attentive, creative and more environmentally active as adults. As the park is devoid of vegetation that supports insects or wildlife, our ducks are often nature's sole ambassadors. But with the recent loss of over 20 ducklings, who left the park in search of water, our children – and citizens – are heartbroken.

Under the Migratory Birds Convention Act, council has a moral – if not legal – obligation to protect our mallards. These regulations include the protection of nests – a nest of six eggs was moved in mid-April – as well as to maintain water levels. Citizen requests for water were made from mid-May onwards to the councillor and commissioner for parks and recreation, Mary Gallery. They were ignored and our nine remaining, high-and-dry ducklings are at increased risk from hawk attacks because swimming ducklings often become aware of birds of prey (e.g. by seeing their

shadows) in time to dive underwater. Without water, this simple defensive tactic is not possible.

The city has also ignored regulations that only permit maintenance work before ducks nest or in the fall after they leave. Activities must also avoid noise violations over 50 dB as well as other disturbances to ducks and ducklings.

Council's decision to add unnecessary lights – known endocrine disruptors in both wildlife and humans – as well as the "necessary" electrical work to install them, is both ill conceived and callous.

## **Westmount district National Historic Site of Canada**

As Westmount Park is a "cultural landscape" within a federally designated historic district, any additions must take into account heritage, park usage as well as current requests. Reference to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places* would protect unifying elements such as our Washington lamps – removed from the playground area – as well as ensure a permanent water supply to the pond from underground springs before work began.

Lights outlining the park waterfalls are also contrary to what the city describes as

the "spirit of Frederick Law Olmsted." The designer of Mount Royal Park and Central Park, Olmsted popularized scenic, pastoral landscapes with stately trees and designated conservation zones. This aesthetic was continued by his two sons, Olmsted Brothers, whose recommendations to city hall were adopted by the park's early designers.

Council's insistence on more lights disturbs Westmount Park's quiet tranquility. One neighbour called it a glitzy "Las Vegas gimmick" while another described it as a cheap ploy to hide the mud hills, exposed roots and peeling paint. Others are concerned with the number of trees felled. Park visitors, however, do agree that oversight – both federal and citizen – is needed to protect our heritage, landscape and waterfowl.

## **Environmental, democratic values ignored**

This council does not share our environmental, heritage or democratic concerns. By prioritizing lights over the lives of ducklings or the playground over trees, Council has sent the message that nature is disposable, children's feelings are irrelevant and that public consultation – and our opinions – don't matter.

## **Roslyn steps get some attention**



A large chip of concrete that had come loose from the steps between The Boulevard and Upper Roslyn (see May 21, p. 5) has been replaced by orange cone, as seen May 29. The gap left by its absence is still there.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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*Lights under waterfalls not to affect ducks: Cllr. Aronson*

# City fills Westmount Park’s lagoon, then drains it for electrical work, then re-fills it

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

On-and-off levels of water in the Westmount Park lagoon on the approach of summer have raised some concerns from park goers concerned about the pond’s use by wild ducks and their broods.

While the lagoon was empty for much of the spring, it was filled with water over Family Day, May 25, when many attendees walked by to witness its welcomed filling.

It wasn’t long lasting, however. By the afternoon of Monday, May 27, it had been partially drained. Word spread that this was for the installation of lights around the lagoon, alleged to be a negative for the ducks.

When asked what the city’s plan was concerning the installation of lights, Councillor Matt Aronson told the *Independent* that the plan was “only to install lights under the waterfalls.” This, he maintained, would not adversely affect the ducks. Aronson’s commissionership includes environment and sustainability.

This reply was followed by a posting on the city’s website May 27 reading: “The



The lagoon being filled, and being quite full, on May 25. It was full, including the lower part, the morning of May 27.

PHOTO: L. SWEENEY.



The lower lagoon the afternoon of May 27, left, and May 28. Ducks are present in both photos. Hands added by *Independent*.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

Westmount Park pond will be drained to allow for electrical work necessary for lighting installations. The work will take place during the week of May 27 and the pond will be filled again once the work is completed...

“The upper levels of the pond will not be emptied to allow the ducks to have enough water to float.”

As it turns out, strings of LED lights that were seen fully illuminated June 1 were to be kept illuminated, day and night.

Two sets outlining the larger falls near the bridge and the comfort station were lit in a “strong” blue while one at the smaller waterfall closer to the library was in a much paler blue-to-white. They are apparently programmable like Christmas lights.

The lagoon was indeed re-filled last week and remained full as the *Independent* went to press June 3.



Some of Westmount Park’s ducks, as seen May 30.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOIRA CARLEY.

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*Sebastian Samuel retires last week*

# City's first Communications director recalls growth of role, department

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After 15 years heading communications for the city, Sebastian Samuel retired last week as the director of what has grown over that time to become a full-fledged department that includes some six members.

"We worked hard to make it what it is today," he said, speaking of the role he played in its growth as initially the sole communications officer and joined a year later by Maureen Lafrenière from Community Events, whom he described as "my faithful partner in crime." She retired in February.

## Stand-alone department

The stand-alone department now organizes and oversees the city's website and many internal and external information platforms including the recent "citizen portal."

Over the years, Sebastian, as he is known to so many dealing with the city, continued working throughout the COVID years "to get the work out and adapt to the numerous projects we were subject to. What was great was that we persevered."

## COVID

He describes COVID as one of the principal challenges along with many changes presented by the upgrading of the city's website and involvement in social media, working in conjunction with the IT department.

The most recent one, he explained, is the creation of a citizen portal as part of "new tools making is easier for citizens to get information."

It was a year ago, at the council meeting of June 5, that Sebastian Samuel was appointed the city's first ever director of the Communications office as it was elevated to the level of a department (see story June 13, 2023, p. 7). Other members of the department now include Pia Savoie, Ashley Baker, Mugisha Rutishisha, Anniq Dufour and Rijha Bhattacharjee.

Asked what challenges his years with the city had presented, he told the *Independent* that "the department was in constant flux, which made it new every day. And I like it that way. Challenges are just issues to be solved."

Challenges, he continued, "are small mountains that we reach the top of at least 15 times a day. No huffing, no puffing, just smiling all the way."

What does he have planned after retirement from the city? Back to his roots in graphic design, which he did before joining the city, he replied.



Sebastian Samuel, right, was appointed by city council June 5, 2017 as division head for Communications, reporting directly to then city director general Mike Deegan. Awaiting his appointment with him were, from left, brother Sherman Samuel, mother Lenore Attzs, and then 12-year-old son Markus Samuel.

PHOTO: L. SWEENEY



Sebastian Samuel on June 10, 2023 not far from his office at city hall. He had just been named the city's first director of Communications.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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Friendly, active Lance needs a foster family

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Lance could benefit from a daycare program to help encourage socialization. Lance is a child who enjoys bedtime stories as part of his nightly routine.

Lance is an active age-appropriate child who could benefit from a stable routine as

he responds well to a predictable structure.

Potential foster parents should be open to supporting family contacts.

The ideal foster family would be that of the black community and who would be open to caring for Lance on a long-term basis or make a commitment to care for him as long as needed.

Interested foster parents should contact Batshaw Youth and Family centres and inquire about Lance. We can be reached at 514.932.7161 ext. 1139.

Update on Contactivity move

Seniors' centre now looking for office space, too

The *Independent* learned last week that the offices of the Contactivity seniors' centre will also be required to relocate. As already reported (May 28, p. 1), the centre's programs and activities are moving from Westmount Park United Church to Victoria Hall and the Westmount recreation centre (WRC), both of which are owned and operated by the city.

While it was initially believed that the move of the office would not be required, Benita Goldin, the centre's director general, said last week that as things have evolved, the centre is now looking nearby for office space.

She would announce the new location once this is found. The move is to take effect September 1.

City's McEntyre Writing Competition attracts 10 percent more participants



Excited prize winners

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Lots of excitement radiated around Victoria Hall May 29 for the announcements of the 2024 McEntyre Writing Competition winners. In the midst of the 150th anniversary of the city and the 125th of the library, the city-run competition was celebrating its 52nd edition.

Every school in Westmount participated, resulting in 1,207 grade 1 to grade 11 entrants contributing English and French stories and poems, up 10 percent over last year. To pick winners, 77 volunteer judges reviewed the anonymous material under the tutelage of chief judge Liz McCallum, who took over this year from Rosalind Davis. The theme was "The Library Speaks."

"I read so many imaginative stories about what happens when the library closes and the lights go out," said McCallum in her opening remarks.

"Books jump off shelves. They dance and sing.... I had to go into the library one

morning and was surprised that everything was so clean and tidy, and the books were back on their shelves."

Andrew Katz, Dawson College English teacher and frequent volunteer at children's library events, often in costume, spoke about the benefits of writing, referring to a quotation on a wall of the Westmount Public Library's Westmount Room (itself the former children's library), "There's no frigate like a book to bear us leagues away."

Each group of winners was announced by city councillor Mary Gallery, commissioner of sports, recreation, parks and green spaces, while Councillor Elisabeth Roux and Councillor Kathleen Kez handed out the prizes: a collection of the winning compositions, a blank writing journal and a monetary gift.

The competition was established by then mayor Peter McEntyre in 1972 to encourage writing and foster a community spirit.

See p. 13 for the list of winners.



Councillor Elisabeth Roux, right, welcomed the audience of creative writers and their parents. From left, children's librarian Wendy Wayling, Councillor Kathleen Kez, Councillor Anitra Bostock, Councillor Conrad Peart, Andrew Katz, Rosalind Davis, chief judge Liz McCallum, Councillor Mary Gallery and library director Anne-Marie Lacombe.

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# McEntyre Writing Competition 2024 winners (in order)

## Grade One

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Lingyi Wan The Study  
Mollie Bowen The Study  
HM Vincent Landry Selwyn House School

## Grade Two

Marina Bellini The Study  
Rochelle Deng The Study  
Aila Parker Roslyn School  
HM Mia Weizmann Akiva School

## Grade Three

Yitong Li ECS  
Aya Ahdab The Study  
Crescent Sun Selwyn House School  
HM Hannah Ellis Akiva School

## Grade Four

Charlotte de l'Étoile Villa Sainte-Marcelline  
Nathan Sefkind Akiva School  
Sienna Martin The Study  
HM Caroline San Gregorio ECS

## Grade Five

Lise Cohen Académie Michèle Provost

Sienna Purmal École St-Léon  
Violet Iny Akiva School  
HM Sachin Aourpally Lower Canada College  
HM Vela Iordanova The Study

## Grade Six

Alexandre Maietta Selwyn House School  
Bianca Baccus ECS  
Edi Obenaus Selwyn House School  
HM Corina Silva Habra Villa Sainte-Marcelline  
HM Maria Doumit Villa Sainte-Marcelline

## Grade Seven

Samarth Bhan Westmount High School  
Tess Brunet École internationale de Montréal  
Sabrina Ullah Westmount High School  
HM Maya Itani The Study

## Grade Eight

Mandy Ding The Study  
Abby Iny Royal West Academy  
Sienna Malky The Study  
HM Lucas Cheung Selwyn House School

continued on p. 22



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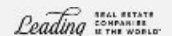


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# SWAT beats SWATTOO

SWAT and its “usually younger” “farm” team SWATTOO are best known in Westmount for their decades of fundraising for the Montreal Children’s Hospital Foundation and the CHU St. Justine Foundation (e.g. December 12, 2023, p. 24).

Even so, it was all competition and glory last month, when the Stanley Swatuski Cup was up for grabs April 10 in the final game of the teams’ 2023-24 series. The game was “a thriller,” according to SWAT player Fred Greenberg, with a 6-5 victory for his side.

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From left, back row: Howard Hoppenheim, Ken Shaw, Fred Greenberg, Alain Elbaz, referee Francis Lalonde, Vahe Djourian, Chris Dodson and Nic Matossian; front row: Larry Dionne, Dominic Agostino, Adam Cutler and Paul Cutler.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SWAT.

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Chair, Melanoma Canada

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Director, MUHC Melanoma Clinic

**Dr. Ari-Nareg Meguerditchian,  
MD, MSc, FRCS(C), FACS**  
Scientific Director, St. Mary’s Research Centre

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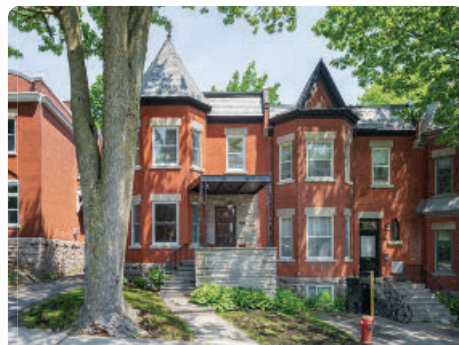
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28 AV. ARLINGTON, WESTMOUNT  
4+1 BEDS, 3+1 BATHS | \$2,495,000



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727 AV. UPPER-ROSLYN, WESTMOUNT  
4+1 BEDS, 3+1 BATHS | \$2,348,000



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607 AV. ROSLYN, WESTMOUNT  
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7 RUE ELLERDALE, HAMPSTEAD  
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## Public Works resolves Clandeboye resident's complaints Parked car makes lane 'inaccessible' for garbage pick-up

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Is the lane behind houses on Clandeboye accessible to garbage trucks or not?

This was an issue encountered recently by at least one resident of row houses on Clandeboye as part of the city's new garbage collection processes, which started May 1. This requires waste material to be picked up from the street side of all houses unless they back onto a lane that is not identified among those being inaccessible to the regular trucks.

Sara Pedersen told the *Independent* she had checked the city's map of inaccessible lanes so was mystified on discovering a city notice in her mailbox one day saying the lane was not accessible for pick-up. And this was after the lane had already become "a mess" from uncollected garbage.

She said she had kept an eye on the new rules and had never seen Clandeboye lane marked as inaccessible "until today," a decision she said had been made "overnight without even notifying our city councillor."

Following emails to Mayor Christina Smith and Councillor Kathleen Kez May 23 as well as phone calls back and forth with Public Works, she explained that the

inaccessibility issue appeared to have resulted from a car parked at the rear of an apartment building on Dorchester rather than the size of the lane.

"The Clandeboye lane is large, has recently been given a facelift and we have never had issues with garbage pick-up in the 20 years I have lived in this house."

**Problem now solved**

On May 30, however, she reported that "the problem has now been resolved after review and I have been told that cars will no longer be allowed to park" where they were. This enables residents of at least some 18 houses backing onto the lane to continue to have their garbage collected from the rear, a particular need for many older residents who would have problems carrying their garbage through the house.

Pedersen recalled how about 10 years ago parked cars at the same location had also proven to create issues until the parking area had been found illegal and resolved.

She said that in her recent interaction with the city she had tried to be "respectful" and attributed this in part to the successful outcome.

Councillor Kez said that "a number of residents had voiced their complaints, causing the city to look into the garbage contract and find that Clandeboye lane was never specified as being inaccessible." As well, Julie Mandeville, the city's director general, had walked the lane and Public Works had driven it in a truck.

In a case such as this, Kez added, "I encourage residents to voice their concerns to the administration. Residents' help is invaluable to a councillor. It's about teamwork."

**No barrier yet at Greene bridge**

Despite what a worker on site told us for last week's paper (p. 15), the protective barrier for the Greene rail bridge was not up when the *Independent* went by June 3. The bridge is notorious for being hit by overheight trucks, mainly from the south. It located between St. Antoine and Dorchester. All of the infrastructure for the new warning system and barriers appears to be in place, but no barrier yet. – WI.



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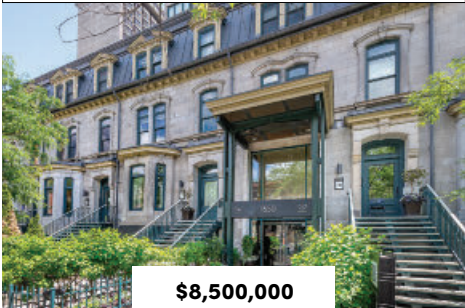


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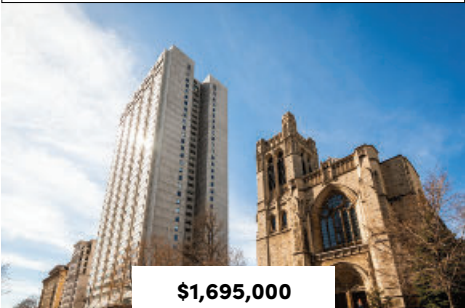
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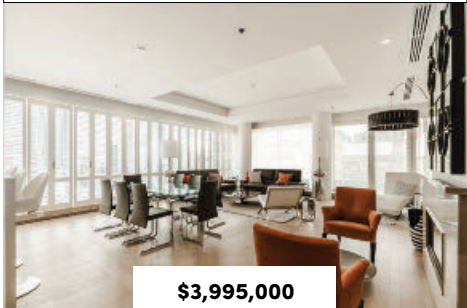
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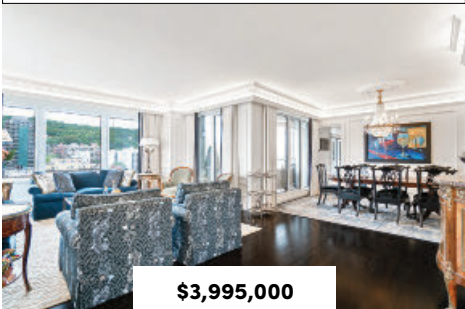
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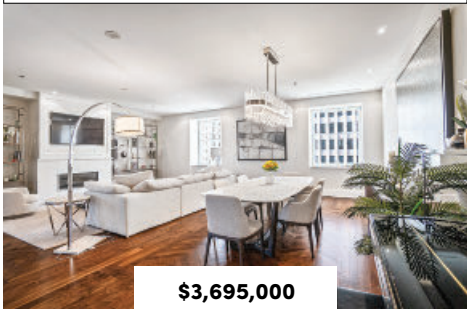
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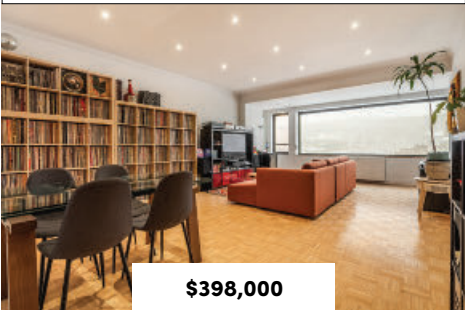
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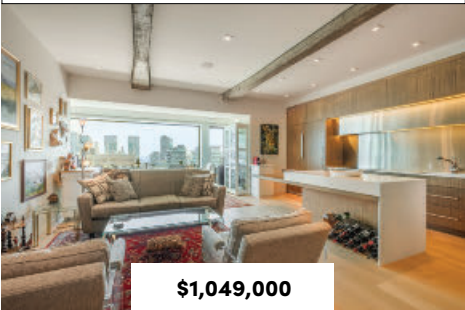
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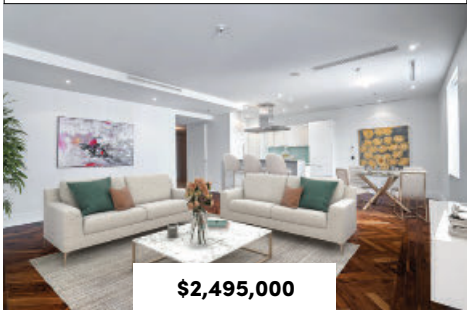
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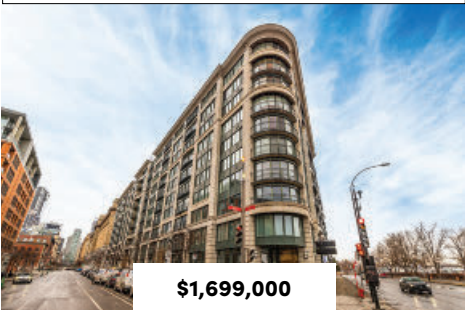
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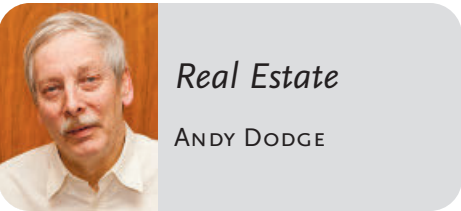
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Real Estate  
ANDY DODGE

*Note: The following article relates to the registration of deeds of sale for Westmount property in January and February, 2024, gleaned from city sources. A list of sales can be found on p. 19.*

The year 2024 started off very slowly, insofar as registration of real estate transfers are concerned, with only three house registrations per month, one condo sale and one share sale, both in February, plus a small land sale in January.

The six house sales ranged in price from \$1,385,000 to \$2,737,500, including none of the prices over \$3 million that we normally find – at least to some extent – in monthly transfer lists.

High & low houses

The highest price in the two-month period involved a stonefront row-house on Elm Ave., which sold for \$2,737,500 while having a municipal tax value of \$1,178,400, representing also the highest mark-up of the two-month period at just under 26 percent.

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# January/February transfers: Not much action

The lowest price, \$1,385,000 in February, transferred a house on Prince Albert Ave. opposite the park of the same name. That was slightly less than its valuation; four of the six home sales went for less, with the biggest mark-down at 646 Belmont Ave., which is now in a “state of renovation.”

Overall, the six sales saw \$11,307,500 for houses with a combined valuation of \$11,809,900, thus an average of only \$1,884,583 and an average mark-down of 4.3 percent.

The only condominium sale – signed in January – involved one of the flats in the former triplexes Clarendon Ave. above Sherbrooke St., which brought its owner \$755,000, 11.5 percent above its 2023 municipal valuation. Then in February, a 53-percent share of 461 Elm Ave. – which the owner said involves “Apartment One” – went for \$1,075,000, some 30 percent above the proportion of the duplex’s \$1,556,000 valuation.

Valuation roll looking flat

This summer’s sales registrations provide



485 Prince Albert, lowest price, \$1,385,000.

vide the basis for the next valuation roll to come into effect in 2026, so unless there is a serious change in the way the market

is moving, there might not be too much of a shift in valuations to be presented at that time.



483 Elm, highest price, \$2,737,500 and highest mark-up 25.7 percent.



646 Belmont, biggest mark-down, 24.8 percent. All photos May 24

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# Bought & Sold – real estate transfers in January-February 2024

ADDRESS	VENDOR	PRICE	2023 VAL	RATIO (±%)	MONTH
646 Belmont	Peter Brown & Margaret Graham	\$1,400,000	\$1,862,000	-24.8%	Jan
483 Elm	The Sanctuary Trust	\$2,737,500	\$2,178,400	25.7%	Jan
434 Lansdowne	estate Ivan Barry Pless	\$1,950,000	\$1,886,200	3.4%	Feb
485 Prince Albert	Helena Richards	\$1,385,000	\$1,530,600	-9.5%	Feb
29 Renfrew	Sheena MacLean & Suresh Thadhani	\$1,575,000	\$1,742,400	-9.6%	Jan
639 Roslyn	Arlene Cohen	\$2,260,000	\$2,610,300	-13.4%	Feb
CONDOMINIUMS					
430 Claremont	Francyne Morin	\$755,000	\$677,100	11.5%	Feb
SHARE SALES					
461 Elm, 53% <sup>1</sup>	Joanne Tremblay & Pierre Drapeau	\$1,075,000	\$824,680	30.3%	Feb
OTHER					
Land, Grosvenor	Cleophas Roussin & Comité de Gestion de la Taxe Scolaire	\$11,000	\$288,300	-96.2%	Jan

<sup>1</sup>Includes right of occupancy of Apt. 1. Valuation is 53 percent of \$1,556,000.

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Police Report

# Police investigating pick-pocketings on Victoria and Claremont

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Police at Station 12 on Stanton St. are advising Westmounters who shop along Sherbrooke, Claremont and Victoria to beware of the possible presence of a pick-pocket ring following two recent incidents that may be related.

As reported in the *Independent's* May 14 issue (p. 12), a woman leaving the TD Canada Trust branch at the corner of Sherbrooke and Claremont after withdrawing \$1,000 in cash was robbed by a trio of pick-pockets who followed her home and managed to steal the wallet from her purse.

In her complaint to the police, she said the three suspects who trailed her to her apartment building on de Maisonneuve Blvd. were the same as those she had seen earlier at the bank branch.

**New pick-pocketing incident**

In a suspected pickpocketing incident around the same area, a woman who was returning from shopping at the Metro supermarket on Victoria Ave. on May 28 filed a complaint with police at Station 12

that she was followed by two men who stopped her momentarily to ask for information.

"They approached her and asked if she had seen a dog," said Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit, reading from the incident report.

He said the victim, who was also headed towards de Maisonneuve Blvd., later surmised, after realizing her wallet was missing, that it may have been at that moment her wallet was stolen.

While Cst. Yigit was cautious, saying "there's no proof" the two incidents indicate an emerging pickpocketing trend in the Sherbrooke/Victoria/Claremont area, he said that he would be taking a look at images recorded by security cameras to help identify suspects.

He repeated his previous advice that vulnerable persons in particular should avoid carrying large amounts of cash, while being cautious of strangers who seem to be watching too closely.

**Cars vandalized**

Three teenage boys from Westmount face the possibility of having to answer

charges in youth court following an incident on May 26 when several parked vehicles were vandalized on Lansdowne Ave.

According to the Station 12 incident report, the trio was spotted around 6:30 pm by a nearby resident who saw them causing a commotion as they struck vehicles – one of which ended up sustaining some damage.

"The witness, after hearing some screaming, looked out his window and saw three young kids around 15 years old just fooling around, breaking branches, pushing their way around," said Yigit. He said the witness reported seeing one of the teens eventually take a swing at a parked vehicle.

The witness called the police, who responded and ended up intercepting the youths. They also confirmed that damage had been done to a vehicle. Charges against the youths will depend on whether the owner of the damaged vehicle can be found and wants to file a criminal complaint, said Yigit.

"It's still under investigation," he said, confirming that the youths were residents of Westmount.

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# infoWESTMOUNT

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## NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE  
DU CONSEIL

Lundi 3 juin

## NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL  
MEETING

Monday, June 3



### La piscine du Centre des loisirs de Westmount ouverte

La piscine du Centre des loisirs de Westmount est ouverte depuis le 27 mai. Pour y accéder, une carte d'accès valide ou un laissez-passer est obligatoire en tout temps. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org).



### The Pool at WRC is open

The WRC outdoor pool opened for the season on Monday, May 27, at 7 a.m. To access the pool, a valid Facility Membership Card or guest pass is mandatory at all times. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org).

### Imagine Westmount Sud-Est

Un Plan particulier d'urbanisme (PPU) est en cours d'élaboration pour le secteur Sud-Est de Westmount. **Une consultation publique aura lieu le 12 juin à partir de 18 h au Victoria Hall, 4624 rue Sherbrooke Ouest.** [engage.westmount.org](https://engage.westmount.org)

### Changement aux collectes

À partir du 1er mai, toutes les collectes se feront uniquement en bordure de rue ou dans les ruelles accessibles aux camions de collecte. Détails à [engage.westmount.org](https://engage.westmount.org).

### Bois Summit : Chiens en laisse

Rappel : les chiens doivent être tenus en laisse en tout temps au Bois Summit pendant la période de nidification printanière, jusqu'au 15 juin. Détails à [westmount.org](https://westmount.org).

### Imagine Westmount Southeast

A Special Planning Programme (SPP) is currently being developed for the south-east sector of Westmount. A public consultation will be held on June 12 at 6 p.m. at Victoria Hall, 4624 Sherbrooke Street West. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org).

### Electric leaf blowers are prohibited from June 1 to September 30

In accordance with the provisions of By-law 1519 concerning noise, the use of leaf blowers is prohibited from June 1 to September 30. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

### Waste collection changes

As of May 1st, all waste materials will be collected streetside or along waste truck accessible lanes only. [engage.westmount.org](https://engage.westmount.org).

### Summit Woods: Dogs on leash

Reminder: dogs must be kept on leash at all times at Summit Woods during the spring nesting period, until June 15. Details at [westmount.org](https://westmount.org).

## BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

### Concert – Duo Perendosi : Dark Tales

**Mercredi 5 juin, 19 h**, Victoria Hall. Le Duo Perendosi explore le côté sombre des contes de fées en combinant une narration littéraire et musicale. Inscrivez-vous sur [Eventbrite](https://eventbrite).

### Visite de l'apicultrice

**Judi 6 juin, 13 h 30**, Bibliothèque, Jardin du conte. Une apicultrice s'occupera de la ruche de la Bibliothèque dans le Jardin du conte. Venez poser vos questions et observer l'apicultrice et les abeilles au travail. Aucune inscription requise.



### Les 125 ans de la Bibliothèque publique de Westmount – ça se fête!

**Dimanche 9 juin 14 h à 17 h**, les jardins de la Bibliothèque, Pour célébrer le 125e anniversaire de la Bibliothèque, nous vous invitons à un après-midi de divertissement et de rafraîchissements pour fêter les 125 ans de la Bibliothèque. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

## LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Concert – Duo Perendosi: Dark Tales

**Wednesday, June 5, 7 p.m.**, Victoria Hall. Duo Perendosi explores the dark side of fairy tales, combining the arts of written and musical storytelling. Register on [Eventbrite](https://eventbrite).

### Library Tours

**Until August 22**, Library. To celebrate the Library's 125th anniversary, we invite you on a tour of the building. You will learn about the institution's history, view its architectural highlights, and hear about the activities happening throughout the year. Available in French or English. Please register individually. Space is limited to 15 per tour. 514 989-5355 or [refdesk@westmount.org](mailto:refdesk@westmount.org).

### Lecture – “We take care of our own.”

**Westmount, a socially distinct microcosm, 1920-1970**

**Thursday, June 6, 7 p.m.**, Anthony Chiasson, Division Head of Archives and Records Management at the City of Westmount, will talk on the City's unique social identity from the 1920s to the 1970s. Register on [Eventbrite](https://eventbrite).



### Beekeeper Visit

**Thursday, June 6, 1:30 p.m.** Library, Storytelling Garden. The beekeeper will be tending to the Library beehive in the Storytelling Garden. Stop by with your questions and watch the beekeeper and bees at work. No registration required.

### 125 Years at Westmount Public Library – Let's Celebrate!

**Sunday, June 9, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.**, Library lawn. To celebrate the Library's 125th anniversary, we invite you to an afternoon of entertainment and refreshments to celebrate the Library's 125th anniversary. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)





# Helen Rainville Olders Music Award to honour late Westmounter

By **MARTIN C. BARRY**

Longtime Lansdowne Ave. resident Henry Olders has decided to create a music award for students at Villa Maria School to honour the memory of his late wife, Helen Rainville, who was a Villa Maria graduate. Rainville died in early July 2019 following a struggle with endometrial and colon cancer (see August 20, 2019, p. 3). She was well known in Westmount for her musical abilities and as a community volunteer (see profile, December 5, 2007, p. 13). She was a member of the city of Westmount's Community Events Advisory Committee, the Friends of the Library, the Westmount Quilters' Guild and treasurer of the Westmount Municipal Association. A talented musician who for years was the official organist at St. Malachy's Church in Snowdon, Rainville decided to take up the harp in 2007. "A couple of months ago, when a high



Henry Olders, seen here on May 29 with a portrait of his late wife, Helen Rainville and the harp she used to play, has established the Helen Rainville Olders Music Award at Villa Maria School from which she graduated in 1974. school classmate of Helen's asked me for some technical assistance in holding a 50th anniversary reunion of their class, Villa

Maria '74, it occurred to me that a nice way to honour Helen's memory would be by creating an annual award to Villa Maria students in her name," said Olders. Beginning this June and every year after, Villa Maria will be choosing two students (one each from the French and the English streams) to receive the Helen Rainville Olders Music Award. Each student will receive a certificate and a cheque for \$250. The certificate will state in part: "The Helen Rainville Olders Music Award is given to two secondary four [grade 10] students who, through their commitment to music, endeavour with passion, generosity, and humility to bring beauty and joy to their community." To finance the award over the long term, an endowment fund has been set up, administered by the Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal. With a principal amount of \$10,000, the Helen Rainville Olders Memorial Endowment Fund will

provide five percent (\$500) annually to the school. A starting donation of \$5,000 has already been made by Henry Olders, and he is hoping others will come forward to help raise the endowment to \$10,000. Donations can be made online via the following link ([jcfn.fcsuite.com/erp/donate](http://jcfn.fcsuite.com/erp/donate)), as well as by phone (Wendy Grossbaum, 514.734.1592), or by cheque to the JCF (with the fund name in the memo line). JCF will provide a receipt for income tax purposes for donations over \$18. Former friends and colleagues of Helen Rainville who might like to contribute can contact Henry Olders directly by phone or text at 514.290.2639 or by e-mail at [henry.olders@mcgill.ca](mailto:henry.olders@mcgill.ca).

**McEntyre winners, cont'd from p. 13**

- |                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| HM Daphne Molson        | The Study                        |
| HM Alexander Kobelansky | St. George's High School         |
| <b>Grade Nine</b>       |                                  |
| William Depow           | Westmount High School            |
| Nicolas Olmos           | Westmount High School            |
| April Chen              | The Study                        |
| HM Matilda Gore         | Westmount High School            |
| <b>Grade Ten</b>        |                                  |
| Juliette Marcoux        | The Study                        |
| Luciana Merchan         | Westmount High School            |
| Yasmine Aouchiche       | École internationale de Montréal |
| HM Joy Gerhard          | Westmount High School            |
| <b>Grade Eleven</b>     |                                  |
| Kaiyuan Li              | The Study                        |
| Penny Benoit            | Westmount High School            |
| Bianca Luger            | St. George's High School         |
| HM Olivia Bertucci      | Westmount High School            |
| HM Eliana Gasparini     | The Study                        |
| HM = Honourable Mention |                                  |

## Galerie 203 to host McLaren Racing tribute to driver Senna

The Grand Prix is coming to Westmount! Premiering at Galerie 203 will be a superb one-off McLaren livery (paint scheme for a race car). Gallery owner Corinne Asseraf hosted Grand Prix parties at her Notre Dame St. art gallery for many years. Now she is bringing this annual event's exhilaration and energy to Greene Ave. There are many parties downtown. Now our neighbourhood has one: Grand Prix on Greene. Guests be able to view a magnificent McLaren machine – part of the global celebration of the 30th anniversary of racing car driver Ayrton Senna's untimely death. As part of its Senna30 celebrations, the McLaren special operations team has created a one-off McLaren Senna livery. The car boasts vibrant colours inspired by his racing helmet "and a bold energy that pays homage to Senna's Brazilian

roots." Join the excitement at this unique moment. A DJ will ensure the cocktail-dînatoire party mood is Grand Prix perfect.

Thursday, June 6. 9:30 pm. Galerie 203, 1346 Greene Ave. \$75. Dress: Red carpet. Reservations necessary. Contact [corinne@galerie203.com](mailto:corinne@galerie203.com). 514.261.0899. – VR.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCLAREN RACING.



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*Pinchevsky, Shine speak at Temple*

# The evacuee and the therapist: Two perspectives on mental health



BY JENNIFER BALL

Two Jewish childhood friends whose friendship has endured for almost 70 years shared their insights on resilience during a *shabbat* service dedicated to mental health.

On May 10, Pnina Pinchevsky and Ruthie Shine were invited to Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom for a *shabbat* that explored the intersections of mental health, spirituality and resilience. The temple is found on Sherbrooke at Wood Ave.

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow said that the *shabbat* service was part of a broader community effort for mental health.

She approached Pnina Pinchevsky, who is a member of Temple, as they taught a class on resilience together, taking a rabbinic approach to the subject matter.

Pinchevsky confirmed her presence for the talk and invited her friend Ruthie Shine, who is an evacuee, to come and

speak with her. There has been considerable displacement of people at the northern Israeli border with Lebanon after October 7, and Shine has de-camped to a hotel with her youngest son, who is significantly disabled.

Pinchevsky said, “These days we do not talk about trauma without referring to October 7 and post-October 7...”

“When I came back to Canada after the October events, I was so inspired by [Shine’s] determination to build a new life [and a new community] in a hotel that I felt that the [talk on] trauma and resilience must be shared from this perspective...”

“Ruthie is only here to represent Ruthie. She’s not representing the Israeli government, the state of Israeli, and she does not represent the over 100,000 Israelis who are living away from their home.”

## October 7’s nightmare

Shine said, “On October 7, we walked

Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom is located on Sherbrooke at Wood Ave. Photography was not permitted inside Temple on May 10. Photo taken May 14.

into a nightmare. We did not know what was going on but slowly, slowly, step by step, the stories reached our ears...”

“...I was in shock, everybody around us was in shock, and I got into a panic because I knew Hezbollah was much more experienced, much more professional, and much better organized... than Hamas...”

“I had feelings of fear, anxiety and fear for the future.

“When is it going to end, when are we going to be able to go home, what about the Israeli hostages?... ”

“But we are not victims. We are just evacuees. We are not refugees. We are in our own country and whenever it will be possible, we will go home.”

Rabbi Grushcow said that *shabbat* gives the community the opportunity to bring to the foreground voices, issues and conversations that are not as front and centre as

they ought to be.

“The things that we can’t talk about – the things that we’re afraid to talk about – are the things that we most need to talk about.”

## Positive change

Pinchevsky, earned a master of social work and completed postgraduate training in psychotherapy. She has made it her life’s goal to work to empower individuals and foster positive change in mental health and social well-being. Her work demonstrates the transformative power of compassion and action.

Shine is a retired school vice-principal from a village in Israel near the Lebanese border. She is a member and leader of an Israeli organization dedicated to the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities.

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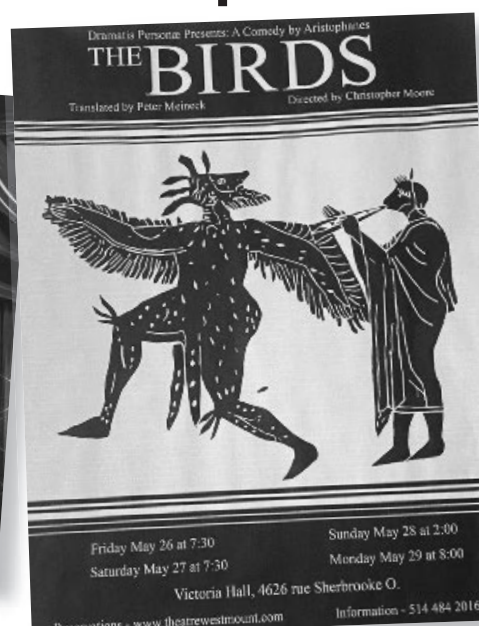
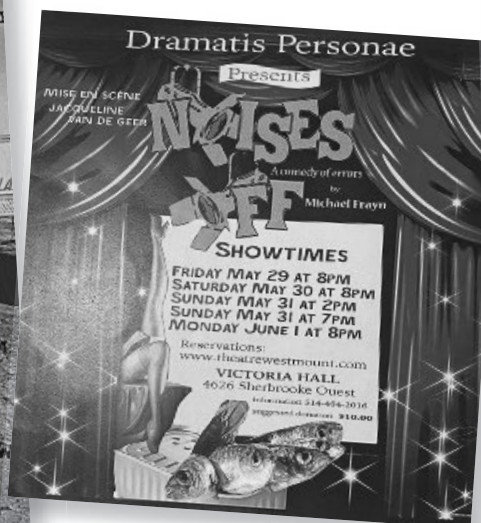
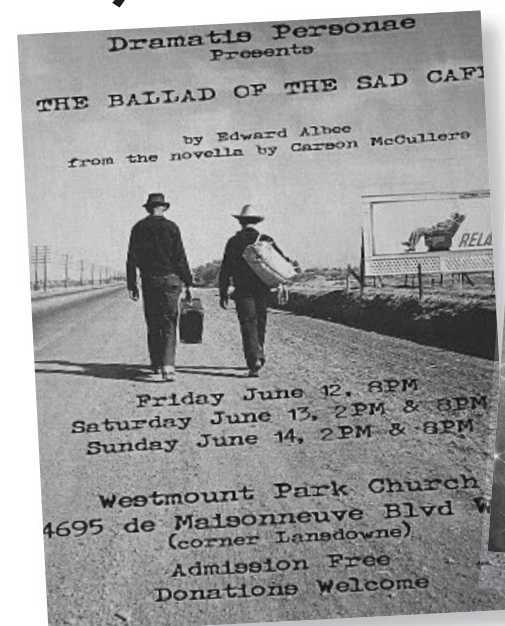
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## Dramatis Personae turns 40

# Plays have run the gamut from Aristophanes to Noel Coward



By JENNIFER BALL

Westmount's community theatre group Dramatis Personae had two reasons to cheer recently: it is commemorating its 40-year anniversary, and it staged its second annual theatre production on May 22, 23, 25 and 26.

Ann Elbourne and Ellen Rubin – who are the producers behind the plays that Dramatis Personae stage – recalled that 40 years ago Ann Page founded the independent theatre group with a collective, decision-making membership.

It is a not-for-profit group that is funded by membership fees and donations from audiences.

Elbourne started in 2000 and Rubin in 2002. They met with the *Independent* on May 7 to discuss company developments over the years.

### Some history

In 1987, the late Sally Aitken, who was

a city councillor at the time, brought Dramatis Personae into the city's recreational and cultural programme as a course that could be taken. The city hired a director, but attendance was low, and the course did not meet the minimum attendance requirement.

The city said they could continue but as an associate group and this is what they did.

From 2007 until the spring of 2015, Jacqueline Van der Geer directed plays, then Christopher Moore from 2015 until this year, when they brought Marissa Blair in.

These are just some of the full-length plays that they have staged since 2008:

- 2008 – *Arrivals and Departures* by Carol Shield,
- 2009 – *The Ballad of the Sad Café* which is an Edward Albee adaptation of a Carson McCullers novella,
- 2011 – *Under Milkwood* by Dylan Thomas,
- 2013 – *Nude with Violin* by Noel

Coward,

- 2015 – *Noises Off* by Michael Frayn,
- 2017 – *The Birds* by Aristophanes and translated by Peter Meineck.

Elbourne said there is a sub-committee that reads a smattering of plays to determine “which ones would work with the casts that we have.”

Dramatis swims against the current tide of two-performer productions because it must look for something with enough characters. “Because everybody pays a registration fee, everybody deserves to have a part,” Rubin explained.

### Too much light

The latest production, which took place at Victoria Hall, was *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind*. The work is by Greg Allen, directed by Blair, and consists of 30 rapid-fire plays delivered in 60 minutes.

The audience got to choose the order of them and some required audience participation.

It featured many actors who have performed regularly for the company including Ian Knowles, Ann Elbourne, Jenny Chopra, Ellen Rubin, Brian Wrench, Karen Sauder, Nathalie Saint-Pierre and Bruna Perussello,

In reflecting over the past four decades Rubin said, “there is nothing like theatre: the immediacy of human interaction, you just don’t get that from a screen.”

Every performance is going to be different, Elbourne said, and “there is going to be a dynamic between the actors and the audience.”

Both women mentioned that they are incredibly grateful to the city for allowing

them to perform in Victoria Hall and to have free rehearsal space there as well, but they lament that there isn’t more support for community theatre in Westmount.

“We would like to be considered a Westmount organization rather than an outside group. Having a designated theatre – with everything that is required for it – would be nice,” Elbourne said.

Because “having a community theatre is not nothing and we do all the dog work to bring community theatre [to the audience],” Rubin said.



From left, Ellen Rubin and Ann Elbourne, the producers behind Dramatis Personae plays, in Westmount Park on May 7.

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## Tour de l'Île June 2

# Perfect weather, happy cyclists, happy crowds – Cycle jam, at least two spills

Montreal's Tour de l'Île bicycling event wound its way through Westmount June 2, coming into Westmount from the west on Côte St. Antoine and then south on Lansdowne to Glen Rd. into St. Henri, starting at about 11 am.

The weather could not have been nicer and an estimated 18,000 cyclists and many well-wishers were out, with the main 50-km loop starting from and going to Rachel St. and Park Ave. in the Plateau.

Police became concerned about the

speed of cyclists on Lansdowne below Côte St. Antoine and asked people to walk their bikes down the hill. This request caused a traffic jam on Côte St. Antoine west of Lansdowne.

The *Independent* witnessed two spills on

Glen Rd. just south of the stone railway bridge, which might have been caused by the old tram rails coming through the asphalt. Ambulance staff and volunteers sprung into action. – WI, LS & RT.



▲ A spill on Glen Rd. just up from the Home Depot.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

► A traffic jam on Côte St. Antoine west of Lansdowne. Cyclists had to wait to walk their bikes down the hill.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARJA SHERMAN.

Cyclists on Lansdowne above Sherbrooke, above right, and below. All styles of bike were used by participants.

ABOVE RIGHT: RALPH THOMPSON; BELOW: LAUREN SWEENEY.



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Architect Wigglesworth remembers

# Re-purposing the Congrégation de Notre-Dame motherhouse for Dawson College

BY RALPH THOMPSON

The Westmount Historical Association (WHA) hosted renowned architect David Wigglesworth, former partner at Dimakopoulos et Associés, to talk about his involvement in the transformation of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame motherhouse into Dawson College, more specifically its chapel into the CEGEP's library.

Wigglesworth opened his May 16 presentation with a little historical perspective going back to 1652 when the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame was founded by Marguerite Bourgeoys to help and educate French and native peoples. It soon outgrew its facilities in Old Montreal.

In 1893, following multiple fires, the Sulpicians, who were the seigniorial landlords of most of the island of Montreal, sold the Congrégation land at a very low price to build a new motherhouse. The site at Atwater and Sherbrooke straddled the border between the city of Montreal and the municipality that was soon (1895) to be called "Westmount."

Jean Omer Marchand and his American partner, Samuel Steven Haskell, were selected to design the new structure, a contemporary Beaux Arts building with a Romanesque theme.

### Dawson bursting at the seams

Meanwhile, by 1980, Dawson College CEGEP – founded in 1969 – had 3,000 students spread across 14 buildings in Montreal. In 1982, it was granted the right to consolidate all its campuses into the motherhouse. There were issues, though. The building had been designed to house 300 sisters, not contain 4,000 energetic young-adult students.

The reinforced concrete structure, floor structures and bright open-plan corridors and staircases did not meet modern safety and fire standards. Heritage laws completely forbade modification to the exterior of the building. Many interior elements, including the chapel, were also protected under heritage laws in Quebec.

However, the rather utilitarian balconies at the rear of the building on de Maison-neuve were removed.

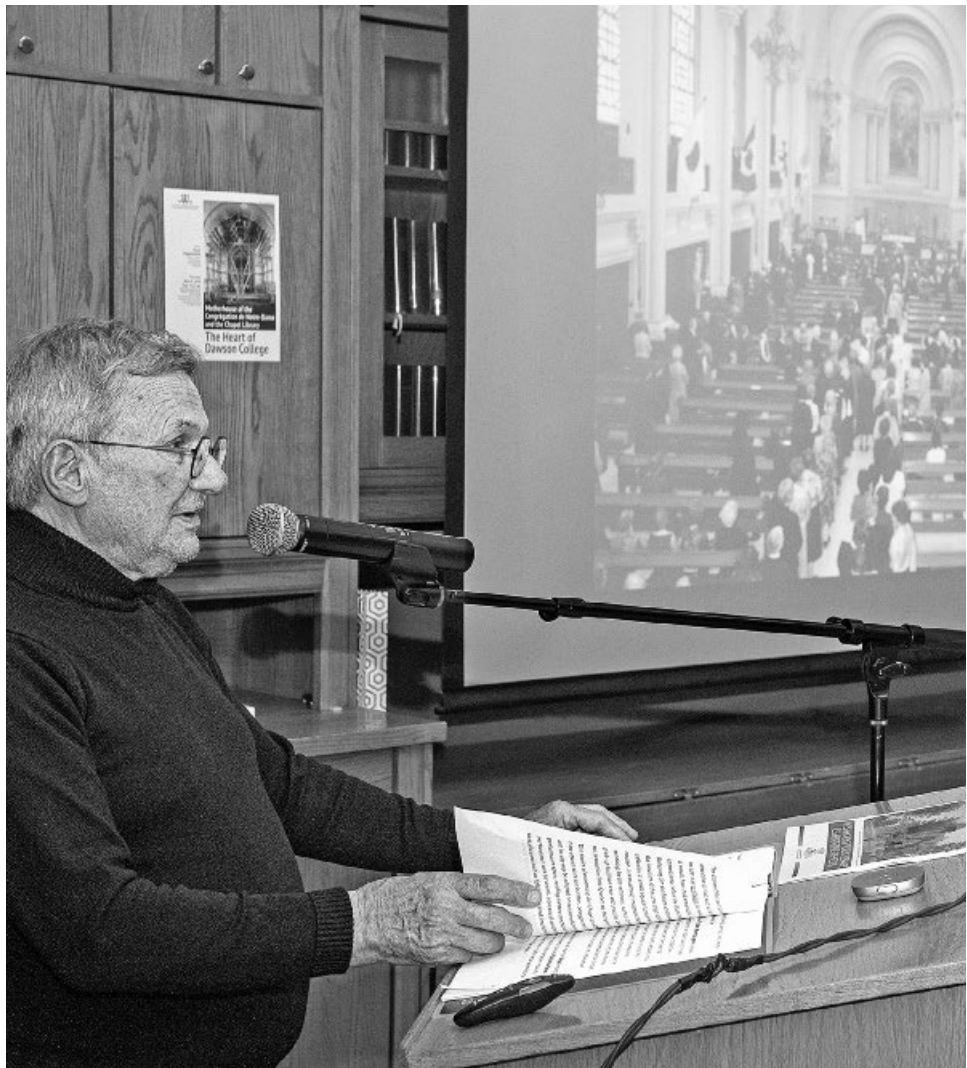
### What to do with the chapel?

One of the many big challenges was what to do with the strictly protected historic chapel, and its Casavant organ, high ceilings, dome and ornate windows. Wigglesworth explained that several ideas were

floated: a concert hall, theatre, student meeting place and exhibition hall.

But the front runner became a library and reading room.

The mezzanines were established for books and the one major heritage concession was allowing a grand staircase to be added from the reading room up to them.



Architect David Wigglesworth shows a slide of the chapel as it was before its conversion to Dawson's reading room and library.

### Vic village festival, cont'd from p. 1

workshop outside the Visual Arts Centre is planned for 1 to 4 pm on exploring techniques of "marbling" on paper and the simple folding of paper to create an original and functional pinwheel.

"Children under age 5 are welcome," Lulham said, "but will need help from an accompanying adult." In case of rain, the event will take place inside the centre at Victoria and Somerville.

Centre Greene will be also animating fun attractions at the same location while Westmount Stationery is offering "free custom embroidery" using a computerized embroidery machine for applying names

on agendas and journals brought along or newly purchased.

### New participants

Among the new attractions, the Royal Bank, Scotiabank and TD are planning activities outside their venues while Christina Miller Real Estate Group is sponsoring various activities in Prince Albert square that include free popcorn, tattoos and helium balloons.

"Victoria village is a community of merchants and businesses serving our Westmount residents and beyond – come enjoy a fun weekend!" Lulham said.

The magnificent cruciform hanging lights were retained and restored, requiring extensive scaffolding to enable work on these very heavy chandeliers.

Although the organ pipes remain today, the rest of it was removed. Decorative art works were added to cover the alcoves.

The rear of the building, which had originally housed the furnace room, became an entrance, but the tall, now decorative, chimney remains as a reminder of its original use.

Later, additional space on the campus was created above and below ground for studios and workshops, and direct access to the Atwater Metro station.

Following the extensive, multi-million renovations, some of the sisters were able to return to see their former chapel and were apparently very pleased with the result and use of the facilities.

Claire Elliott, Dawson's librarian, joined the speaker to answer questions from the audience.

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LYSANNE FOWLER



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

## Fantastic Topaz

A delightful little miss, Topaz is in foster care for the Gerdy's Rescues and Adoptions group. She has been her best self and has pleased everyone with her great results from training in leash-walking, focussed heeling, advanced commands and the dog-dog experience.

As a sweetheart companion, Topaz is affectionate and enthusiastic. Happy in bonding, she looks forward to sharing the everyday: indoor cuddling, outdoor adventures as car rides and walks, or on the



Lovely as can be, and very playful, Zara is in foster care for the Montreal SPCA. A white-and-grey tabby pixie with huge green eyes, Zara really makes an impression. At one year of age, she is a fun little playmate for the family, cuddly and silly.

Zara is a very healthy kitten, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped.

If you would like to find out more about her and apply on the Montreal SPCA website, please refer to their [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com) link, then refer to her information page by her identification number, 2000096917. Click on the "Fill out the form" black rectangle, and you will have the basic information questionnaire to fill out in order for the adoption coordinators to contact you back. Then you can discuss adoption and your interest in Zara.

Such a delight, a wonderful kitten to love and share home with.

Your neighbour,  
Lysanne

home front while running around the fenced backyard.

Topaz has no experience with cats and is best in a home with children over 10 years of age. She is a very healthy and energetic terrier mix, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped.

Please enquire about Topaz with the Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions volunteers at their website [www.gerdysrescue.org](http://www.gerdysrescue.org) or email them at [info@gerdysrescue.org](mailto:info@gerdysrescue.org). Her development while in foster care is excellent. She enjoys company and training. She is most proud of her achievements, bright and looking to please!

Your neighbour,  
Lysanne

## Petite Zara



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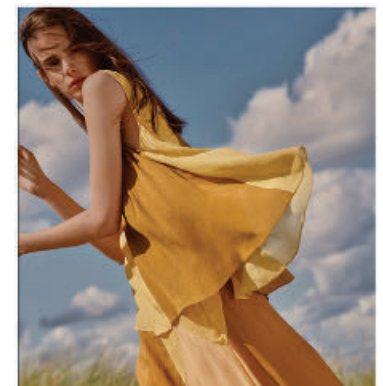
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Art

VERONICA REDGRAVE

# Prager publishes cookbook by his parents

Forty years ago, Eva and Richard Prager were published every week in the local paper. The *Westmount Examiner* (closed since 2015) ran their “Adventures in Cooking,” a charming recital of moments from another era.

Along with being a businessman, Richie – as he was known to friends – was an excellent “hobby-gourmet” chef, having worked as a *sous-chef* at London’s Savoy during the war. His wife Eva was an artist, renowned for her portraits. They made a terrific team.

Richie recounted his cooking experiences and gave readers the recipes; Eva illustrated the stories. One chronicle noted that while they were staying at Rideau House, the official residence of the governor general, while Eva did a portrait of then governor general Jeanne Sauvé (1984-1990), Richie prepared some meals.

The evocative memories were also touched with humour. Another adventure noted that a hostess forgot to turn on the oven for a turkey. Richie transformed the moment. He cut the turkey “into small bits and cooked them *à l’orange*.”

He recalled a meal when he was 17: “Refrigerators did not generally exist in those days so we kept the wine cool in a lake.”

After a sojourn in Mykonos, the column listed his version of Spanakopita illustrated with Eva’s sketch of a Greek temple.

Perhaps my favourite account was about violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin. Eva knew him because her father, the internationally renowned artist Joseph Oppenheimer, had painted his portrait. By chance, travelling by train to Locarno, Switzerland, Eva and Richie ran into him. Their conversation delved into memories, in particular Oppenheimer’s roast veal dinner for the acclaimed violinist. That recipe also stars



Vincent Prager, holding *Adventures in Cooking*. The portrait is of Eva Prager by her father, Joseph Oppenheimer.

in this delightful book.

The book was published by Vincent Prager, Eva and Richie’s son, who grew up in Westmount, and was given away at his 80th birthday. An archivist sorting through family documents discovered the series so Vincent decided to reprint them “exactly as they appeared each week in 1982.”

The delightful tales form an integral part of the recipes providing an enchanting remembrance of things past. And now the Prager’s memories come full circle. The story about Richard Prager’s anecdotes is published once again in a newspaper; this time the *Westmount Independent*. These nostalgic reminiscences, full of amazing friendships in a bygone era, make one pause in our whirling tech world.

(Full disclosure. Not only did Eva Prager paint my daughter’s portrait, but I enjoyed many delicious meals at Eva and Richard Prager’s Westmount home.)



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Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Prager turns 80 at designer Hillside party



Nike Coulourides, Vincent Prager and Daniel Bichet.

The invitation dress code read “Extrava-gant!” so most guests added elaboration to their attire at **Vincent Prager’s** 80th party.

The birthday boy himself wore a fabu-lous Basquiat bomber jacket. Some ladies donned gala-worthy long skirts and many added red-carpet bling that twinkled under the disco ball. The creative décor was by designer **Roberto Menegati**, who fashioned an innovative mood complete with Cirque de Soleil performers.

An amusing touch? Tiny yellow rubber duckies “swimming” amidst flowers in large vases.

Prager held his celebratory night at the Hillside Tennis Club. The menu was bespoke. Menegati worked with **Jason Viau-Breau**, the club’s director general, to ensure the cocktail-dinatoire was ample and that the duck/roast beef choices were done to perfection.

Dessert was a tempting choice of truffle bites, cupcakes and a cake – of course!

Prager gave guests a charming parting gift: a book of his father ..... Richard Prager’s recipes, *continued on p. 30*



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**Social notes, cont'd from p. 29**

illustrated by Eva Prager. Found in the archives of Prager documents, they were published weekly in the *Westmount Examiner* throughout 1982 (see story, p. 28).

Amidst the revellers were Kathryn Stephenson and Peter Trent, Nancy Cleman, Ted Claxton, Gillian and Bryan MacCormack, Belle and Ernie Grivakis, Elizabeth Wirth, Diane Fowler LeBlanc, Suzanne and Daniel Colson, Connie and Marc Médalsy, Supreme Court of Canada judge Suzanne Côté and Gerald Tremblay, Jean Philippe Ewert, Hugh Cowans, Margie and Bob Ross, Linda and The Honorable Sean Harrington, Nike Coulourides and Daniel Bichet, Pam McLernon, Betsy Mitchell, Rasa Pavilanis, Rosemary Christensen and Elsa Bolam and Maurice Podbrey.

Attending from Vincent's Selwyn House 1959 class were Harry Bloomfield (there with his wife Nancy), Michel Guité and Lee Watchorn, with his wife Nancy.

Hailing from out of town were Anne Summers (England), Cristina Santos (Brazil), Gabriela Naidu (Zurich, Switzerland), Barbara Chaffe and Rob Weir, Caroline Davies and Vicki Hogarth and Patrick Watt (St. Andrews), and Jason Hickey (Newfoundland).

Arriving from Toronto were Kathy and Ron Base, Don Smith, Joanne Sutherland



Roberto Menegati with one of the night's performers.

and Rob Douglas, and Joanne and André Sulzenko.

The evening was art-full in another way. Guests painted on a large follow-the-lines canvas of Zeeba, another of Vincent's best friends – this one with a wet black muzzle and silky fur coat.

Besties all enjoyed the night. A pitch-perfect party marking not only a milestone but the touchstone of friendships.



Sean and Linda Harrington, and Betsy Mitchell.



Former Westmount mayor Peter Trent and Kathryn Stephenson



From the Selwyn House class of 1959: Vincent Prager, Harry Bloomfield, Michel Guite and Lee Watchorn.



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Suzanne Côté and Jean Philippe Ewert.



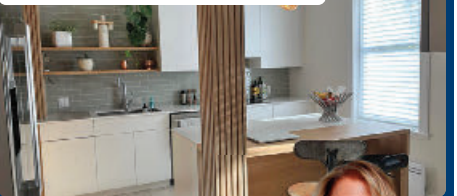
Guests reading *Adventures in Cooking*.

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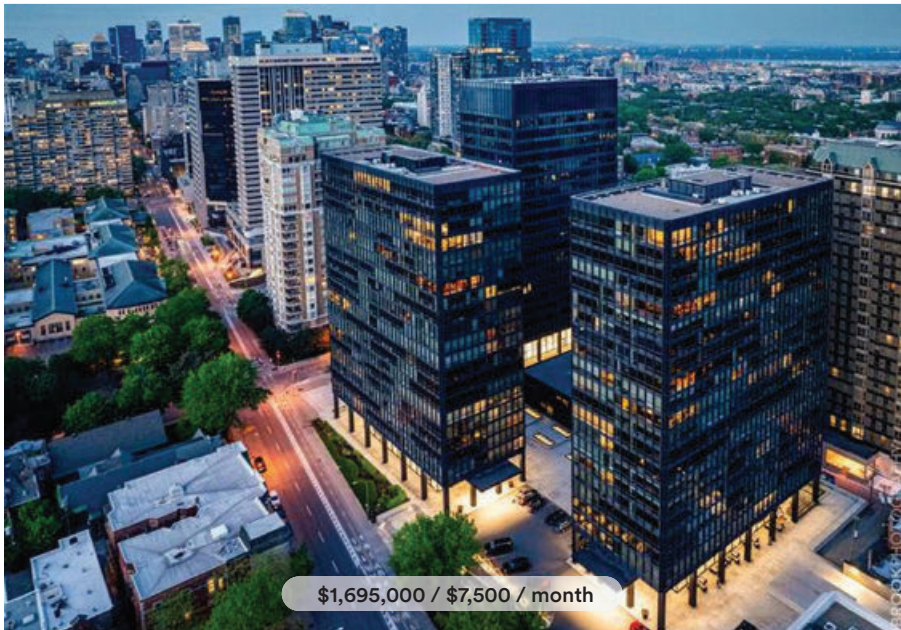




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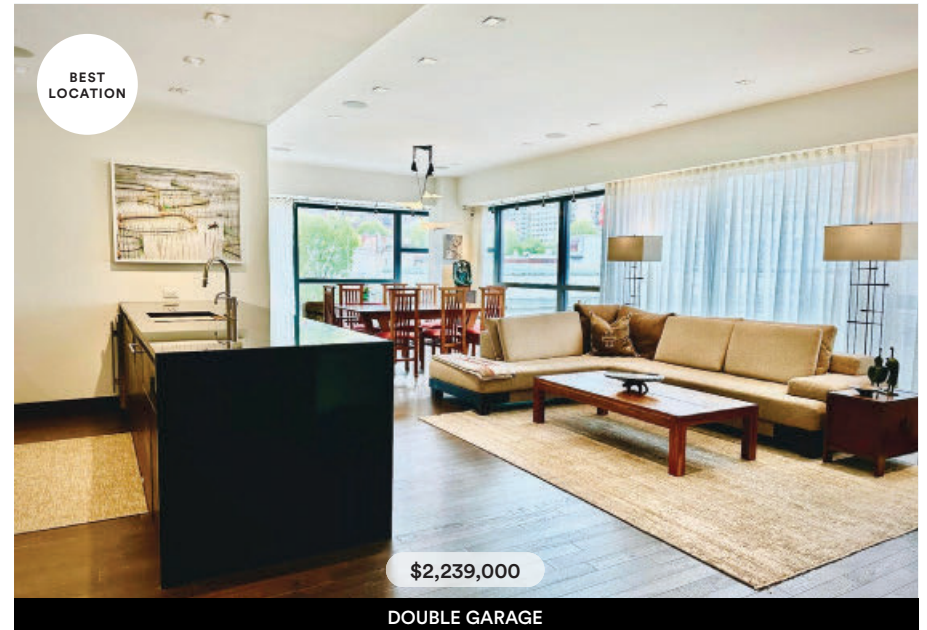


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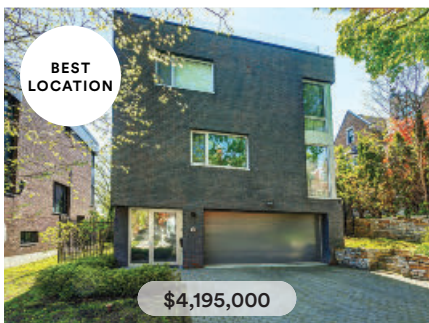
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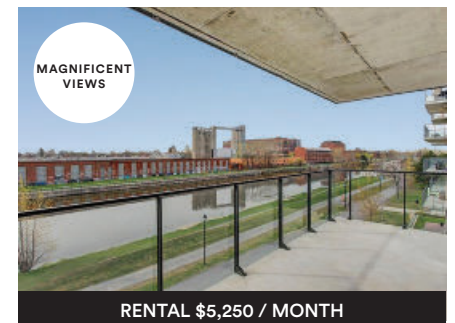
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