

City recognizes its young athletes at sports banquet



Federal
election
coverage

See pages
15 to 19

Letters to the Editor, p. 6
Police Report & extra coverage, p. 14-15
Dodge on March real estate, p. 18
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See p. 6 for coverage, p. 7 for more photos and p. 8 for the names of winners.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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'Too costly, lacking social acceptability'

Tenders cancelled for Claremont project at special meeting

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After months of discussion, consultation and questions at city council meetings, one of the city's largest infrastructure projects in many years was cancelled at a sudden and special noon-hour council session April 10. This was the re-construction of Claremont and Lorraine.

According to a resolution to cancel a

tender call for the project, "council is of the opinion that the re-development project does not currently have the required level of social acceptability to proceed," and the latest estimate received by the city "significantly exceeds" the anticipated budget.

Tender bids were to have been opened April 23.

The estimate is in
fact 50 percent more *continued on p. 11*



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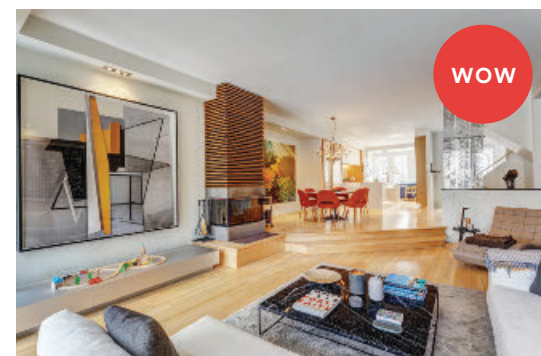
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\$3,495,000

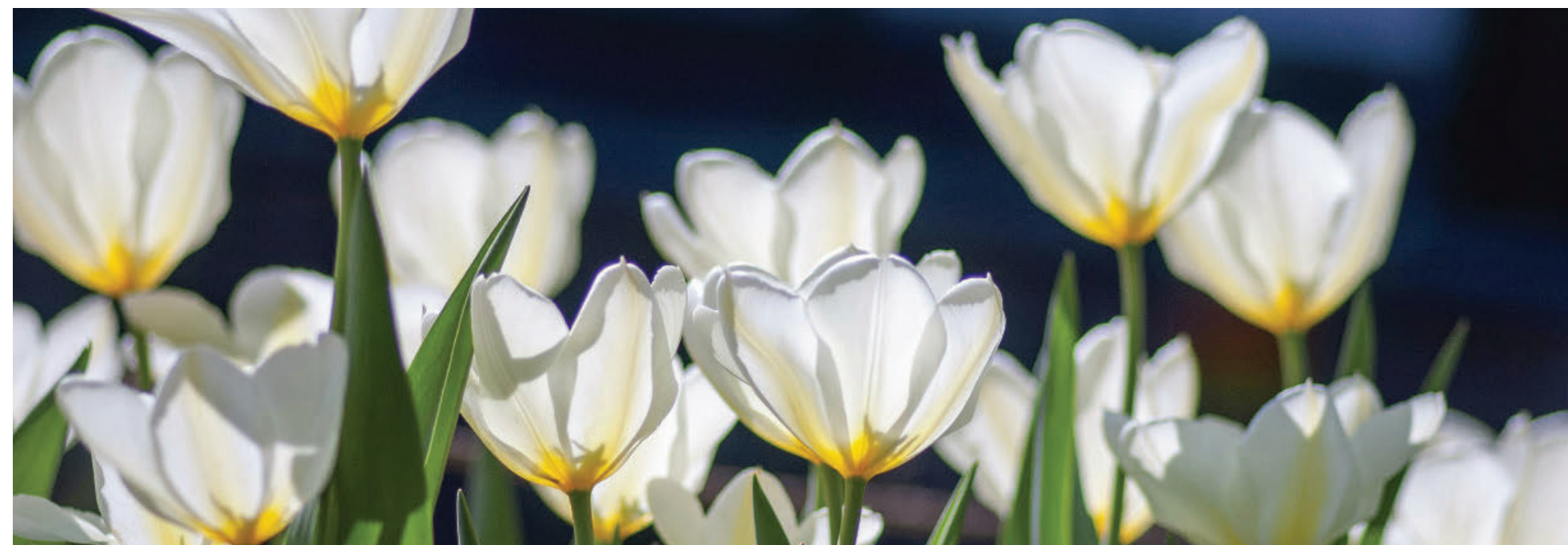
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Public Security spots bike thief

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Given the warmer weather and increased use of bicycles, Public Security officials last week reminded users to lock up their bikes.

This followed an incident concerning a suspicious man wearing a black jacket and seen walking north on Greene toward Dorchester April 5 at 5:52 pm, they said. He had a bicycle missing the front wheel and kept looking nervously over his shoulder. A patroller who spotted him engaged the man in conversation and asked if he needed assistance.

When he could not justify the circumstances regarding the bike, he admitted to having taken it at the Vendôme Metro station.

Police were called, the bike seized and incident entered into the police database. The man aged 34 was reported freed without further action. No additional details were reported.

User of gasoline-fired leaf blower ticketed

Public Security issued a ticket for \$158 to a contractor using a gasoline-fired leaf blower April 4 on Forden, Public Security officials said. Gasoline-fired models are prohibited in Westmount even during the allowable spring clean-up period ending May 31. The discovery followed a complaint around 9 am.

Fallen man assisted

A Public Security patroller went to the assistance of a man spotted lying on the sidewalk at the corner of Hillside and Metcalfe April 5 at 6:24, department officials said. The man, who had been using a walker, stated he had fallen and could not get back up. He was helped up to sit on the walker while awaiting Urgences Santé for further evaluation.

When he was reported to be in condition to return home, officers escorted him to his apartment on nearby Hillside.

RMR gets 5-year lease extension

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR) and the city have agreed to extend the regiment's lease for an added five years until April 29, 2030 under the same terms and conditions as the current two-year lease that expires April 28, 2026, according to a resolution approved by city council April 7. The armory is located at 4625 St. Catherine St.

This follows an original emphyteutic (long-term) lease for the building between the city and the king from 1925 to 2024 (see story January 31, 2023, p. 1).

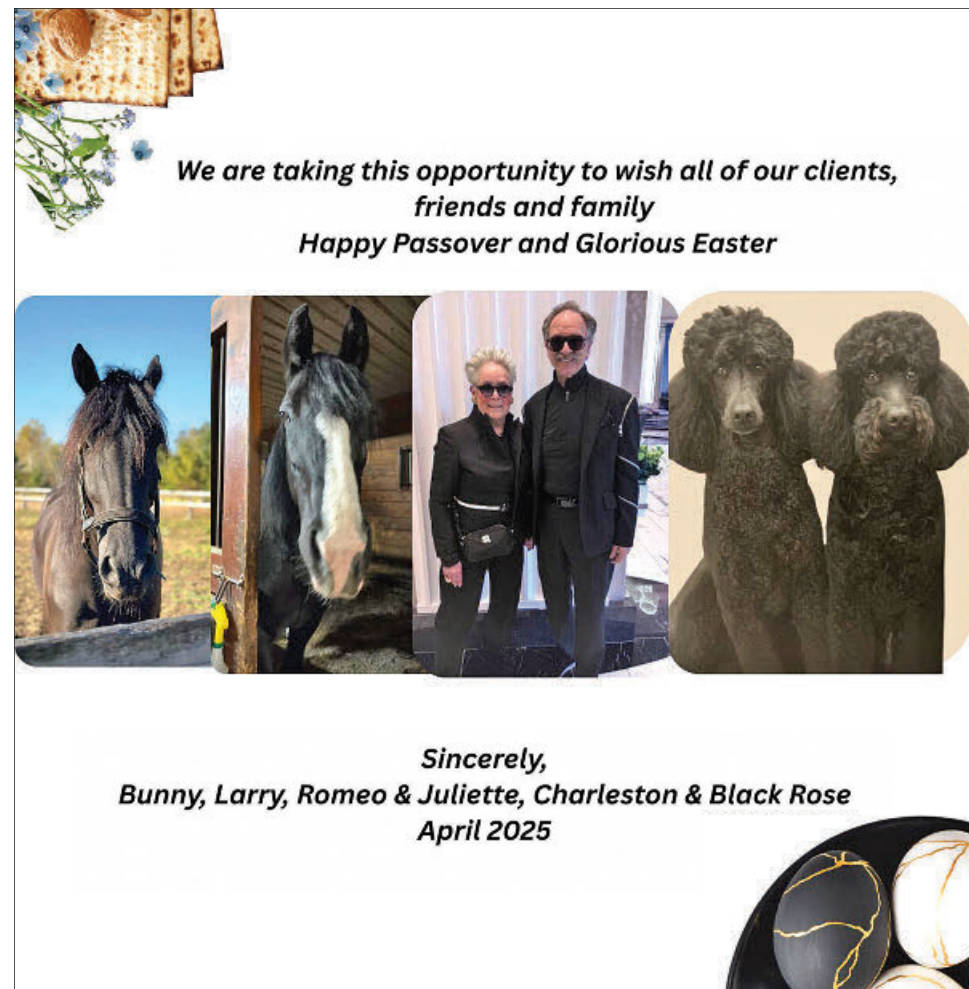
Moved by Councillor Jeff Shamie as commissioner of finance and administration, the resolution was adopted unanimously and described by Mayor Christina Smith, who said that the regiment "wants to be there and we want it there." This extension is longer term than the previous

one "while we look at other options."

The city has been trying to sell the property to the federal government for at least two years (see April 25, 2023, p. 1). Given technical hurdles to completing the sale, the lease was extended last year (see March 5, 2024, p. 1).

While the armory itself was built in 1925 with publicly raised seed money, it sits on city land adjacent to the Westmount recreation centre (WRC), for which the regiment paid \$1 a year in rent for the original 99-year lease.

The ongoing lease extensions also enable it to continue to be used, in the same way as presently, as a community rental resource for some the city's recreational programs and other community purposes, which have included the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf, cadets, Scouts and charitable groups.



We are taking this opportunity to wish all of our clients, friends and family

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April 2025

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need. Becoming a foster parent is a life-changing experience, not only for the child but for you as well.

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No child should have to go through life feeling alone. If you believe you can provide a safe, supportive and loving environment, we would love to hear from you.

For more information on how you can make a difference, please contact Batshaw Youth and Family Centres at 514.932.7161 ext. 1139.

A little love can make a world of difference. Are you ready to be that difference?

Tow needed for stalled car

A tow truck was called April 9 around 12:35 pm to remove a car stalled outside 4141 Sherbrooke, according to Public Security.

The car was obstructing traffic but could not be started owing to overheating.



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Buyers leaving with armfuls

Spring book sale raises \$15,580 for Westmount library

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

This year's spring book sale held by the volunteer Friends of the Westmount Public Library at Victoria Hall generated a total of some \$15,580, Councillor Elizabeth Roux announced at the city council meeting April 7 as the city's library commissioner.

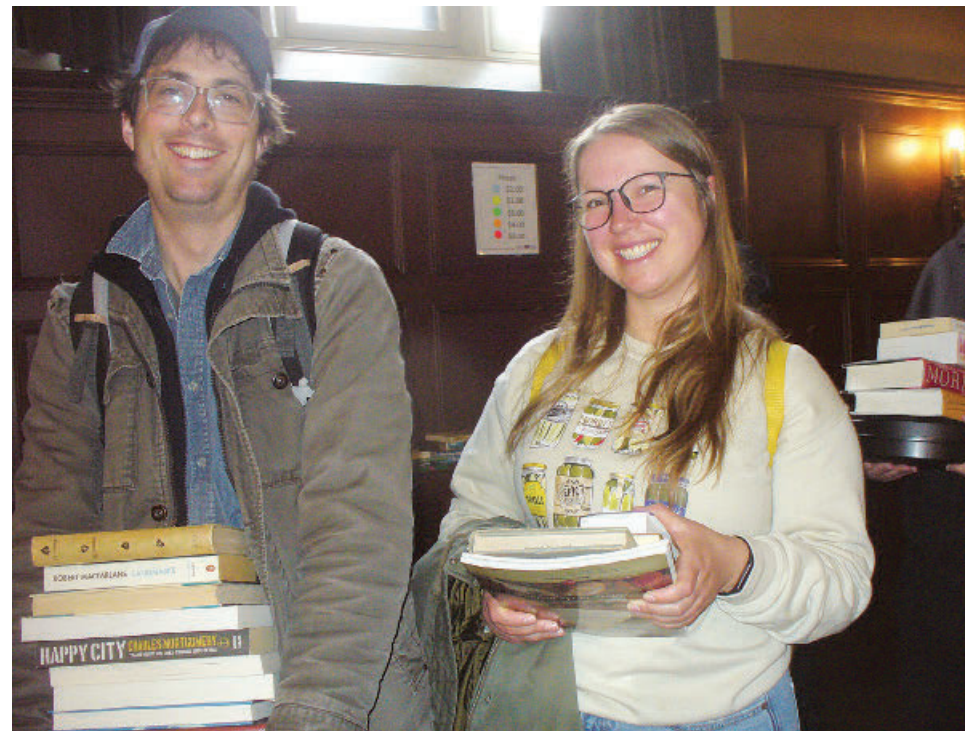
The semi-annual sale held April 5 and 6 was made possible by the large number of volunteers including a contingent of students from local schools recruited by Carolyn O'Neill, the group's president, and its members.

As testament to the event, the line-up waiting to get in on the first day began forming long before doors opened to Victoria Hall at 10 am on the Saturday.

Proceeds are to go toward library



The wait.



The pay-off. Shoppers Will Ambeault and Tina Delorme from St. Henri "love the sale."

services, collections and programs during the year.

"This is excellent news," she said. "We had a terrific turnout on Saturday where most of the revenues were made, even with the [rainy] weather. The line-up went far outside Victoria Hall."

Many of the shoppers had already been at the events other years as seen by the stickers previously attached. The popularity of the donations and purchases remains high despite the inroads of current technological programs that render some of the older material obsolete.

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THANK YOU, DR. VAILLANCOURT

We wish to thank Dr. Vaillancourt for supporting our community’s Grosvenor block parties in years past. His generosity was so tremendous that we created a canine component in our programming in order to attract enough furry participants. This included a “Dogs on the Block” show and educational workshops aimed at sensitizing children to canine behaviour, both of which were very successful.

We are grateful to have such an exemplary community member and a compassionate and exceptionally knowledgeable veterinarian nearby.

Thank you, Dr. Vaillancourt.

FRITS BERAN, MARINA BRZESKI, GLORIA CARON, ROB DOREY, MARIA LONGO, VANESSA ROSE, GEMMA MATHEIJ AND NEIL MACKINNON – FORMER GROSVENOR AVE. BLOCK PARTY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MOUNTAINSIDE PROPOSAL UNACCEPTABLE, CHURCH SHOULD REMAIN COMMUNITY BUILDING

I would sooner transform into a lizard than accept the current form of the Mountain-side Church plan (see letter April 8, p. 4-5). This project would take place in our very backyard and while I am not against developing the empty portion of the plot of land, under no circumstances should it be accepted that the church, a former community building, be re-purposed to use for a single person’s family dwelling. To plan for such a monument to one’s ego is nothing short of flagrant avarice.

Westmount above Sherbrooke St. is nearly completely developed and this serves as an opportunity to bring community use to this part of the neighbourhood. I have already outlined to council and the owner nearly a year ago how this site is well

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

suited for conversion into a school. Given that the owner had informed me it was “too difficult to find interest for such a purpose” that statement seems to go against Selwyn House’s recent purchase (see April 8, p. 6).

Living on Roslyn, I have seen first hand how the school has pushed the limit of its capacity, and Roslyn elementary is not alone with this problem. While I understand converting a property’s use is no easy task, it would be easier to convert a community building for any other community use rather than a family dwelling.

While it is unfortunate that the city and other organizations have little interest in providing a community-based solution, this is not the way forward, especially with a housing shortage. And honestly, amplifying the voice of the owner/architect within the *Westmount Independent* to frame the city as an unfair beast that cannot be tamed is irresponsible as I have never had an issue with meeting and having rational conversations where I am free to express my concerns or grievances. I’m quite fatigued only ever seeing one side of the story published.

Also to clarify from the last issue’s letter (p. 4) with James Murphy’s comments, I am not against building taller buildings in any capacity, in fact I think it is an absolute necessity. Families can live in larger buildings without any issue so long as there are sufficient services and greenspaces nearby. These buildings should be demonstrated as multi use as well with units large enough to accommodate families. I think the city should do a better job conveying and illustrating their plans for development because when people think of those levels of height there are these tall and ugly concrete monsters that age horribly.

There is currently a building under construction next to the corner of Guy and Sherbrooke downtown by Broccolini that I think is shaping up to look very nice. One of the effects of the housing shortage is that single people, such as students, cannot afford to have their own unit and thus live together in larger apartments sharing the rent. This takes family-suitable apartments away from the market to families who would fully utilize the space. If there were five units for five single people as opposed to them all living under one roof, that unit could then be for a family.

I was raised in Manhattan for the first eight years of my life and as a kid I never thought “Boy I sure hate living in this large building!” It was my parents’ decision to move to Montreal (where they are both from) to give us more space, which quite honestly never really got used. Tall buildings are fine so long as they are planned for properly.

And I agree with James’ point of amplifying negativity far too much from the council meetings. I attend each one of them and it seems like the *Independent*

pushes narratives that align with a particular set of concerns that have been milked to death at this point.

JESSICA WINTON, ROSLYN AVE.

Editor’s reply: So when James Murphy complains at council (see p. 4 of last week for my description) and you complain at council about the city’s presentation of proposed buildings, everything is AOK; but when others complain, it is “negative” and should be suppressed? Not here. – DP.

BLOW SNOW ONTO LAWNS (2)

As per Warren Dick’s letter (April 1, p. 6) concerning blowing snow onto lawns, I completely agree.

Growing up with that system, snow got cleared quickly and efficiently, especially around school zones when time was of the essence. It also kept traffic to a minimum as wait times for loading trucks was non-existent.

Kids played in the piles until the spring and then watching the snow melt and the gardens return was something we all looked forward to.

Costs and pollution were kept to a minimum.

TINA DUBROVSKY, UPPER BELMONT AVE.

Clarification: Incident happened outside entrance to Alexis Nihon

Building management contacted the *Independent* last week to take issue with the headline: “Stabbing at Alexis Nihon sends two to hospital” (April 8, p. 9).

Most precisely, the stabbing took place in front of the mall, as the text of the story explained: “...on Atwater Ave. outside the entrance to the Alexis Nihon shopping mall.”

In our view, “at” is a general word that does cover where this event occurred, especially for the purposes of a headline,

which should always be read with the article in question. For instance, it would be totally normal, in our view, to be standing on the sidewalk in front of Alexis Nihon, call for a cab and say: “I am at Alexis Nihon. Can you send a taxi?” Given its three major entrances, you might say, “I am at the Atwater entrance of Alexis Nihon.” In both cases, they would not think that you were inside the building.

Nevertheless, we are happy to share the views of others. – DP.

City hosts sports banquet

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Victoria Hall was rocking on its foundations April 9 as a stampede of wild kids descended on the community ballroom for the spring semi-annual sports awards banquet.

Hundreds of kids, their parents, volunteers, and Sports and Recreation staff merged into a seething mass of enthusiasm and excitement. At precisely 6 pm, the hall doors were opened and there was a mad dash for the pop line-up and another scramble for the best seating.

After the mayor, council members, staff and volunteers had served up large trays of pizza, the slick operation moved to order

under the direction of Dave Lapointe, director, library, sports, recreation and culture. Mayor Christina Smith welcomed everyone and thanked the staff and volunteers for managing the event. She then proceeded to hand out the first batch of awards. Councillors Mary Gallery, Matt Aronson and Anitra Bostock followed with the remaining honours.

After an hour, the distribution of dozens of medals, cups, trophies and banners, plus the consumption of hundreds of slices of pizza and cans of pop, the rear doors opened again and everyone departed at precisely 7 pm.

See p. 7 for photos and p. 8 for recipients’ names.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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Most improved skating: Geonwoo (Ian) Park (front left) and Laurie Beaupré with Gabrielle Jay-Riendeau (left) and Mayor Christina Smith.



Player of the Month for April, Aether Anderson, with Councillor Mary Gallery.



M7, Jeux de Montréal Champions. See p. 8 for names.



Girls instructional hockey most improved players: Elizabeth Colby (centre front) and Xiaoyu (Elsa) Yu (right) with Kai Duenetz and Councillor Matt Aronson.



M9 Inter-City Medals with Kai Duenetz and Councillor Anitra Bostock.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON

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City of Westmount's Semi-Annual Awards Night – Spring 2025 April 9 at Victoria Hall

- Trophies to the Most Improved Skating participants:
Beginner – Victoria Labbé, Maya Navon, Grace Zhao, Ivy Grey Velan
Intermediate – Geonwoo (Ian) Park, Hao-Yu Tien
Advanced – Emilia Shinder
Powerskating – Laurie Beaupré
- Indoor soccer Sportsmanship Awards:
Boys' Soccer – Yoav Navon, Léon Launay, Agustin Cifuentes
Girls' Soccer – Yun Seo Chung, Maria Lim
- Basketball Sportsmanship Awards:
Dante Camberos, Olivia Chabot
- Girls' instructional hockey Most Improved Player Award:
M9/11 – Xiaoyu (Elsa) Yu
M13/M15 – Elizabeth Colby
- Boys' instructional hockey Most Improved Player Award:
M9 – Kenneth Simmons
M11 – Jack Tucker
M13/15 – Henry Depow
- M7 – Jeux de Montréal Champions:
JingAo Mi, Henry San Gregorio, Alessandro Di Gregorio, Ilan Khazzam, Gabriel Cinq-Mars, Adam Zarrabian, Henri Guilbert and Cedric Pospisil.
- Westmount Minor Hockey Players of the Month for 2024-2025 Season.
October: Marianna Drimtzias,
November: Noah Fox, December: Aberdeen How, January: Jesse Kriebel, February: Pheebie Louie-Philippart, March: Jacob Lubarsky, April: Aether Anderson.
- Junior A Inter-City Sportsmanship Award: Ayden Dorey
- Junior A Inter-City Most Improved Player Award: Teva Cooperstock
- PM18 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:
Holden Kelly – M18 A
Emanuel Rozhansky – M18 B
- M18 Inter-City Most Improved Player Awards:
Spencer Kaplan – M18 A
Hans Zhang – M18 B
- M15 Inter-City Sportsmanship Award:
Luca Robinson – M15 A
Louis Gignac – M15 B
- M15 Inter-City Most Improved Player Award:
Timothee Klein – M15 A
Oscar Mendivil – M15 B
- M13 C Inter-City Lac St Louis Playoff Championship Banner: Lincoln Sala, Julian Dankort, Zachary Guay, Isaac Urman, Noah Fox, Oren Rozhansky, Liam Martelli, Taylor James Wiseman, Aether Anderson and Maxime McNulty.
- M13 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:
Ariane Goulet – M13 AF
Maddox Durocher – M13 A
Zachary Guay – M13 C
- M13 Inter-City Most Improved Player Awards:
Rose Niunka – M13 AF
Lucas Ling – M13 A
Taylor Wiseman – M13 C
- M11 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:
Morgan Piccioni – M11 AF
Kieran Tinker – M11 A
Quillan Anderson – M11 B
- M11 Inter-City Most Improved Player Awards:
Lily Louie-Philippart – M11 AF
Tristan MacDonald – M11 A
Jude Guyot – M11 B
- M9 Inter-City Sportsmanship Awards:
Mila McConnel – M9-3F
Solomon Prupas – M9-1
Walter Sala – M9-2
Cashel Francoeur – M9-3
Trafford How – M9-3
- Lucas Doyon – M9 4
- M9 Inter-City Most Improved Player Awards:
Camille Normandin – M9-3F
Liam Zimmerman – M9-1
Eason Wang – M9-2
Jacob Tarshis Trudeau – M9-3
George Wang – M9-3
Ryan Moosavi – M9-4
- M9 Girls' Inter-City Banner M9-3F:
Alice Lord, Camille Normandin, Kennedy Adam, Lila Domanko, Lyvia Armstrong, Margaret Pencer, Mila McConnell, Pheebie Louie-Philippart and Sofia Zarrabian.
- M9 Inter-City Medals
M9-1: Austin Zhang, Cenxu Wang, Felix Plante, Hudson Shapiro Stotland, Liam Zimmerman, Mason Kaine, Milo Bogdaneris, Solomon Prupas and Vicente Oberto.
M9-2: Eason Wang, Hendrix Durocher, Jasper Iserhoff, Lucas Fontaine, Lucas Guilbert, Milan Haffar, Samuel Ghattas, Walter Sala and Xavier Ince-Cushman.
M9-3 BLACK: Christos Saltos, George Hao Cheng Wang, Guanqiao Wang, Harrison Paseli, Jacob Shatilla, Liam Dancik, Peter Black, Trafford How, Victor Cotnoir and Gabriel Bouhaddi Chartrain.
M9-3 RED: Adam Saheb, Ashley John Dunwoody, Cashel Francoeur, Charlie Wiseman, Jack Himmel, Jacob Tarshis Trudeau, Max David-Lussier, Peter Henry Birzgalis, Pim Edens and Yuho Jang
M9-4: Asher Viesel-Mathieu, Cristian Paul Abou Nassar, Leo Knecht, Lucas Doyon, Malcolm Nickel, Neel Srinvas Aourpally, Runchen Lan, Ryan Moosavi and Jesse Kriebel.

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3015 CH. DE BRESLAY, VILLE-MARIE
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441 AV. PRINCE-ALBERT, WESTMOUNT
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4645 CH. CIRCLE, CDN/NDG
3 BEDS, 2+1 BATHS | **\$1,650,000**



INTRODUCING

486 AV. ARGYLE, WESTMOUNT
4 BEDS, 2+1 BATHS | **\$1,575,000**



INTRODUCING

5022 AV. ROSLYN, CDN/NDG
4 BEDS, 2+2 BATHS | **\$1,525,000**



37 AV. BURTON, WESTMOUNT
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Pour souligner le Jour de la Terre en 2025, la Ville organise plusieurs activités citoyennes. Ces activités gratuites sont offertes aux résidents sur inscription seulement. Les places sont limitées ! westmount.org

Sports et loisirs : inscription pour les activités de l'été
Les inscriptions pour les activités de loisir et le camp d'été à Westmount débutent le **15 avril** pour les résidents. Les inscriptions pour les activités aquatiques et les sports de raquette ouvrent quant à elles le **22 avril**. westmount.org/inscriptionenligne

Fermeture temporaire de l'escalier Holton/Mount Pleasant
L'escalier reliant les avenues Holton et Mount Pleasant sera temporairement fermé à partir d'avril. La date exacte des travaux de réparation est à confirmer. westmount.org

Fermeture partielle de l'av. Claremont du 22 au 25 avril pour travaux d'égouts
Des travaux d'excavation pour le raccordement à l'eau et aux égouts du 500 av. Claremont nécessiteront la fermeture de l'av. Claremont entre les avenues Windsor et Chesterfield du mardi 22 avril au vendredi 25 avril. westmount.org

Élections fédérales 2025 : bureau de vote au Victoria Hall
Un bureau de vote pour les prochaines élections fédérales canadiennes sera ouvert dans la salle de concert du Victoria Hall (4626, rue Sherbrooke O.). Pour plus de détails, visitez westmount.org



Earth Day Activities
To celebrate Earth Day in 2025, the City is organizing several citizen-oriented activities. These free activities are available to residents by registration only. Spaces are limited! westmount.org

Sports and Recreation: registration for summer activities
Registration for activities and the summer camp in Westmount starts on **April 15** for residents. Registration for aquatic and racket sports will begin on **April 22**. westmount.org/online-registration

Temporary closure of the Holton/Mount Pleasant staircase
The staircase connecting Holton Avenue and Mount Pleasant Avenue will be temporarily closed starting in April. The exact date for the start of the repair work is yet to be confirmed. westmount.org

Partial closure of Claremont Ave. from April 22 to 25 for sewer work
Excavation work for water and sewer connections of 500 Claremont Ave. will require the closure of Claremont Ave. between Windsor Ave. and Chesterfield Ave. from Tuesday, April 22 to Friday, April 25. westmount.org

2025 Federal election: polling station at Victoria Hall
A polling station for the next Canadian federal election will be open in the Victoria Hall concert hall (4626 Sherbrooke St. W.) For more information and schedule, visit westmount.org

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Club de jeux de société
24 avril, 18 h Salle Westmount. Avec Dorian Pineros. Êtes-vous novice en matière de jeux de société ou spécialiste chevronné? Vous êtes invité à notre Club de jeux de société bihebdomadaire. Nous fournirons une variété de jeux, mais vous pouvez apporter le vôtre! westlib.org

Art Westmount 2025
Les samedi et dimanche 26 et 27 avril, de 10 h à 17 h, Victoria Hall. Cet événement célèbre plus de 30 artistes locaux en leur offrant l'occasion d'exposer leurs oeuvres, sans commission, dans un lieu charmant. Venez encourager la créativité locale et trouver un cadeau unique ! westmount.org

Ciné-club : Brother (2022)
29 avril, 14 h, Victoria Hall. En anglais. Le film suit l'évolution au fil des ans du lien entre les frères Francis et Michael, fils d'immigrés jamaïcains, alors qu'ils sont confrontés aux questions de masculinité, d'identité, d'amour et de famille tout en grandissant dans un quartier de Scarborough qui met leurs rêves à l'épreuve à chaque tournant. westmount.org



Parlons opéra! : La Bohème
4 mai, 14 h, Victoria Hall. En collaboration avec l'Opéra de Montréal. Quatre jeunes artistes vivent ensemble dans le Quartier latin parisien. Ils rêvent de tout, et ne se soucient de rien... La nuit où Mimi frappera à la porte du jeune poète Rodolfo bouleversera le cours de leur vie. Trop vite, la dure réalité leur fera perdre leurs illusions. westmount.org

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Board Game
April 24, 6 p.m., Westmount room. With Dorian Pineros. Are you new to board games or a seasoned pro? Join us for our bi-weekly Board Game Club. We'll provide a variety of games, but you can bring one of your own! westlib.org

Art Westmount 2025
Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Victoria Hall. This event celebrates over 30 local artists by offering them the opportunity to showcase their work, commission-free, in a charming venue. Come support local creativity and find a unique gift! westmount.org

Film Club: Brother (2022)
April 29, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. This film follows the evolving bond between brothers Francis and Michael, sons of Jamaican immigrants, through the years as they face questions of masculinity, identity, love, and family while growing up in a Scarborough neighbourhood that tests their dreams at every turn. westmount.org

Let's Talk Opera!: La Bohème
May 4, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. In collaboration with l'Opéra de Montréal. Four young artists are living together in Paris' Quartier latin. Their dreams are many and their cares are few... The night when Mimi knocks on the young poet Rodolfo's door marks disruption in the course of their lives. All too quickly, the stark realities of life shatter their illusions. westmount.org



Council ‘stands behind’ city’s planning, but cannot move forward given costs, ‘insufficient acceptance’

Cllr. Aronson comments on cancelled Claremont Ave. project

“This whole exercise – what we think about when we do this job is that we are the servants of the people,” explained Councillor Matt Aronson. “They put us here to make good decisions, to watch the public purse, and to listen to the needs and wants of our residents.

“It would be preferable if everything we planned was executed exactly the way we’d hoped it would be.

Claremont cont’d from p. 1

than the budget, Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* after the vote. As a result, the project has been cancelled. This results in part from the cost of concrete.

The cancellation resolution was moved by Councillor Elisabeth Roux and seconded by Councillor Aronson. Councillor Conrad Peart, commissioner of infrastructure, was among those not attending.

The way forward was not mentioned at the hastily called session that followed on the heels of the regular monthly council meeting April 7. At that time, several residents continued to raise ongoing concerns about the safety of a proposed re-design that included a concrete cycling path.

“But it is better for us to do our jobs properly and that what is done... is done in the spirit of good fiscal management and respect for our residents, and their opinions and desires, than for us to lead the city down a path that would provide better infrastructure over the next 50 years without the certainty that we’ve been fully faithful to our residents and to our responsibilities.

Coincidentally, Claremont is to be closed April 22 to 25 between Windsor and Chesterfield for excavation work concerning water and sewer connections to the apartment building construction site at 500 Claremont.

In a statement the next day, the mayor added that “We are also beginning a street assessment to repair the concrete base, paving, and sidewalks. This plan would therefore leave the road in its current configuration. This will allow us to address the condition of the road surface, and we can then proceed with repairs to other roads in the city.”

The council, she added, “was not aware of certain financial aspects of the consultants’ estimates (for re-doing Claremont) until the project went out to tender.”

“In other words,” he added, “we stand behind the great infrastructure planning and urban design done by the city’s professionals in re-building a better Claremont for the future citizens of Westmount, but, with regret, we cannot move forward with a project where the costs aren’t what we can responsibly spend nor where there is insufficient acceptance by those who participated in our public consultations.”

Now, “alternative ways are being taken to address the condition of the street.”

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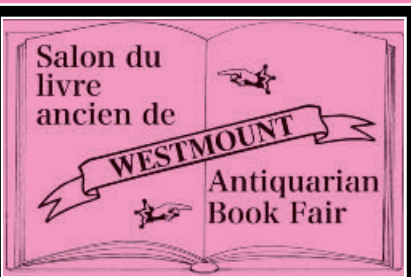
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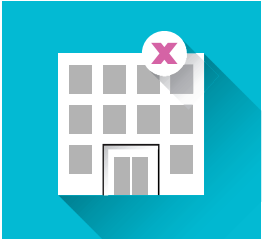
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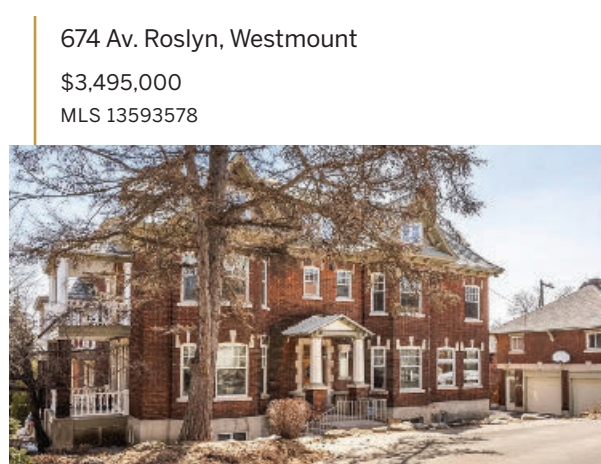
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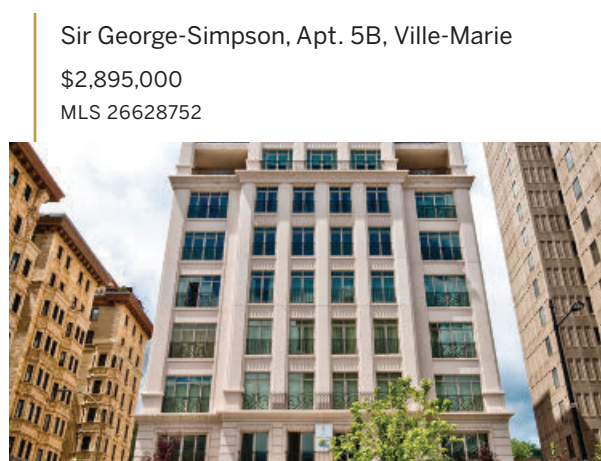
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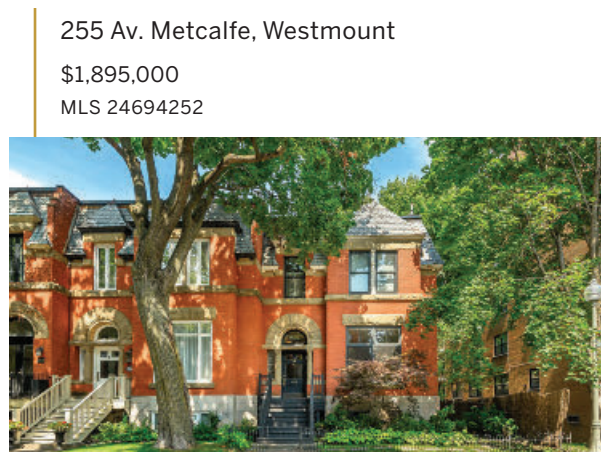
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Police Report

Car thefts and a break-in attempt keep police on their toes

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

A series of criminal incidents committed in Westmount – including two car thefts and an attempted business break-in – contributed to an exceptionally busy week for police at Station 12.

The week didn't start off well for a family using the services of a children's daycare on Sherbrooke St. near the corner of Wood Ave.

Around noon, after parking their baby stroller outside the entrance before going inside, the stroller – worth \$830 – was stolen.

According to Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit, a surveillance camera recording of the incident picked up images of a suspect lurking a few moments next to the stroller, before taking it and walking away.

"Some strollers are worth a lot of money," said Yigit, noting that parents sometimes don't take this into consideration when they

leave their strollers in an unsupervised location while they enter an establishment.

He said it's always best to keep an eye on a stroller, or take it inside if possible.

Thieves fail to enter Optical Center

Would-be thieves who attempted a break-in at the Optical Center eyewear store on Sherbrooke St. near the corner of Claremont around 11 pm on April 7 apparently gave up after failing to get in through a back door.

"The alarm went off and officers responded," said Cst. Yigit, noting that when they arrived on the scene, they found no immediate signs of disturbance at the front where the main entrance was locked and secure.

After looking through the front windows and determining that everything was in order inside, they proceeded to the rear of the building where they saw that a hinge on the back door had been removed.

Security camera footage investigators

viewed later turned up images of two male suspects trying without success to break in.

Two vehicles stolen


After a period of de-escalation in the number of cars being stolen in Westmount, two vehicles disappeared last week from parking spaces on city streets.

The first, a BMW X3 SUV, had been parked overnight between April 8-9 on Sherbrooke St. between Clarke and Olivier avenues.

No signs of forced entry such as broken window glass were found on the ground where the car had been parked.

The owner reported in a complaint filed with police that when he went to use the car the morning after parking, it was gone.

And a Toyota RAV4 that was parked from April 9-10 on Victoria Ave. near the corner of The Boulevard was reported stolen by its owner, who told police it also disappeared overnight.



Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

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website at www.sPCA.com. Then scroll to his information page by his identification number, 200267114, and consult the table of the SPCA daily opening hours to plan your visit: from Monday to Friday, 3 pm to 8 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm.

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Senior loses \$10,000 after wallet stolen by pickpockets

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

The owner of the Metro supermarket on Victoria Ave. says management is working closely with police while also taking measures to improve store surveillance following reports of pickpockets stealing from elderly customers – including a Westmount woman last week who was defrauded out of \$10,000.

Details from that incident, on April 6 around 5 pm, were shared with the *Westmount Independent* the victim's granddaughter.

"Today my 85-year-old grandmother was approached by scammers in the aisles of the store who intentionally distracted her to then steal her wallet right from her purse," she said in an e-mail.

"They then phoned her not long after pretending to be the bank and claiming to cancel her cards and claiming that they noticed concerning transactions. In reality, they took this opportunity to gain more personal banking info from her while pretending to be the bank."

People, especially more elderly people, "should be informed of this behaviour that tricks you into distraction for easy theft," she said, while adding that she was left with the impression that two suspects were

involved, and that her grandmother was probably not the only person they preyed on.

She said her grandmother described the male suspect as being in his late 30s with dark hair, and that he approached her under the pretext of having her read the label on a mayonnaise jar, because he wanted to be sure there were no eggs among the ingredients since he had an allergy.

One-minute distraction

"As she was reading it to him during a very short exchange – couldn't have been longer than a minute – a woman brushed up closely against her on the other side," she said, noting that the woman, with long dark hair and also seemingly in her late 30s, appeared to be the other suspect's partner.

"Then all of a sudden they were gone. And I guess she then realized a short time afterwards that her purse – which was not in her shopping cart but on her arm – was lighter. And so she went to look and realized she no longer had her wallet."

She said she was especially shocked that the suspects contacted her grandmother on her cell phone so quickly after stealing her wallet. They called again later that

evening trying to pry out more information. There remains an unanswered question as to how they obtained her phone number.

"I'm not sure how they would have found that so quickly," she said. "There was a lot in her wallet, but I don't know that there would have been anything giving away her cell phone number. I think that's what was most disconcerting about all of this."

Metro Westmount franchise owner Gajan Rajasingam told the *Independent* that even with strategically-placed security cameras, staff have trouble keeping track of all the comings and goings as there are three entrances and exits at the store.

"They work in gangs," he said, acknowledging that store management has been aware for some time they have a pick-pocketing problem. He said the suspects' tactics include wearing hoodies and protective surgical masks to hide their facial features from the security cameras.

Rajasingam said staff have been instructed to pay closer attention to individuals wearing face masks or other accessories concealing their features, or who are seen behaving suspiciously while in the store.

Local federal debate: Liberals won't be there, Rhinos not asked

The April 16 federal election debate at Victoria Hall at 7 pm that has been organized by the Westmount Municipal Association to meet the candidates will not feature sitting MP Anna Gainey from the Liberal Party, and Rhinoceros Party candidate Stephen Hensley was not even invited to take part.

Hensley told the *Independent* on April 13 that he was only aware of the debate via an ad in the *Independent* (see April 8, p. 8).

The Gainey campaign did not respond to a request for a profile interview prior to the *Independent's* press deadline (see p. 16), but it did provide a statement regarding this debate.

"Francophone voters living in Westmount and throughout the entire riding of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Westmount deserve to hear in real time from federal party leaders, in addition to hearing from their local candidates..."

"It is regrettable that, despite our early inter- continued on p. 16

What do Darwin, Voltaire, Dickens & Harry Potter have in common?

Well, they'll all be at the Westmount Antiquarian Book Fair this coming Saturday, April 19th – or at least their books will be there.

Now in its 32nd year, the annual spring fix for Montreal bibliophiles at the Greene Avenue Community Centre, will bring together twenty-one dealers from Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, offering used, secondhand and rare books and all kinds of paper and ephemera. "Whether your taste runs to art, Canadiana, travel, natural history or first editions, in English or French, you're sure to find something that catches your eye and suits your pocket," says Susan Ravdin who, with her husband Wilfrid de Freitas, has been organizing this bibliophilic rite of spring for the past 32 years. "Don't be put off by the word bibliophile" says Wilfrid, "it just means someone who really enjoys and collects books and related items, some might say, excessively!"

The book fair runs from 10 to 5 on Saturday, April 19th at the Centre Greene, 1090 Greene Avenue, Westmount, QC H3Z 1Z9. Admission is \$3. More info at the website:

www.defreitasbooks.com/wbf.html
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Federal election candidates

Liberals' Gainey, unaffiliated 'Trainman' Montagano do not reply in time

By JENNIFER BALL

The *Independent* reached out to the campaign of current MP Anna Gainey the week of April 7 for an interview with her but there was no response in time for the *Independent's* print deadline.

Additionally, the *Independent* messaged

Alex (Trainman) Montagano via his Facebook page, requesting an interview with him, but he did not respond to the *Independent* in time to meet the print deadline. On April 7, he listed all major program points for his candidacy in the NDG-Westmount riding in this year's 2025 federal election on his Facebook page.

Federal election candidates

Drabkin running for Conservatives in NDG-Westmount



From left, Neil Drabkin with Senator Leo Housakos at his 2019 NDG-Westmount campaign launch.

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Neil Drabkin, a perennial Conservative candidate in Montreal-area ridings over several decades, is running for the party in NDG-Westmount in the April 28 election, but was unavailable for an interview with the *Independent* for this issue.

Drabkin, a Conservative candidate in a half-dozen elections since the early 1990s, in Pierrefonds-Dollard, Mount Royal and NDG-Westmount, is a lawyer and president of a consulting firm that assists foreign enterprises seeking to invest in Canada.

He is also a political commentator who has appeared on CTV and is heard regularly on CJAD 800 radio.

According to a statement issued by his campaign team, Drabkin began his career as a legal counsel and senior policy advisor to Minister of State for Immigration and Citizenship Gerry Weiner in the Conservative government led by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Later, in Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper's government, Drabkin

was chief of staff to Stockwell Day during Day's time as minister of Public Safety, minister of International Trade and president of the Treasury Board.

Drabkin served as chief of staff to Joe Oliver when Oliver was minister of Natural Resources in the Harper government. Drabkin also served as a federal prosecutor. In a statement he submitted to the *Independent*, Drabkin expressed his strong support for the Conservatives' leader.

"Pierre Poilievre is a dynamic leader with a sound plan for Canada that will make him a great prime minister," he said. "That is why I am pleased to support him in his efforts to form a government that will put Canada First – For A Change."

NDG-Westmount is one of the most secure Liberal Party bastions in Canada. Conservatives last scored a major breakthrough in ridings in the Montreal region in 1988, when the former Progressive Conservative Party won several traditionally Liberal ridings on the island. Westmount (then Westmount-St. Henri) was not one of them.

Federal election candidates

Lewis-Richmond running for NDP in NDG-Westmount

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Housing is on a list of priorities for NDG-Westmount NDP candidate Malcolm Lewis-Richmond should he be elected on April 28.

A public affairs and labour relations professional, the 31-year-old longtime NDG resident's work brought him into contact with government officials in Quebec City and Ottawa, leading him to conclude that politics is one of the only ways to bring about change.

"Organizations and associations have a lot of weight," said Lewis-Richmond, who is credited in a biography on the NDP's website as the founder of Youth 4 Youth, an organization dedicated to the success of young English-speaking Quebecers.

He caught a glimpse of how a constituency office operates while working as an attaché for former NDP MP Isabelle Morin, who represented NDG-Lachine (as part of the current riding then was). "So, I really feel ready for this job if I am elected," he said.

The NDP came within 642 votes of winning the former riding of Westmount-Ville Marie in 2011, when the party won a record number of seats in Quebec during a surging "orange wave."

Since then, support for the Liberals in NDG-Westmount has returned to levels well above 50 percent, although the NDP continues to finish a second, albeit distantly, with the Conservatives not far behind in third place.

Housing, NDP's role during minority government

In discussing housing, he said young people have been virtually shut out of the home-buying market, nor can they find suitable apartments at decent rents. Part of the NDP's plan is to make more federally-owned land available for new housing projects.

He noted that the NDP played a key role in the minority Trudeau Liberal government's decisions over the past four years to introduce federally-funded dental care and pharmacare programs. "A lot of people aren't fortunate enough to have employer plans for insurance," he said.

"So, many seniors are getting insured dental care for the first time. In Quebec alone, almost a million people are using that program. We would have never had that if the Liberals had been a majority. That's why we need NDP voices in parliament to ensure that progressive policies



Seen here at the Westmount greenhouse on April 2, Malcolm Lewis-Richmond is running for the NDP in NDG-Westmount.

move forward."

Although the NDP's policies have usually placed far less emphasis on business-driven economic growth than have the Liberals or the Conservatives, he said his party's policy on national revenue to pay for social programs would include cracking down on corporate tax havens.

"There are a lot of companies that operate in Canada that have their headquarters elsewhere and don't pay taxes here," he said, adding that e-commerce remains inadequately taxed. "There's a lot that we can do to ensure that these corporations pay their fair share."

Federal debate, cont'd from p. 15

vention, no accommodation was made for Westmounters to address the scheduling conflict between the Westmount Municipal Association's debate and the French federal leaders' debate on April 16. Having senior responsibilities with the national campaign, Anna Gainey will be supporting Liberal Party Leader Mark Carney that evening in preparing to communicate with Quebecers and all French-speaking Canadians...

"Anna looks forward to other opportunities to engage with Westmounters on their priorities and the Liberal plan to build Canada strong."

Federal election candidates

Greens' Downey: Climate change is not taken as seriously as it need be

By JENNIFER BALL

Arnold Downey is the Green Party candidate running in the NDG-Westmount riding in the federal election, and he contends that climate change is not taken as seriously as it needs to be in this country.

He sat down with the *Independent* on April 7 to discuss what prompted him to run and to explain how his professional experience aligns with the platform of the Green Party.

Downey studied chemistry and atmospheric science at McGill University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 2018. He has pursued a career as an environmental chemist and a chemical technologist.

The Green Party's dedication to evidence-based policy in its approach to the climate crisis matches his own game plan.

"Evidence-based decision making is the biggest thing that I would transfer from my background as a scientist to being an MP," he said.

While many Canadians reeling from recent losses in their equity and fixed income portfolios caused by Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs may not be in a mood to share his optimism, Downey sees what is happening to the Canadian economy – as caused by the expansionist, protectionist policies of the US – as an enormous opportunity.

Opportunity knocks?

A juncture to "Transform our economy from being in the 20th century to being in the 21st century..."

"Some of the things that confront us give us the opportunity to move our economy forward, to be more sustainable and more efficient."



Arnold Downey, who grew up in the Westmount-NDG riding, is running for the Green Party in the federal election. The photo was taken on April 7 in Tommy's Café in Alexis Nihon.

Downey said that even if we return to normal times with the USA, being more self reliant is a must. "We have a lot of raw resources, but we don't have the capacity to process them."

And what about the rise of Canadian nationalism and inter-provincial cooperation that has been correlated with Trump's threat of annexing Canada?

Downey asserts that breaking down trade barriers across the provinces has been a Green Party policy for as long as he can remember. "To have our economies more synergistic with each other has always been a priority for the Green Party so it is good to see other parties jumping on that now that it is a necessity."

Were he to be elected in the NDG-Westmount riding, he says he would strive to be the most careful and representative person for this community.

"People have the freedom to vote for what they want in this riding and it's an important thing to do because it applies pressure to the Liberal government and stops them from taking advantage of this riding: NDG-Westmount."

"...If you agree with [the Green Party's platform] use your vote to say that without the fear of [electing] a Conservative because they never get above 20 percent here."

Federal election candidates

Perez: People's Party of Canada is the new centre-right

By JENNIFER BALL

Marc Perez is the candidate running for the People's Party of Canada (PPC) – a political platform he asserts is the new centre-right.

According to his official bio on the PPC's website – which identifies him as its NDG-Westmount candidate – Perez is driven by a deep commitment to his community and defending the core values of freedom, personal responsibility, respect and fairness.

Per his LinkedIn page, he is the organization manager of Let's talk about Quebec/Parlons du Québec, which is a "Montreal-based think-tank conducting comprehensive research, analyzing data, and cultivating innovative solutions to offer informed advice on diverse political, economic and social issues."

He sat down with the *Independent* on April 8 to discuss what prompted him to run and to explain how his professional experience aligns with the platform that Maxime Bernier – a former Conservative MP and cabinet minister in Stephen Harper's government – formed in 2018.

"When I read Bernier's platform, I thought that there were a lot of good things about it that were original and I [discovered] that he has been saying these things for many, many years..."

"The Liberals and the Conservatives are just repeating [it]. If [those political parties] are going to copy the platform, [voters] might as well go for the original guy."

He did not provide examples of such alleged copying.

The PPC ran candidates in 315 ridings of Canada's total 338 ridings in the 2019 federal election, but no candidate was elected under its banner and Bernier lost his bid for personal re-election in the Beauce. The *Independent* wondered why they are in the mix in 2025.

"The Liberals just have not been listening," Perez said.

The PPC's platform focuses on "the economy, housing, and housing affordability and inflation."

Incentivizing developers

As news stories have indicated, few developers are willing to create low-cost housing due to their return on investment. Would Perez work on a plan to incentivize them, were he to be elected?

"They have to be incentivized," he affirmed. "These [developers] are not charity cases. At the end of the day, they need



Marc Perez is running for the People's Party of Canada in Westmount-NDG riding in the general election. This photo was taken on April 8 in Alexis Nihon shopping mall.

to pay their workers and from everything that I have been reading these [developers] are saying that it is not worth it for [them] to get into these projects because [they] will be losing money."

Perez said his first priority, were he to win the MP seat, is to "Familiarize myself with whatever is going to reduce the financial burden on people..."

"How can we improve the economy? How can we improve the housing situation and how can we fix the immigration system?..."

"I think those are the really the three core issues that can have a massive domino effect on the lives of people immediately..."

"I believe that once that's done, then we could start working on other things."

As voters make their decisions on whom they will elect – or, as the case maybe re-elect – Perez was clear that he has a handle on Maxime Bernier's platform and that it is now more centre-right than the Conservatives.

"I think that the whole paradigm has shifted..."

"The Liberals are no longer centre-left; they are extreme left. The Conservatives are now the extreme right. I always want to be in the [centre to the right] where we try to find a balance to everything."

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Federal election candidates

Félix-Antoine Brault running for Bloc in NDG-Westmount

By Martin C. Barry


After finishing fourth or fifth in NDG-Westmount since 2015, the Bloc Québécois's candidate in the April 28 election will be trying to improve on that record. Results for the last four NDG-Westmount elections show that the Bloc Québécois ran a different candidate each

time. The latest, Félix-Antoine Brault, has been an NDG resident since early childhood. According to a biography posted on the Bloc Québécois website, Brault has worked for the past five years as a specialized French-language instructor at the CEGEP du Vieux Montréal, while also pursuing post-secondary studies in linguistics and

political science. "Félix-Antoine Brault is a dynamic young man who puts living together and collective well-being at the centre of his commitment," reads the web statement translated from French. He has been active in student affairs as well in labour union issues, the website states, firstly as member of the board of a

college campus cooperative, but also as a union rep during a 2023-2024 common front labour dispute. The Independent attempted to reach Brault for an interview through the e-mail address provided on the Bloc Québécois's website, but we did not hear back from him in time for our deadline.

March sales: Getting ready, mark-up at only 1.8%



Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

Note: The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in March 2025. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph at the right offers a picture of these trends over time.

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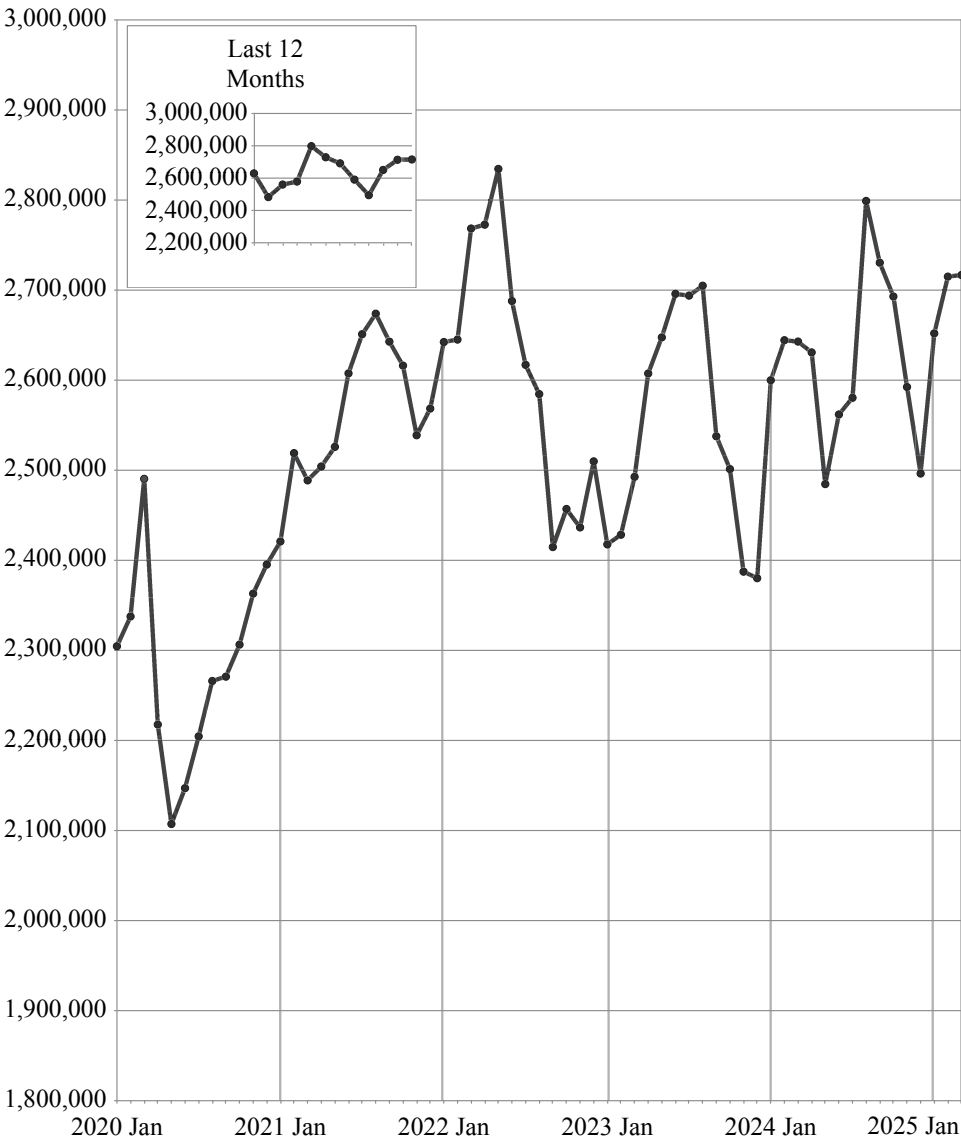
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The coming of spring does not seem to have spurred Westmount's real estate market – yet – but there are signs of life at the lower end of the market that might percolate as we get further into the spring. Local agents are reporting 10 residential sales agreed to in March and posted another four sales for February, which now sets the total volume for that month at 11, including one house going for more than \$5 million. The March list's highest price was just under \$3,500,000 while the lowest involved a house on Burton Ave., selling for \$750,000, by far the lowest price for a Westmount house this year (though there is another house nearby that is asking less than that). The average of the 10 sales was \$1,985,800, a raw average matched in December last year but otherwise the lowest since November of 2023 and one of very few averages to be below \$2 million since the middle of 2018. The average mark-up over valuation in March was only 1.8 percent, with two double-digit mark-downs as low as 19.4 percent, and two similar mark-ups, at 16.3 and 16.4 percent. In overall terms, it would seem the market is getting ready to produce a good spring market, with a sharp drop in the number of houses listed between \$1 and \$2 million (from 43 to 31) and a similar increase in those asking between \$2 and \$4 million, which might be pushing up prices at the lower end of the scale. Total residential listings in mid-April numbered 129, down by four in the last month, as demand increases the spring market. Agents announced the sale of one \$3-million condominium in March, whose five condo sales brought the total for the first quarter of 2025 to 15, going down to \$650,000 for a lower-floor condo at 1 Wood Ave., which also brought the biggest mark-down for a condo in the first quarter at -33.6 percent. The next-lowest price was for part of a duplex on Burton Ave., \$812,000, which represented the highest mark-up of the quarter for condos, at 65.5 percent. Adjacent-Westmount, which reported exactly zero sales in January, began to

Average adjusted price for 'typical' Westmount house, by month, January 2020 to March 2025, based on accepted offer dates



revive in February and March, with four and six sales, respectively, in eastern NDG and the Trafalgar-Daulac area, but none on the tracts north or southeast of Westmount, nor the Square Mile, so we might

expect more activity in adjacent areas as the spring blossoms. So far this year, the agents have posted 10 house rentals in a range between \$4,800 and \$9,825, with another 20 available for rent.

Federal election: On the streets

NDG-Westmount riding seems to be leaning Liberal, again

BY JADA CHENG

As the federal election approaches, the *Independent* found that political interest is rising in Westmount, and – in an unscientific sampling – the mood remains Liberal, the longtime result for ridings that have



Silvia Bortoluzzi, owner of Boutique Sisi on Victoria, on April 4.

included Westmount.

In Victoria village, the pace of spring feels typical – sidewalks busy, conversations flowing from café patios – but there's a sharper attention to politics than usual. And more than anything, locals are drawn to Mark Carney for what his résumé implies: stability, international footing and a clear break from populist drift.

For some residents, this election feels more charged, especially in light of political developments in the US.

"What a turnaround! It's rare for Canadian politics to be exciting," says Silvia Bortoluzzi, owner of Boutique Sisi. "But this time, there's a lot of concern – and I would even say fear." She sees a growing sense among her clientele that Canadians need to band together to emerge as a more resilient country amid growing US unpredictability.

"It's insane," she comments, describing Trump's actions unfolding south of the border. The relationship between Canada and the US has changed forever, in a way she finds unfortunate. "But I feel confident in the new Liberal leader. He's well respected globally and at home."

With tariffs flaring and US ties fraying, some voters see Carney's economic background as a central reason for their support. His record at the Bank of Canada and Bank of England is an asset for them,

especially as tensions with the US over trade and tariffs continue.

Canada's eggs in one basket?

Reece Solowsky, who was passing through NDG near Sherbrooke St. and Vendôme, says the election is long overdue



Patrick Marlor on the job at Victoria Ave.'s L'Autre Choix on April 4.

and arrives as Canada's economic vulnerabilities become clearer.

"We built our economy on the assumption that the US would always be an open market. That's no longer guaranteed," he says. "We relied on a weak dollar to boost exports and called it a strategy. Now people are starting to see how risky it is to put all our eggs in one basket."

Even those who admit they aren't following the campaign closely are picking up on deeper shifts. Patrick Marlor, prepping for university while working full-time at L'Autre Choix on Victoria Ave., says his support for Mark Carney stems from the candidate's clear stance on Trump. "He's taken a strong stance against what Trump is doing in America," he says. For Marlor, the bigger issue is Canada's economic direction. "The future of our economy is at stake. We've been really dependent on the US – now we're shifting toward other allies, like Europe and Mexico. That's a pretty big deal."

It's a sentiment stated more sharply by Ryan Nguyen, a political science master's student at McGill. "Trump symbolizes a rise in anti-intellectualism," he says. "He oversimplifies complex issues to push easy solutions. Carney is the anti-Trump – he's the intellectual, the quote-unquote 'globalist' conspiracy theorists talk about. But he comes from a very well-educated place."

Nguyen contends that Canada has its own version of Trump in Pierre Poilievre. "Carney is a good counterweight. He's a refreshing change of pace for the Liberal Party right now."

Conservative-leaning views are rarer in Westmount, the *Independent* found. At



Ryan Nguyen at Lululemon on Sherbrooke St. on April 6.

Roost, a clothing store on Sherbrooke, recent chatter among staff and customers has circled around what Poilievre's rise might mean for Canada's social direction.

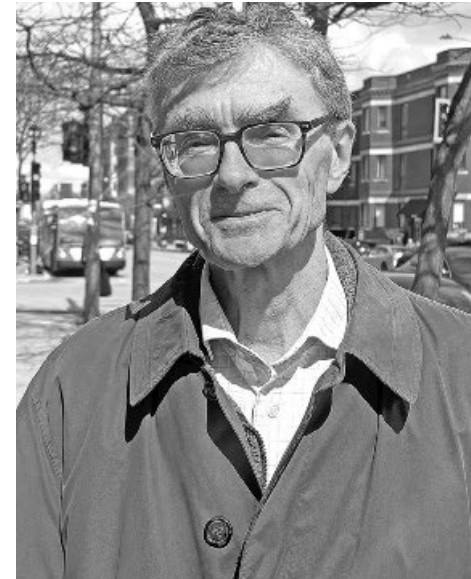
What retailers hear...

One young retail worker remarked that people coming through to the shop tend to echo the same thought: *God forbid Canada turns into the US*. It's not a prediction so much as a shorthand for deeper anxieties – about backsliding on women's rights, protections for minorities and the culture-war tone Poilievre is seen to be encouraging.

She recalled a woman shopping for

travel gear who asked for a Canada hat – just to avoid being mistaken for an American abroad. "It's a bit scary," she says. "But that's why it's important to stay informed, and to vote."

As of now, no one whom the *Independent* talked to predicted upheaval. The bets



Reece Solowsky on Sherbrooke near Vendôme, just west of Westmount, on April 6.

are familiar. And even here, where optimism clings to what the national polls are saying, no one can say for sure what lies ahead.

"Fun fact," said a woman with that thought who stepped into the conversation but declined to give her name, "There are actually young people who are leaning more Conservative. It's no surprise. We've had 15 years of Liberal leadership, and people are tired of how much we're paying in taxes." More than policy, though, what seemed to frustrate her most was the cultural shift in corporate messaging and political rhetoric.

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Art

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Don't miss *Bad Girls Only*.

No. It's not a rock concert: it's the new exhibition at the MMFA. The bold show presents *Women and the Seven Deadly Sins*, traditionally represented as female allegorical stories since the Middle Ages.

The prints and drawings date from the late 15th through the 17th century. Starring two prints by Albrecht Durer and a unique series of preparatory drawings by Hendrick Goltzius, the works are part of the museum's collection. Goltzius' preparatory drawings are shown with the engraved versions made by Jacob Matham, his student and stepson. They are displayed side by side for the first time in decades.

The images and explanatory texts examine the reasons why the female body – often eroticized – was used to illustrate sin. The beautifully elegant works from cen-

Bad girls, seven deadly sins arrive in Montreal

turies ago are counterbalanced by a touch of today.

An interactive wall features cards inviting audiences to recount their own experiences on the ways that rhetoric around the seven sins shows up in our daily lives. A video helps us understand the technically sophisticated process of translating a drawing into print.

"With these rarely seen works, visitors will have a vivid snapshot of a fascinating and ever-relevant period in history," stated Mary-Dailey Desmarais, chief curator MMFA.

Also attending the media premiere were the MMFA's director Stéphane Aquin and Chloé Pelletier, curator European art (before 1800), who curated *Bad Girls Only: Women and the Seven Deadly Sins*.

The day I visited, the museum was an art magnet. Lines of art-admirers reminded me of the energy at New York's Met. The special exhibition is on until August 10. Free for museum members and ages 25 and under.



Mary-Dailey Desmarais and Stéphane Aquin flank Chloé Pelletier.

Tiggy Wiggly



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Here is a delightful kitten, a precious tabby who has been taken in from the cold by a caring family and then given care, vetting and now the opportunity of a forever adoption.

Tiggy Wiggly is so handsome and affectionate, ready for cuddles and playtime. He has just returned from his first vetting, the beginning of his inoculation program and neutering. He is doing well, basking in



sunshine and tucking into meals heartily.

If you would like more information on Tiggy Wiggly and more adorable kitten photographs, do not hesitate to contact Leia on her cellular 514.677.3801 or her email leia.cheng@gmail.com.

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Art

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Whimsical balloons fluttered bravely in the bitter wind at Alan Klinkhoff’s eponymous art gallery. The festive moment was in celebration of Tobie Steinhouse’s 100th birthday.

A long-time Westmount resident, the artist enjoys international recognition. The painter and printmaker studied at the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris and had her first solo show in that city in 1957.

Today, her art is represented in collections such as the Musée d’art contemporain, The National Gallery of Canada, the Canadian Embassy in Moscow, and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA).

The Klinkhoff show featured oil paintings ranging from colourful abstracts of New York harbour to subtly shaded works capturing the feeling of Montreal and Parisian streets.

Her use of light is a far cry from Caravaggio’s *chiaroscuro*: strong contrasts of light and dark.

Tobie’s scenes flicker
with quiet highlights: a

continued on p. 22

Steinhouse turns 100 at Galerie Alan Klinkhoff



Stephan Steinhouse, Alexander Steinhouse, Tobie Steinhouse, Adam Steinhouse and his wife Melanie Mauthner.



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Social notes, cont'd from p. 21
poetic light.
As the elegant centenarian arrived, guests sang “Happy Birthday.”

Yasmeen Khoury of Alan Klinkhoff Gallery presented a splendid birthday cake, complementing the macaroons and brownies nestled alluringly by the welcoming “100” balloon.

Arriving admirers included Tobie’s sons **Adam Steinhouse** (with his wife **Melanie Mauthner**) and **Stephan Steinhouse** with his son **Alexander Steinhouse**.

Noted in the crowded room were local res **Ira Roth**, **Julian Armstrong**, MP **Anna Gainey**, **Sandra Clementson**, **Carole Duhaime**, **Christopher Ross**, **Vincent Prager**, **Dorota Kozinska**, author **Judith Adamson** and **Karen Thomson**. Also seen were **Anne Grace**, curator Modern Art at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and from McGill University’s Visual Art Collection **Wendy Owens**, director of curatorial affairs, and **Michelle Macleod**, assistant curator.

Putting this show together was “a wonderful experience,” recounted Westmounter **Alan Klinkhoff**, who curated the special one-off exhibition. “I spent hours at Tobie’s house choosing works for this magic birthday party.”

KLINKHOFF.CA
Anne Grace of the MMFA. ►



Peart twins return to Vic village with GOODEE



Retail Review
VERONICA REDGRAVE

There’s a new shop in the neighbourhood. And what a shop it is! A curated home and lifestyle destination, GOODEE brings together the culture and values of good design and good purpose.

The owners, twin brothers Byron and Dexter Peart, sourced heritage crafts from around the world. It is their first permanent store arising from their online platform GoodeeWorld.com, which was launched in 2019.

(The pair, whose brother is city councillor Conrad Peart, operated the WANT Apothecary clothing and beauty products store at 4960 Sherbrooke near Claremont for a decade. See June 7-8, 2011, p. 8. and March 23, 2021, p. RE-18.)

Supporting local artisans, GOODEE spotlights hand-craft skills offering unique pieces that are useful. “We feel that conspicuous consumption has reached an unsustainable point,” stated Dexter. “Discovering and supporting inspiring brands has always been our passion,” added Byron. “We choose them according to strict criteria such as sustainability, social impact, heritage production and organic materials.”

A few examples caught my eye at the store’s opening launch: EcoBirdy, which recycles discarded plastic toys into sculp-

turesque seating for children; Haeckels, a grooming brand that manufactures natural products from sustainable resources; and Skagerak, a family-owned, sustainable-design company from Denmark.

After admiring the shop’s “installation” wall at the back, where products displayed echo the season (e.g. Mother’s Day, gardening), I perused the collections, admiring iconic Niwaki Sentei garden scissors from Japan; a squirrel-safe (one hopes!) bird feeder by Pidat; fabulous touch-worthy baskets made in Ghana of elephant grass and a flower frog with brass pins (a hard-to-find little object to place in a vase, where it helps flowers to stand up and stay straight.)

These maestros of merchandise have tapped into the *zeitgeist*. The rustic *luxe* they offer is more than just decorative. It is an invitation to appreciate an artistry while carrying out a daily task.

That their unerring eye is a touchstone for today is proven by GOODEE’s former sites. GOODEE pop-up shops were selected to present at The Whitney Shop, The Whitney Museum, New York; Platform LA, California and the Phi Centre in Montreal. While some of us are at least trying to avoid fast fashion, these artisan ambassadors offer statement styles with a difference.

I use my little Swedish table crumb sweeper daily and treasure my elegant raku-style black vase “Made in Quebec.”

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Dexter and Byron Peart.

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