

Change-over may cause 'temporary' disruptions

## City aims to launch newly designed website this week

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city is aiming to launch its new website April 23 to replace its 12-year-old one, city officials said April 10 when previewing it to the *Independent*. There could be temporary disruptions during the transition, including the overnight parking service and Sports and Recreation registration.

Described by Communications director Mugisha Rutishisha and Pia Savoie, communication officer, as "designed to make information easier to find and understand," the site's home page has a menu divided into quick-link categories. These are "City," "Services," "Leisure" and "Urban Planning," which highlight most information, they explained.

One of the new features is a search-by-address to find out what services are available at a particular location and time, such as garbage collection.

"We encourage all citizens to explore the new site and discover the improved online experience," Rutishisha said. The city is "confident the new website will significantly enhance communication and service delivery to residents."

The upgrade marks "a major step forward in the city's commitment to providing accessible and user-friendly online services and information to its residents" in a way that is easier to find and understand across all devices, from desktops to cell phones.

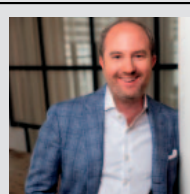
Along with the website's technical infrastructure, the city also focussed on strengthened security, content management, and improving search engine visibility.

The project was described as a "cross-departmental effort in partnership with Blanko Technology Group, a web design and creation agency that has developed municipal websites for St. Eustache, Mascouche and St. Bruno."



Mugisha Rutishisha, left, and Pia Savoie demonstrate a view of the city's new website during a preview to the *Independent* at city hall April 10.

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**Federal election  
coverage**

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event, p. 6-7

Another candidate  
found: Rachel Hoffman  
of the Marxist-Leninist  
Party, p. 13

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# Public Security spots, follows wanted purse-snatcher suspect

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A Public Security patroller driving along St. Catherine near Atwater April 15 at 5 pm spotted a suspect wanted by police in the purse snatching from an elderly woman in the general area, Public Security officials said. The officer, on preventive patrol, kept the man under surveillance based on a photo circulated by police.

When the officer and suspect made eye contact at Atwater, the suspect appeared nervous and turned south to Tupper, at which point police were requested to attend. The officer continued on foot to keep the suspect under surveillance as the man ducked into a store and then into the Alexis Nihon McDonald's, where police placed him under arrest.

"This shows how Public Security and police can work together when sharing information," said Public Security director

Greg McBain. "Our parking inspectors had also been on the lookout for the suspect."

*For the police's view of the same incident, see p. 10.*

## Ticket issued for \$668 dog running free in WAG

A ticket for \$688 was issued April 11 for a dog allowed to run freely in the Westmount Athletic Grounds at 4:18 pm while chasing a ball, Public Security officials said. The dog had initially been spotted "running all over the park" without a leash.

As the patroller parked and approached on foot, however, the guardian was seen quickly attaching a leash but continuing to toss the ball for the dog to retrieve.

Because the guardian, who lived nearby, had been issued a warning March 14, 2024 for a similar offence at the same location, this time she was issued a ticket.

## And another one...

## And another one...



This truck was caught under the rail overpass' protective barrier April 6 on Greene below Dorchester. It would appear that it is not hitting the bridge itself, as trucks did before the installation of the metal I-beam.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLES ANDERSON.



This truck was seen going east to Victoria Ave. against de Maisonneuve's one-way on April 15. It came from the 4898 de Maisonneuve worksite, located at the corner with Prince Albert.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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Rows of dresses, tables of jeans  
**Earth Day Clothing Swap**  
attracts some 500 this year

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city’s Clothing Swap April 12 at Victoria Hall attracted more than 500 people this year, most of whom brought in items they no longer want and found some from other people, said Donna Lach, assistant director of the library and community



Volunteers, all set up in Victoria Hall April 12, ready for the swap.



All ages gather around to pick up their new spring wardrobe.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT COMMUNITY EVENTS

events.  
“It was a huge success, with people starting to line up an hour before the doors opened.  
“The most popular items were the rows of dresses and tables of blue jeans. The generosity of the community was outstanding as was the quality of the items – [even]

some Christian Dior,” she added.  
The event was started in 2023 as an Earth Day initiative, with left-over items taken to shelters. This year, however, “there was hardly anything left over.”  
Volunteers worked during the sale as well as during the two previous days to receive, unpack and set up.



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*Includes interactive activity, Mouton Noir café*

# Art Westmount this weekend to feature work of 30+ artists

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city’s annual Art Westmount takes place Saturday and Sunday April 25 and 26 from 10:30 am to 5 pm at Victoria Hall featuring the work of some 30 artists who either live in Westmount or have studios here. It was first held in 2006.

The event is described by Donna Lach, assistant director of the library and Community Events, as “a platform for artists in the Westmount community to showcase their work without any commission fees.” Among them are those who are emerging, semi-professional and established as artists.

According to Mélissa Denis-Daignealt, Community Events organizer of Art Westmount, “attending this event is not only an opportunity to discover local art but also a chance to meet Westmount-based artists and celebrate their creativity.”

They include painters, photographers and sculptors highlighting a range of local artists. “The event offers a unique opportunity to discover and acquire original artworks whether viewers want to add to their

collection or find a one-of-a-kind gift.”

Visitors will also be able to participate in an interactive activity led by Ève-Catherine Champoux, exhibition curator at the Victoria Hall Gallery. This aims “to allow everyone to explore their creativity and appreciate art from a different perspective.”

A pop-up café by Mouton Noir is also planned to take place in the vestibule of Victoria Hall.

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The “crowd” at the Westmount Municipal Association’s meet-the-candidates event April 16 at Victoria Hall. See p. 7 for story.

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.

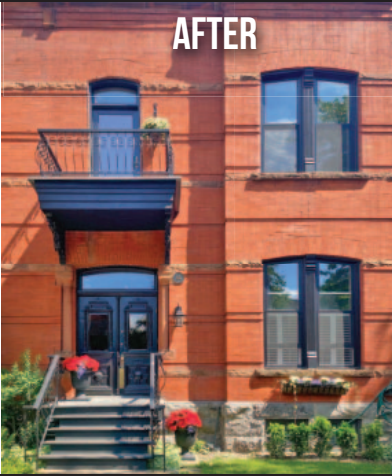


From left, questioners Kimberley, Olivia, Yan Hong and unidentified person.



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*Liberals, Conservatives, Bloc skip event*

# WMA's federal meet-the-candidates night attracts small crowd



From left: Malcolm Lewis-Richmond (New Democratic Party), Marc Perez (People's Party of Canada), Arnold Downey (Green Party), Alex "Trainman" Montagano (unaffiliated), Linda Sullivan on behalf of Rachel Hoffman of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada and Stephen Hensley (the Rhino Party) at the Westmount Municipal Association's "meet the candidates" at Victoria Hall April 16.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

BY JENNIFER BALL

The Westmount Municipal Association (WMA), under the stewardship of Nigel Goddard, held a "meet the candidates" event on April 16 for voters to hear from those running in the federal riding of NDG-Westmount. It was attended by approximately 12 audience members and it went forward *sans* the Liberal, Conservative and Bloc candidates.

The party leaders' French-language debate and also a Montreal Canadiens game were simultaneously taking place – prompting the moderator and MC Beryl Wajzman, who is the editor-in-chief of *The Suburban* newspaper as well as a longtime WMA leader (see February 25, 2020, p. 6), to say, "It says something about the state of our country [that hearing a debate with the people who may run this country] has taken second place to a hockey game..."

In attendance were:

- Arnold Downey – Green Party,
- Stephen Hensley – Rhino Party,
- Malcolm Lewis-Richmond – New Democratic Party,
- Marc Perez – People's Party of Canada,
- Alex "Trainman" Montagano – unaffiliated,
- Linda Sullivan on behalf of Rachel Hoffman of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada, who was unavailable on the night.

The three no-shows were Neil Drabkin of the Conservatives, Felix-Antoine Brault of the Bloc Québécois and Anna Gainey of the federal Liberal Party. Gainey's team had already sent a statement explaining her absence due to "senior responsibilities" with the national campaign and the event's conflict with the leaders' debate, which the *Independent* quoted extensively last issue

(see April 15, 2025, p. 15).

The candidates had a five- to seven-minute opportunity to explain why everybody's lives would be better if they were elected and why they had decided to run, when – according to Wajzman – their chances were very slim at being elected. (The riding is a well-known Liberal stronghold.)

Wajzman, channelling Phil Donaghue, asked attendees why they came to the event and what – on a micro level – they want from their politicians.

While not directly answering, audience member Hannah said, "We had the expectation that certain candidates would not be here tonight – and that was something that ticked me off – so we wanted to show up and support everyone who did."

*Where's your passion?*

Audience-member Yan Hong asked the candidates: "What is the one issue that you feel passionate about?"

In brief: Hensley wants to fix Canada's

broken electoral system.

Downey talked about climate destruction and accelerating the construction of the high-speed rail project that outgoing PM Justin Trudeau just proposed between Quebec City and Toronto.

Montagano said he could offer his creativity and his capacity to effect change locally using mechanisms that leverage the local community.

Sullivan said her party would work to stop supporting the rich and invest in social programs to stop people in parliament from buttering the bread of foreign and national monopolies.

Lewis-Richmond's priority would be local constituents. He would continue the NDP's role as what he referred to as the "conscience of parliament."

Perez said that he would analyze problems, break them down into smaller problems and try to find solutions for every one of them by focussing on what needs to get done.

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## GOOD LUCK AND THANKS TO DR. V.

I was somewhat dismayed by your article on Dr. Vaillancourt. He has served Westmount's community for decades and, at least as far as my family pets are concerned, going back to 1997.

I think he deserves a big thank-you for his veterinary service to the wider community over the years.

The tabloid-like headline about him was not well received. Good luck to Dr. V. and with many thanks.

HEATHER HANNAN, VICTORIA AVE.

**Editor's reply:** I find the headline in question ("Order of veterinarians shuts down Dr. Vaillancourt," April 1, p. 1) free of any tabloid influence, editorializing, speculation or embellishment. It is factual and focused on the new thing that occurred. We only knew (and know) the facts in the article. How could it be more neutral?

You are a Vaillancourt partisan. Great. Would you have preferred that we bury or finesse the news? You might have missed it, and might have been unable to help (potentially) or offer your good wishes (as you have).

Please also note that Dr. Vaillancourt alerted us to the story, although he then declined to comment further. Additionally, news articles aren't usually in the "thank-ing" business, although letters are – and yours is the third one that we have published on this topic, happily. – DP.

## SPRUCE UP THE PARKS, PLEASE

While spring has seemingly arrived at this year, spring cleaning of Westmount parks appears to be even later. Skating rinks are still standing, wood chips under swings not yet replenished, and winter



debris remains in the sandboxes.

The youngest residents have taken it upon themselves to begin this work, but we hope the city will continue these efforts in a timely manner. Our parks are in need of a spring spruce-up!

DIANA ANDERSON, VICTORIA AVE.

## LET THE PEOPLE WALK

At the corner of Victoria and Somerville, a frequent hazard for pedestrians is the frequent parking on the pedestrian crosswalk, usually to pick up a coffee.

RAY BUSBRIDGE, SOMERVILLE AVE.



## GAINNEY'S DEBATE ABSENCE SHOWS LACK OF RESPECT

Anna Gainney has chosen not to participate in the Westmount Municipal Association candidates' debate, citing scheduling conflicts.

Pensioners are struggling with insufficient income, families are struggling with rent, well paying jobs are scarce and even groceries are a luxury for some. This issue is no longer about politics – it is about finding real solutions.

Refusing to answer real questions and provide real answers shows a lack of respect for vulnerable citizens struggling to make ends meet.

MARTIN MUELLER, ST. CATHERINE ST.

## COUNCIL MEMBERS SHOULD BE TAKEN ON A TOUR

Would someone please invite Mayor Smith and the city council to take a car ride on The Boulevard between Grosvenor and Clarke. Ditto for Edgehill Ave, driving uphill in the westbound direction.

The same for Victoria down from The Boulevard. And Cedar east of Clarke, and many other streets, I am sure.

That this administration has let the condition of our roadways to deteriorate so badly, despite the massive taxes we pay, is both shocking and sad. Our once-beautiful city is now a giant breeding ground for potholes and bumps, and driving on these thoroughfares has become challenging, if not outright dangerous.

JOE RUSSO, SHERBROOKE ST.

## KUDOS TO FEDERAL RHINOS, THEATRICAL ONES COMING!

I enjoyed the article by Jennifer Ball about the Rhinoceros Party candidate, Stephen Hemsley (April 8, p. 1). I'm so glad that satire still has a place in local politics. I understand that in 1963 the founders of the party chose as their leader Cornelius the First, a rhinoceros in the Granby Zoo.

Coincidentally, Dramatis Personae, Westmount's community theatre group, will be performing *Rhinoceros* by Eugène Ionesco in Victoria Hall at the end of May. It's a fascinating absurdist play set in a small provincial French town where one after another its citizens turn into rhinoceroses. It is an allegory for the easy way in which fascist parties turn their adherents into a herd of big ugly animals. Sound familiar?

Luckily, the play will make the audience laugh, even while they are drawing present-day political parallels.

ANN ELBOURNE, SOMERVILLE AVE.

## NEIGHBOURS SUPPORT RESIDENCES AT MOUNTAINSIDE, OWNER'S PROPOSALS REACT TO CITY'S REFUSALS

I am torn between withholding comment and letting Jessica Winton's writings (April 15, p. 6) speak for themselves; or, alternatively, questioning her chosen personal sacrifice when she states as "I would sooner transform into a lizard than accept the current form of the Mountainside Church plan."

This random opinion was expressed by her in response to the letter I authored addressed to the mayoress and council, and which was published in the *Independent* of April 8 (p. 4-5) in support of the owner's quest to return the residential zoning that was taken away.

Winton was the lone dissenting voice in the public information meeting held last summer to present the proposed project (see July 9, p. 12) – recommending only that the former church be converted into a school and insisting that such transformation would be a benefit to the city of Westmount.

From their lack of response, it would seem that the mayoress and council choose to support this unique position by refusing, to date, to allow residential occupancy that would integrate well into the immediate neighbourhood – a position supported by everyone else who attended the public meeting.

Her comment, "to plan for such a monument to one's ego is nothing short of flagrant avarice," is – at the very least – most insulting, misplaced and incorrect. Potentially, it is slanderous.

In fact, after a series of presentations refused by the city, the owner made the reluctant decision to protect the existing monumental building verbatim and occupy it as it is. The flexibility of space within a large residence would allow the preservation of the church building – from its exterior beauty, right through to and including the spatial volumes and details within.

Rather than "avarice," the owner's willingness to relocate his family residence is only a last-ditch effort and measure to salvage some of the sizeable investment he has made for what was [at purchase] a residential property, frozen afterwards by the city's removal of his zoning rights.

Whether or not Ms. Winton chooses to reconsider, it would be most appropriate that the city does.

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### Chief reporter

Laureen Sweeney

### Graphics

Ted Sancton

### Advertising sales

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Spokesman: 'Experience Centre' coming at end of summer

# Miele rents former Lululemon, ScotiaBank space on Greene Ave.

By JENNIFER BALL

Miele has rented the street-level commercial space at 1394 Ave Greene., corner of Sherbrooke, and will open a showroom in late August or early September.

According to the Montreal property roll, the estate of Morris Feinstein owns 1394 Greene Ave. The commercial unit has been without a permanent occupant since 2014, when its previous tenant, Lululemon, moved to its current premises on Sherbrooke in Victoria village (see August 12, 2014, p. 23).

The landlord is Barry Feinstein. He spoke to the *Independent* on April 3 and facilitated an introduction to his tenant.

Miele, now in its fourth generation of

family ownership, Miele employs approximately 22,300 people worldwide, including 11,200 in Germany and its range of products includes vacuum cleaners, laundry appliances, dishwashers, ovens, cooktops, range hoods, refrigerators, wine storage units and coffee machines.

Eric Tanguay, communications specialist at Miele, provided a statement April 11 explaining why the company chose Westmount for its store



1394 Greene on April 11.

location.

“Westmount represents an ideal location for Miele. With its rich architectural heritage, strong sense of community and vibrant local atmosphere, the area is a natural fit for our next Experience Centre.

“Greene Ave., in particular, offers a charming and well-established commercial setting that aligns perfectly with our brand values. Westmount’s timeless elegance and attention to detail resonate deeply with Miele’s brand DNA. We are excited to become part of this community and contribute to

its already-thriving commercial landscape...

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## EDITOR’S NOTE

### Former mayor Trent explains history of blowing snow in Westmount

Former mayor (1991-2001, 2009-2017) and councillor (1983-7, 1989-1991) Peter Trent wrote me the following last week:

“Two of your readers (April 15, p. 6, April 1, p. 6) have wondered why Westmount does not cast snow onto front lawns as is done in TMR. While it could be looked into again, we stopped that practice in 1988.

“TMR is flat; over one third of Westmount streets have a slope of 5 percent or steeper and therefore require intensive salting for reasons of safety. This salt is why Westmount’s airborne product was impure as the driven snow whenever it was cast onto lawns or other greenery. Come spring, the price to pay in dealing with both burnt lawns and browned-off citizens was not insignificant.

“I attach excerpts from a 1989 Public Works report that goes into far more detail than you might ever need on the subject.”

\*

I find the page of the report reproduced here to be the most interesting one. Even in the more *laissez faire* 1950s, Westmount only ever blew 50 percent of its snow onto private lawns, which declined to 27 percent by the early 1980s and then to zero from 1988 to now.

Westmount’s geography (slopes!) and built environment (relevant here; many townhouses with small or no lawns) make many things difficult.

These past practices, though, show that we can be flexible and we don’t have to decide between all or none. Without endorsing any specific blown-snow percentage (including the status quo), I encourage residents and municipal decision-makers to consider all the alternatives.

To repeat a previous warning: tough financial times lie ahead. Innovation and belt-tightening needed.

David Price is the editor of the *Independent*.

One major change is the present no casting on private property policy (refer to Section 3.6, page 9). In the fifties, approximately 50% of the snow was cast onto the properties behind the sidewalks and the remainder loaded into trucks and transported to snow dumps. By the early eighties, the amount of snow cast was decreased to approximately 27%. Finally, since the 1986/1987 season, after strong representation from the citizens, casting onto private property was eliminated, therefore drastically reducing the amount of sod damage due to salt. Should the City return to casting 27% of the snow an estimated \$220,000.00 per year could be saved.

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Police Report

Station 12 police map, put a face to, arrest wallet-theft suspect

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Police at Station 12 on Stanton St. announced late last week that they had arrested a suspect who was sought regarding a series of wallet thefts and robberies around Greene Ave. in Westmount as well as in NDG over the past few weeks.

According to Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit, owners and administrators on Greene, as well as in Alexis Nihon Plaza and at Dawson College, provided crucial assistance to the investigation by granting access to images of the suspect captured by their security cameras.

Yigit said that with the security camera evidence as well as community contacts, he and fellow officer Cst. Emmanuel Provencher were able to piece together a map of the suspect's movements, leading to images identifying his face.

Those images were then distributed to contacts in the community, including Westmount Public Safety. A public safety officer (PSO) eventually recognized the suspect standing at the corner of St. Catherine St. and Atwater Ave., according to Cst. Yigit.

After contacting the police, the PSO (who had no powers to make an arrest) followed the suspect, who was placed under arrest by police a short time later. He was suspected of having committed other robberies in the NDG area, added Cst. Yigit.

In one of the incidents in Westmount, on the afternoon of March 18, a 92-year-old woman who had just left the Scotiabank branch on Greene Ave. with a considerable amount of cash was followed by a suspect to her nearby home.

Before she went in, he snatched her purse and ran off. Yigit said that he and Provencher doubled up on their diligence

in an effort to track down and arrest the suspect.

\$300k of valuables stolen from house

The owners of a home on Murray Hill Ave. were robbed of an estimated \$300,000 of personal property during a daytime burglary on April 12.

According to Cst. Yigit, the owners were out for the day between one in the afternoon and 10 pm that night.

When they returned, they found the glass rear patio door shattered and the interior of the house had been ransacked.

According to the incident report, the alarm rang for a short time, but the suspects somehow managed to deactivate it, possibly by force.

They left with a haul that included jewellery, a Rolex watch and women's designer handbags by Gucci and Hermes.

As part of the investigation, the police are seeking help from neighbours whose household or vehicle security cameras may have captured peripheral images of the suspects.

Two cars stolen

Two car thefts in Westmount were reported to police at Station 12 over the last two weeks.

In the first, overnight from April 9-10, a Toyota RAV4 compact crossover SUV was stolen on Victoria Ave.

In the second incident, around 3 am on April 14, a Toyota Sequoia full-size SUV was stolen from a parking spot on Sherbrooke St.

In recent years, the Toyota RAV4 has been at the top of a list of the Top 10 most stolen vehicles in Quebec.

Among the reasons cited by insurers for its popularity among thieves is the RAV4's reliability and durability as well as the fact it is prized for its parts.

Han picks up tennis bursary

Jerry Han of Selwyn House School received a \$2,000 National Bank/Aléo Foundation bursary March 19, one of 22 student athletes from 18 different sports to do so.

A total of \$100,000 in bursaries and services was awarded. Recipients are also given lifetime access to services provided by the Aléo Foundation, namely guidance, mentoring, career transition support and communications services, during and after their athletic careers.

According to the foundation's press release, tennis player Félix Auger-Aliassime is one the more than 425 recipients who have been supported by the National Bank during its partnership with the Aléo Foundation.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALÉO FOUNDATION.



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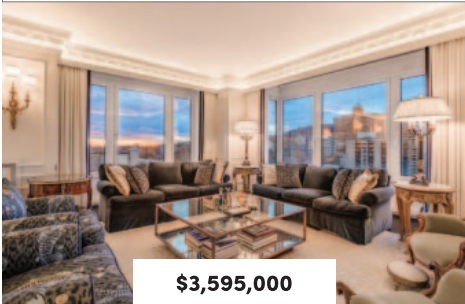
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Panel includes spectrum of professions

# Event host Tajuelo seeks to break the silence on menopause

By Martin C. Barry

When Ana Tajuelo received a visit at her Westmount home two years ago from an old friend around her age, she told Tajuelo she was experiencing many signs and symptoms of perimenopause.

While menopause (when women’s menstrual periods permanently stop) is a term that’s probably better known, perimenopause refers to the menopause transition years prior to a woman’s final menstrual flow.

Perimenopause, along with menopause and post-menopause (when there has been no menstrual flow for at least 12 months), were the subject of a well-attended interactive panel discussion with four experts, sponsored by the Westmount Public Library in Victoria Hall on March 28.

In October 2022, the Menopause Foundation of Canada released a landmark national research report, strongly suggesting a pall of silence and a stigma hang over Canadian women as they go through menopause.

According to the report, one in two (46 percent) women feel unprepared. As well, more than half (54 per cent) believed



menopause remained taboo.

### Personal experiences

As Tajuelo recounted to the all-female audience, she and her friend were both 46 years old, dealing with gray hair and weakening eyesight. But what she noticed

Seen on March 27 in Victoria Hall during the perimenopause, menopause and post-menopause panel discussion are, from left, event host Ana Tajuelo, practising gynecologist Dr. Manon Charlebois, pharmacist/certified naturopath Anh Nguyen, peri/post-menopause health coach Wanjira Njenga, and pelvic floor physiotherapist Sheinaz Abuani.

was that her friend “was a hot mess” – both literally and figuratively.

“She couldn’t take the summer heat, her

emotions zigzagged between rage and crying, she wasn’t sleeping well because of night

continued on p. 13

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## Federal election candidates

# Marxist-Leninists' Hoffman for 'people's empowerment,' making a statement to large parties

BY JENNIFER BALL

NDG-Westmount Marxist-Leninist Party candidate Rachel Hoffman would start a new file called "people's empowerment" and focus on how our democratic system needs to change in order to find solutions that empower people, should she be elected on April 28. Hoffman is an NDG resident who works in arts and culture and who is a perennial Marxist-Leninist candidate.

### Hoffman's statement

In a statement that Hoffman provided to the *Independent* on April 17, she explained her views. "A modern democracy would provide our people with control over our own lives, to direct our economy, our resources and our social investments to the well-being of our people..."

"As a sovereign people, we can block the very rich – foreign and domestic – from plundering our resources, destroying our rich cultural heritage and embroiling us in foreign wars of aggression. We can establish Canada as a zone for peace..."

"We should trust in ourselves and give ourselves a chance. Clearly the present governmental arrangements and the cartel parties work for global financial oligarchs and leave us as vassals of the US war machine..."

"Democratic renewal gives us that chance to turn the situation around."

Linda Sullivan has run as a Marxist-Leninist candidate in three federal and three provincial elections and is their federal candidate running in the Ahuntsic-Cartierville riding in 2025.

She was Hoffman's proxy at the Westmount Municipal Association's meet-the-candidates event on April 16 (see p. 6-7) and for this interview on April 17 because Hoffman had scheduling conflicts for both.

### Sullivan responds

The *Independent* put to Sullivan that the Marxist-Leninist Party – which hasn't been able to secure a single seat in the Canadian parliament despite running candidates in every election since 1974 – was running in one of the most secure Liberal Party bastions in Canada. What was propelling them to stump?

"I think [the Marxist-Leninist Party] is more relevant than ever because everyone at the [April 16 meet-the-candidates event at Victoria Hall] expressed frustration with this system that keeps [us] at arm's length from the people who are supposed to represent [us]," Sullivan said.

"Our problems seem to be getting worse... Homelessness is worse, the cost of living keeps rising, people do not have stability in their jobs...so I think increasingly the [the Marxist-Leninist Party] and our platform for democratic renewal is becoming more important than ever."

Sullivan was asked to gauge what files Hoffman would want to familiarize herself with first were she to win the federal seat. "She would be interested in starting a new file called 'people's empowerment' and starting a new process, at the community level, to consult with people on the problems that they are facing..."

Sullivan intimated that Hoffman wants the 2025 federal election to send a strong

message to the Liberal, Conservative and NDP leaderships.

"The main thing that Rachel would like your readers to know is that she is really calling for people to vote [the Marxist-Leninist Party], small party or independent during this election. [Let's] really make a statement that whoever does get elected doesn't speak for us..."

### Menopause, cont'd from p. 12

sweats," Tajuelo said. However, she admitted that even she didn't fully understand what her friend was going through.

Not long before, she thought of menopause as that time in her mother's life when she would get up dramatically from the dinner table, run to the kitchen and throw her head into the freezer.

### National stats

The Menopause Foundation of Canada's report included the cost of menopause to the Canadian economy. All combined, most women will spend about 40 percent of their lives in a menopausal state – a totally natural but complicated process of ageing "that nobody talks about or prepares you for," Tajuelo maintained.

The foundation claims that at least 10 percent of women remove themselves from the workforce because of unmanaged menopausal indicators. They also estimate the total overall cost to the Canadian economy at a staggering \$3.5 billion a year.

Tajuelo is determined to spread the word about the impact of perimenopause, menopause and post-menopause. She suggested that dialogue forums need to be created "for women to learn exchange and dialogue with each other because we are in the prime of our lives."

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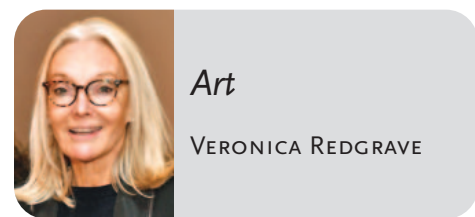
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# PLURAL brings in art lovers, in the plural



Art

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Montreal's Old Port never looked finer. During the three-day PLURAL Contemporary Art Fair, the water sparkled as art-lovers (mostly wearing black) strolled the wide *piazza* full of fun climb-on art installations.

Hordes of the coolly dressed, the hoodied and the pearl-accessorized set admired – and bought – art.

Local artist Antoinetta Grassi was featured at Patrick Mikhail Gallery. Westmount-adjacent Bradley Ertaskiran was also packed.

Amidst the long line-ups for food and beverage, well-behaved dogs were noted as well as future collectors. Never too late to spark a child's curiosity.

► Big sister informing little sister about the finer points.



Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Although Marilyn Monroe's suggestion that "diamonds are a girl's best friend" is perhaps not the best advice, today glitter – worn with hoodies and bespoke – is part



Jaclyn and Kelly Griner.

## Greene diamonds

of everyday glamour.

Local sisters Jaclyn and Kelly Griner recently premiered their shimmering choices. Bubbly and balloons at the Greene Ave. Gorski boutique launched their collection Tennis Bracelet Girls (TBG).

The duo is a balance: Jaclyn designs and Kelly is the marketer. The day was a hit, as guests tried on TBG bangles and delicate necklaces. The sisters' jewellery business offers 14k gold with "natural diamonds. Our brand plays on the concept of the classic tennis bracelet with a modern twist."

The fun back-story of the bracelet comes from over 40 years ago. Then it was called an "eternity bracelet." During the US Open in 1978, champion tennis player Chris Evert's fell off. Play stopped so that it could be found. And, just like that, the diamond-studded wrist wrap was re-branded "the tennis bracelet." It was immediately cool to wear diamonds with athletic wear, as it is today.

TBG has expanded on the classic to include rings, earrings and necklace. Men have a choice too.

Worn stacked or singly, the game continues. Love to match.

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Social Notes  
VERONICA REDGRAVE

Open Minds held its 10th anniversary benefit at Théâtre Paradoxe. Honorary co-presidents were **Marie-Chantal Côté**, senior vp Sun Life; **Sylvain Corbeil**, partner – corporate and business development Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton; and **Guy Côté**, senior wealth advisor and portfolio manager at National Bank Financial.

**Laura Fish**, CEO Douglas Foundation, gave the introductory speech. **Marie-Chantal Côté** then highlighted the importance of de-stigmatizing mental health to improve the workplace culture.

**Laura Osbourne** and **Nakin Plaski** led organizing committee members **Amanda Dawson**, **Heather Monaghan**, **Giselle Murphy**, **Andrea Buhl** and **Jean-François Emmanuel**.

Noted during the fun evening were the foundation's board members **Philippe Fortier**, board chair, chief legal officer and corporate secretary at WSP; **Philippe Adam**, CEO Pomerleau; **Jessi Carrier**, vp Colliers

*continued on p. 17*

# Douglas Foundation breaks record with \$750k benefit



Marc Giguère, Caroline Côté, Valérie Durand, Brett Miller, Philippe Fortier and Jessi Carrier.

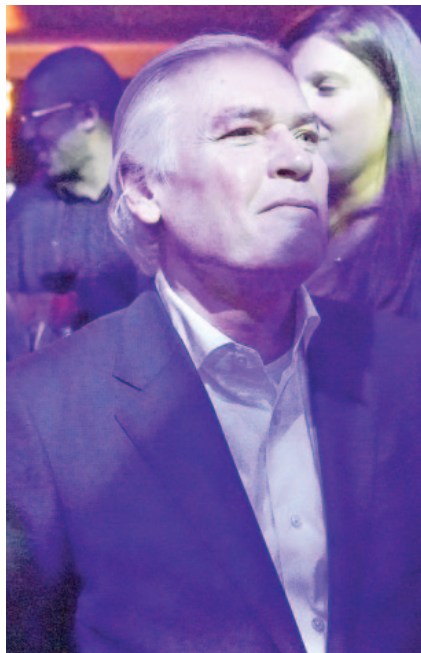
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Laura Fish and Heather Monaghan.

### Social notes, cont'd from p. 16

Hotels; **Caroline Côté**, vp funds private markets CDPQ; **Valérie Durand**, head IR and corporate sustainability Air Canada; **Isabelle Garon**, senior vp marketing, communications and cooperation, office of the president, Desjardins; **Marc Giguère**, partner DHR Global; **Jean-Nicolas Guillemette**,

COO Dialogue; **Brett Miller**, CEO Canderel; **Maxime Turcotte**, partner Stikeman Elliott LLP; **Roxanne Williams**, vp corporate finance and treasurer Agropur; **Carl Magnan**, audit and assurance partner Deloitte; **Maude Leblond**, head, Financial Institutions Group, Investment Banking National Bank Financial, and **Véronique Talbot**, managing director, Energy Infra-

structure at Power Sustainable.

Also seen in the crowded room was **Louis Gendron**, managing director, deputy head corporate and investment banking National Bank Financial.

Signature cocktails were created by Brahm Mauer and Ristorante Beatrice lived up to its delicious catering reputation. DJ LowGo ensured the *soirée* rocked. Pres-

enting partner was Sun Life. Gold partners were Financière Banque Nationale Équipe Guy Côté, Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, Intact Insurance, National Bank and Skadden.

A record-breaking \$750,000 was raised to support critical research projects at the Douglas Institute.



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# WHA lecture recalls legacy of Montreal artist Gerry Tondino

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Although Gentile Tondino isn't a name that is known to most people, it was enough to fill a Westmount Public Library lecture room on March 20 with admirers and

former students of an acclaimed artist who forged a link with Westmount through a local artistic connection as well as professional friendships.

Despite never having lived in Westmount, Gerry, as he was known to most people, made a significant contribution to the community, not only through his art, which included oils, semi-abstract and still-life paintings, but also through his teaching.

As an art student, he apprenticed with esteemed artists, including renowned Canadian painter Adam Sherriff Scott. As an educator, Gerry mentored numerous artists and architecture students.

### Son Tristan presents

Through a biographical and visual presentation, Gerry Tondino's son, Tristan, who also is an artist as well as a set designer for theatre, conveyed aspects of his father's artistic career to members of the WHA.

"It's kind of amazing that my dad even considered becoming an artist given our socio-economic background," Tristan said, noting that Gerry's father and mother immigrated to the US and then to Canada in the early years of the 20th century to get away from poverty in Italy.

Born in Montreal in 1923, Gerry dropped out of school in grade two, according to Tristan, after which he earned a living during the Great Depression doing menial jobs, including door-to-door deliveries of bread and ice, after which he became an assistant to a shoe repairman.

Gerry first began painting around 1940 at about age 17 fol-



Tristan Tondino, seen here on March 20 at the Westmount Public Library, gave a talk to the Westmount Historical Association on the life and work of his father, Gerry, an acclaimed artist with connections to Westmount.

lowing the premature death of his father. His first works were on pieces of fabric he found around the family home.

### Westmount connections

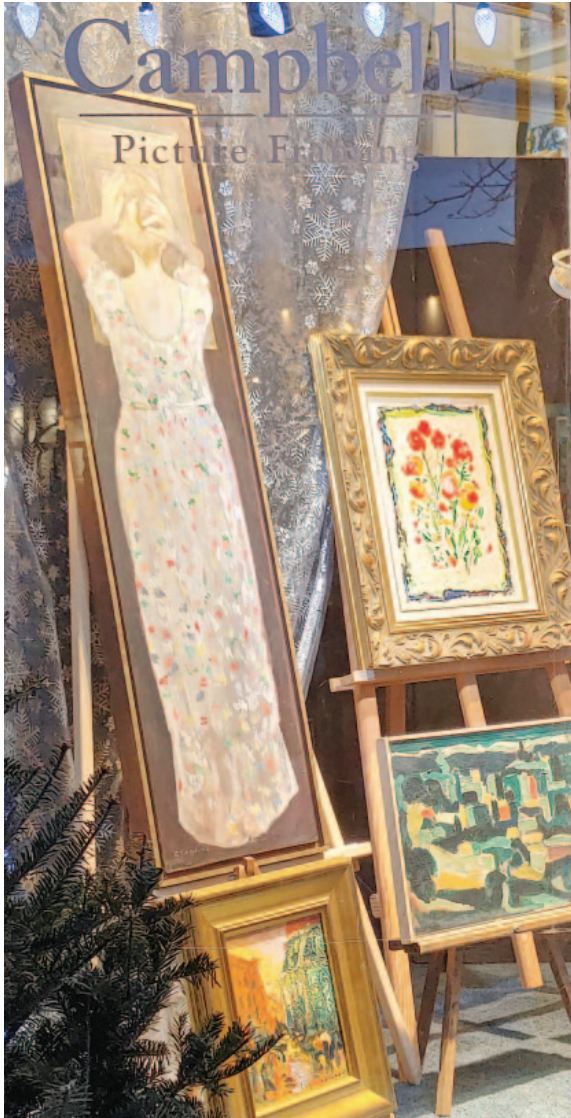
Gerry first connected with Adam Sherriff Scott after seeing his Westmount home address on de Maisonneuve Blvd. (known back then as Western Ave.) published in a newspaper. Another Westmount connection: Gerry's mother went to live at Manoir Westmount in the 1990s when she had retired.

Apprenticing with Adam Sherriff Scott, he learned at his downtown Montreal

studio to stretch canvases, paint backgrounds, mix colours and eventually create paintings on his own.

Through Scott, he was introduced to Group of Seven painter Arthur Lismer, which led in turn to Gerry's obtaining a scholarship at the School of Art and Design at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

Over the course of his career (Gerry passed away in 2001), his works were purchased by numerous collectors, including the MMFA and the National Gallery of Canada. Notably, McGill University commissioned him to paint portraits of several McGill chancellors.



Paintings by Gerry Tondino and his son Tristan were recently displayed in the window of the Campbell Gallery on Sherbrooke St. in Westmount. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CAMPBELL GALLERY.

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