

Homeowners face 1 percent tax hike to ease past burden

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Owners of single-family dwellings in Westmount face an average 1 percent tax hike for 2009, down from 2.5 percent, as the city implements a variable tax rate to min-

imize their share of the tax burden.

In adopting a \$79.8 million budget, half of which goes to the island-wide agglomeration council, city council at its meeting December 15 revealed the new basic rate of \$1.07 per \$100 of evaluation for single-family dwellings and other buildings with five housing units or less. On the average single-family dwelling's tax bill of \$10,184, the increase amounts to \$101.

Larger building, larger rate

The rate increases to \$1.19 for larger apartment buildings (an average increase of 1.97 percent) and to \$3.94 for commercial property, *continued on p. 13*

We'll be back!

This is the *Independent's* last issue of 2008. Thank you – advertisers, readers, contributors and well-wishers – for all your support this year. We have great hopes for the future. Our first issue of 2009 is January 14.

First demerger contract 'reinstates' Westmount labour culture Council hails 6-year blue-collar accord

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After more than two years of labour ne-

gotiations, Westmount and some 125 permanent and auxiliary blue-collar workers have agreed to a six-and-a-half year contract that reinstates some of the working conditions enjoyed before the merger years with Montreal.

Ratified by council at its meeting December 15, the contract was built anew page by page, based on local needs "that were crucial to us," Mayor Karin Marks said, "and not those dictated by Montreal."

The contract extends from July 31, 2006 to December 31, 2012 and had already been accepted by the union, SCSP local 301, which continues to represent Westmount's blue collar workers.

It provides for 2 percent pay hikes for the last six months of 2006 as well as for 2007 and 2008, along with 2.25 percent

in 2009, and 2.5 percent in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The retroactive increases are reflected in the city's 2009 budget.

Other highlights include a return to 13 legal holidays a year, compared with five during the merger years and the reinstatement of the student employment status that enables the city to hire students under a special pay scale. It also embodies the city's determination to maintain a five-day work week, but extends to the blue collars the 4.5-day summer work-week enjoyed by some other city workers.

"One of the many issues was to try to return to the culture and philosophy that characterized our labour relations," explained Councillor Tom Thompson, who chairs the Finance & Administration committee.

Finance commissioner Guy Charette in his budget presentation called it "re-establishing a climate of trust and mutual respect and a stable work force ... which balances wage increases with working conditions that maximizes our productivity."

The city's negotiating team, led by HR director Alan Kulaga, was thanked for what Mayor Marks described as an "accomplishment."

Don't Miss It

Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom's
Hannukah party and
the First Candle Lighting at
Westmount city hall
Sunday, December 21

See Comin' Up on p. 12 for details.

Closing an era



Public Security Sergeant Robert Stringer supervises closing time at the Westmount Public Library December 2. Stringer – the last original public safety officer – retires next month. For the whole story, please see p. 6.



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Jacques Chagnon
M.N.A. Westmount-Saint-Louis
Vice-President of the National Assembly
1155 University, Suite 1312, Montreal (Quebec) H3B 3A7
Tel.: 514-395-2929 – Fax: 514-395-2955
jchagnon-wsl@assnat.qc.ca



Court throws ball back to city in Bellevue ruling

The ruling in a high-profile court case involving a proposed additional storey at 27 Bellevue has once again upheld the powers of the city to determine architectural standards.

In his ruling, Superior Court Justice Robert Mongeon referred to the recent ruling by Quebec Court of Appeal recognizing the powers of the city's Planning Advisory Committee and the city council.

In the Bellevue case, residents of Sunnyside Ave. Mireille Raymond and her husband, John Keyserlingk, had asked the court to quash a city permit that allows

Steven Goldberg to add another storey to his Bellevue Ave. home. The addition, they said, would impede their views and have a negative impact on the neighbourhood.

At the December 15 meeting of city council, Councillor Cunthia Lulham underlined the court rulings.

Among those who spoke during question period, Gary Ikeman asked if council was considering changes in the permit process, given the courts had essentially thrown the ball back into council's court. Lulham said a number of projects would be tabled in the near future.

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at 8:45 am and at 10:15 am.

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continued at lcc.ca/leaders



Leaders by Example

Marie José bids farewell

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

She's been the interface between the mayor, Westmount residents and elected officials across the island for so many years that Marie José Aubertin's retirement will come as a shock to many.

In fact, as executive assistant to current mayor Karin Marks and previously to

With the leadership roles undertaken by the two most recent Westmount mayors in associations of suburban mayors, on island-wide councils and in Quebec political life, nothing was ever routine, she said.

"She's front line when someone calls to speak with the mayor or councillors," Mayor Marks explained. "What characterizes her is this incredible professionalism,



Marie José Aubertin at her post outside the mayor's office.

Mayor Peter Trent, Marie José's name alone took on its own persona.

"The work is very challenging," she said. "Nothing is ever the same. Especially with the ups and downs of the mergers and demergers. It was another world to me."

Aubertin came to Westmount from the corporate world in July 1991, initially to work for director general Manley Schultz. But with the municipal election in November, she was drafted by Mayor Trent into her current position.

courtesy and pleasant tone she maintains even under great pressure. I'm certainly going to miss her."

Marie José also worked closely with now-retired director general Bruce St. Louis and said she has enjoyed her brief time with his successor, Duncan Campbell.

Now, with the opportunity to enjoy "Freedom 55," Aubertin said, she's looking forward to a sunny vacation and having the time to enjoy many things she has been wanting to undertake. "It's just wonderful," she said. "I'm so excited."

'Tis the season to be jolly



Among many volunteers who pitched in to help at Westmount's tree lighting ceremony and party December 9 was Girl Guide Katherine McKenna. Other participants included representatives of Pathfinder and Scouting groups, the St. Matthias' boys' choir, the Harmonia Westmount Women's Choir and St. John Ambulance.



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Letters to the editor

PROVS CUT, NOT FEDS

“Orpheus Singers hit hard by feds’ art cuts” (December 2, p. 3) sure makes a catchy headline, and any publicity for the choir is good publicity, but the reality is that, as far as I know, the Orpheus Singers never received funding from the federal government.

The grant that we applied for annually, and received up until several years ago, was from the Quebec Arts Council.

HENRY OLDERS
MEMBER, ORPHEUS SINGERS
Editor’s note: The *Independent* regrets the error.

PEANUTS ARE DANGEROUS – ANYWHERE

Thank you for the article “Peanut allergies fuel curb on wildlife feeding” (December 2, p. 1).

The ban on wildlife feeding in Westmount should not only be enforced in Westmount Park, but at neighbouring homes and apartment buildings. We live a few blocks from the park and have found peanut shells on our property on numerous occasions. As the parent of a son with peanut allergies, this is a serious concern. It is a safety issue in our own backyard.

Unlike seasonal ones, a peanut (or any other food) allergy is nothing to sneeze at. Those affected by it wish it were. Peanut shells can cause an anaphylactic reaction, which has the potential to be life threatening. Anaphylaxis is acute and severe, and

can be fatal in a matter of minutes if left untreated. Individuals who are anaphylactic must always be vigilant and carry an EpiPen (injectable dose of epinephrine/adrenaline) with them at all times.

Residents who feed the squirrels are causing potential fatal harm to their neighbours even if they do so in their own backyard, since the squirrels travel with their loot. These residents certainly mean no harm, but need to understand and be made aware of the potential severity and dangers of their actions. It would be most irresponsible and unfortunate if they were the cause of an allergic reaction.

It is also important to remember to respect wildlife, and keep it untamed.

PASCALE DELHAYE, DE MAISONNEUVE

ROSENHEK AT DAWSON, TOO

I enjoyed your recent article on Andy Rosenhek and his Peace Medal Award (December 2, p. 4).

However, it made me question my memory. I thought that Andy had been a student at Dawson College (which you might know is located in Westmount), whereas your article has him leapfrogging from Selwyn House to McGill.

Having checked with my younger colleagues, they too remember Andy as a student in science who also took seminars in our Reflections program. In fact, we have a shared hallucination that Andy, one of our most excellent and honourable students ever, also visited Reflections last year to talk to our students about his project in

Tanzania.

Perhaps your fact-finders could clear this up for us; otherwise, we’re off to the Douglas.

ALAN MOSCOVITCH, DAWSON COLLEGE
Editor’s note: Although we never said Andy Rosenhek didn’t go to Dawson, we have now spoken to him and can confirm that he did attend. No need to visit the Douglas.

OWNERS BUY INTO NEIGHBOURHOODS AS IS

RE: “Court upholds city’s discretionary powers” (December 9, p. 1).

Although I do not know the details of the court case mentioned, the slant should have us all concerned.

Our beliefs about Westmount building guidelines are idealistic. I have heard often from fellow Westmounters, “But you can’t do that in Westmount.” Yet people are receiving permission from the city to destroy their “micro-neighbourhoods,” as they are called by Councillor Patrick Martin.

I am aware of two properties where a building change has been approved, despite the deleterious impact on neighbours. Walk around and take a look at others that have not made the newspapers.

Furthermore, permits are secret, known only to those at city hall and the holder. Secrets breed worry, as we all wonder what they have to hide. What are they trying to get away with by hiding details?

As people have “permission” to change their homes, they cut down 50-year-old majestic trees, destroy gardens and add additions to monstrous homes to satisfy their materialistic desires.

As purchasers of properties and homes, we buy into the neighbourhood as it is, recognizing some changes may happen as people maintain their residences. Also, when we take ownership, we really are becoming keepers of the property for future owners, with the care and nurturing of the place as others have before us and others will afterwards. Radical and drastic changes should not be permitted, especially in an area such as Westmount, where history needs to be treasured. Councillor Martin said it well: “There is reasonable expectation your micro-neighbourhood will not change drastically.”

Permits are to protect the area, to ensure that changes fit and to protect the environment.

Yes, the permit application process needs to be adhered to so the person applying is following the rules, but it is also there to protect the neighbours and ensure their rights are not violated. After all, we are all paying taxes to the same place, for

the same rights.

So the true slant of your feature article, I suggest, should not focus on the news of the court decision, but rather tell the citizens of Westmount to wake up, as the city allows these drastic changes.

The legacy of this present council will not be the financial strains of dealing with the botched forced amalgamation, but rather the way they have allowed changes that will profoundly change the character of our community.

When is the next election?
LESLEY AITON, LEXINGTON AVE.

CANADA NEEDS SEXIER VOTING VENUES

Now that voting has become everyone’s favourite indoor activity – excluding sex (that can be engaged in outdoors and may not qualify anyway) – shouldn’t some thought be given to having permanent polling places – not such unsuitable facilities as church basements and schools, especially Westmount High School?

I found that on a bitterly cold day access to the high school seems to be available only to teenagers.

The door from the handicap ramp was firmly bolted and shut on election day, and the only access was two sets of front steps that can be climbed two at a time by anyone who has not reached voting age.

When I told this to a sympathetic election officer, she said she could do nothing – the same thing had happened on federal election day. Even an elevator was not operational.

Shouldn’t an infrastructure program to fight unemployment in the recession (that our government said we didn’t have) include permanent polling booths accessible to all?

EDWARD W. BARRETT, KENSINGTON AVE.

2 MERGERS, SAME SNAKE OIL

I went for a stroll along Montrose Ave. the other day and noticed that cars paid little or no attention to the stop-signs.

I couldn’t help recalling that in the Dark Ages – years before the recent merger/aborted demerger – Westmount had its own police force, and that traffic laws were then ignored at your peril.

Then some snake-oil salesman in Quebec convinced people that the merger of ALL the island’s police forces would result in BSATL (better service at less cost), the usual promise. Akin to the promise that snake oil would cure everything from lower back pain to migraines.

And, true enough, the mergers were just as effective as snake oil was.

J. TURGEON, MT. STEPHEN AVE.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount.

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1,000 copies distributed to over
40 waiting-room drops

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Drop notice: Snow conditions may delay us getting around to all of our drop sites on Tuesday of publication week. Whatever the snow conditions, we still aim to reach our “most reliable” drops (Metro on Victoria, Westmount Square and 310 Victoria lobby) on Tuesdays.

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Nutik steps down as leader of AffiliationQuebec

BY KRISTIN MCNEILL

A mere 11 months after it became an authorized provincial political party, AffiliationQuebec's leader is folding up his tent and the party may fold too, according to leader and founder Allen Nutik, a former Westmount mayoral candidate.

The mandate of the AQ is "to actively pursue the full rights and interests of staunch Canadians living in the province of Quebec."

Before knowing of his resignation, the *Independent* had invited Nutik to discuss his reaction to the results of the provincial election the following day. From a prepared statement, he read "For this failed political leader, my inner feelings while surfing the incoming [provincial] election results on television surged from bitter-sweet, to realization, to a deep sense of great concern for my country... In any event, as of this moment, I too am with Mario!" – in reference to ADQ leader Mario Dumont's resignation the night of December 9.

Anglos 'not interested' in English future

Nutik's prepared statement did not hide his visible disappointment in what he perceives was a lack of interest and support for the protection of minority communities in Quebec. "It's one of the greatest failures of my life," he said. "Quebec's anglo phones and allophones have spoken clearly, if not eloquently in their silence. They are just not interested in their English future in Quebec, or else they would have rallied to do something different. I have now heard and recognized their clear message."

Nutik claims the lack of support from anglos, especially those under 40, comes from a belief that their rights are not threatened.

Nutik claims the Quebec Liberal Party is a nationalist party and the underwriter of some discriminating policies against minority communities in Quebec. He cites Liberal Robert Bourassa's Bill 22 (which was superseded by the Parti



Allen Nutik.

Québécois' Bill 101) as one example.

He also cites sign laws, reduced access to and funding for English language education, health services in English, and business rules. "Once Montreal was the business capital of Canada. It no longer is. We are now a branch plant operation," he said.

How's Westmount doing?

How has Westmount fared under the provincial Liberal party? "The best person to ask is [Westmount] Mayor [Karin] Marks. I think she will tell you in a nicer way than I, that we have been had by Mr. Charest and the Liberals. We were promised our cities back, and we didn't get them," he said.

During the recent federal election campaign, Nutik said he attempted to communicate with the federal election candidates by writing letters, attending meetings and asking questions, "trying to get the federal government to recognize that there are a million Quebecers who live under abrogated rights of language, signs, education, access."

Due to lack of support, AffiliationQuebec did not field any candidates in this election. Nutik originally announced he

would run in the NDG riding, but withdrew when he couldn't get enough signatures for his nomination.

Nutik never considered running in Westmount because he called it an "unwinnable" riding due to gerrymandering and also because of his failed attempts in municipal politics. "I can't get elected in Westmount. I can't get elected city councillor, I certainly can't get elected dog catcher."

Separatists 'alive and well'

At both the provincial and federal level, Nutik claimed the separatist movement is "alive and well, and the ultimate separation of Quebec is closer at hand than even the separatists themselves have dared to hope."

When asked if he fears another referendum should the PQ continue to gain popularity in time for the next election, Nutik said it is not a referendum people should fear, but a majority PQ government. The nationalists are "playing for keeps," he said. With money and a majority government, separation would be inevitable.

Nutik said there is nothing anti-French or anti-Québécois in the AQ platform. There are even a few French Canadians who are members of the party.

Nutik started AffiliationQuebec as "a real political party" following in the foot-

steps of Alliance Quebec, a pressure group, and the Equality Party, which is still a registered political party but now defunct.

His reasoning at the time: "We need to have a political party to have political impact. If we can elect someone to the legislature, it would force media to cover us." He continued, "the heroes of AffiliationQuebec are the weeklies... These are the only places we got ink."

"I built a political party to represent anglos and the minority interests of the 'million [anglo and allo] Quebecers,' and nobody came." Nutik said he hopes someone will take over. He will continue to maintain the AffiliationQuebec website.



Christmas at St. Matthias' Anglican Church

Sunday December 21
Fourth Sunday of Advent
8:00am Holy Communion
10:30am Eucharist

Wednesday December 24
10:00pm Christmas Eve service

Thursday December 25
8:00am Holy Communion
10:30am Family Eucharist service*

*Choir & strings play Malcolm, Monteverdi, Buxtehude

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Winter cleaning



This building at 4400 St. Catherine St. near Westmount High is being excavated around its foundation in spite of the bad weather. A resident explained that it was a soil remediation project. Building management did not return calls for comment.

Last original PSO retires

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The last of Westmount's original public safety officers, Sgt. Robert Stringer retires January 2, closing a chapter in the 28-year-history of the Public Security Unit. "I've loved everything about it," he says, "especially being part of the growing-up process and being closely connected to the citizens."

The "only reason" he's not staying on, he says, is the shift work. At age 58, he's looking forward to being able to live a more 9-to-5 lifestyle with his wife, reconnect with friends and enjoy activities he has missed out with the rotating shift schedule.

The job has also changed. "We lost a lot," he says, with the forced merger of Westmount's fire department into the Montreal island-wide service. "We used to be dispatched to most of their calls. And it gave us more opportunity to interact with citizens and provide assistance in many different ways."

In touch with people

The first of the original PSOs to be appointed to the role of sergeant in 1985 – a patrol position – Stringer says that being on the road kept him in touch with people. That too is changing as the sergeant's role is taking on more of an administrative function.

A South Shore resident, Stringer was a volunteer St. Hubert firefighter when he came to Westmount in July 1980 with the 17 original public safety officers. They were hired from a variety of backgrounds to forge a new service as "the eyes and ears" of the community, he recalls. And it was their diversity that brought a broad spectrum to the force that now hires only graduates of police technology or police retirees.

Planning to keep working in some capacity, Stringer says he'll now be devoting more time to his own entrepreneurship in mechanical and electrical work.

Ceccon, Léger and McAuslan win arts prize



From left: Nathaly Pasieczny (Groupe de la Veillée), Francine Léger, Vasco Ceccon and Pascale Correia (Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal).

Westmounters Vasco Ceccon and Francine Léger of Vasco Design International, and Peter McAuslan of McAuslan Brewing were awarded 2008 Prix Arts-Affaires de Montréal on December 2.

The prizes were created to acknowledge business people who support the arts. Ceccon and Léger won in the SME (small and medium enterprise) category. McAuslan won in the Arts/Business Personality category.

Ceccon chairs the fundraising campaign of theatre company Le Groupe de la Veillée and the board of directors of Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal. McAuslan supports the St. Ambroise Fringe Festival and the Montreal Chamber Music Festival.

The prize is an initiative of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal and the Conseil des arts de Montréal, in collaboration with *Le Devoir*, Quebecor and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

9 Lives: Special Christmas edition

BY LYZANNE

Please give to the most needy in this season of giving.

You can drop off your children's used clothing and toys for the refugee program at the YMCA residence located at 4039 Tupper St., near Atwater.

This is just down the street from us, in our neighborhood: the Covered Garden is a YMCA community program located at this YMCA residence. It is a temporary lodging program for asylum seekers who have just arrived in Canada. These families are accompanied during their first month in Canada in order to help them integrate through a variety of activities for children, teenagers and adults.

The Covered Garden would like to offer asylum seekers the possibility of living a memorable first Canadian Christmas sea-

son, despite the difficulties they must overcome. As planned every year, the Covered Garden volunteers organize a special event during which Santa Claus presents gifts to the children. This special event cannot be held without the support of generous donors who offer used or new toys for the children, from newborns to 17 years of age.

Please consider giving clothing that your children have outgrown, especially winter clothing and toys that your children no longer find of interest. If you would like further information, please contact Valérie Lavigne or Tania Ghanem of the Covered Garden at 514.932-5353x204 or email Valérie Lavigne at valerie.lavigne@ymca-montreal.qc.ca.

Many thanks for your generosity.

LYZANNE



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Hennelly hosts vernissage

Recent New York City transplant and artist Nadine Hennelly held a vernissage of new works entitled “Urban Abstractions” on December 3 at Studio H in St. Henri.

The former top model, who – prior to relocating to Westmount – appeared nightly on the *Late Show with David Letterman* as one of the Hi-Ho Babes, has continued a series of photographs that were initially begun in NYC on assignment for Fujifilm.

On display at Studio H were Hennelly’s photographs of industrial sites in and around Montreal.

The mostly Westmount crowd included Alexandra and Jaqueline Macdougall, former premier of Quebec Pierre Marc Johnson, writer Tim Hornyak and Roger’s Cup tournament director Eugene Lapierre.

The show can be seen by appointment until December 19. Contact studio H at 514.932.2217 or go to www.nadinehennelly.com.



Nadine Hennelly.

Friends of Library sales succeed

The Friends of the Westmount Library hosted two sales in November. \$21,476 was raised in total. At city council on December 15, Councillor Kathleen Duncan explained that the two principal organiz-

ers, Carolyn O’Neill and Lee Taylor, studied past sales and those of other groups in order to optimize results. She later told the *Independent*, “It was a huge accomplishment. They were so entrepreneurial and really thought out how maximize the profits from the sale.” All proceeds will be used by the Westmount Public Library.

Correction Flying Five facts

Our article, “Moving Muscles – the book” (December 9, p. 4), got it wrong. Of the five cyclists who completed the cross-Canada Moving Muscles trip, only Westmounter Keith Martin has muscular dystrophy.

The book – *The Flying Five* – has arrived in Westmount. It is available for purchase at Sharyn Scott on Consignment (4925 Sherbrooke St., 514.484.6507) and by email at flyingfivepress@gmail.com.

Berger brings thrills for the holidays

Westmounter Leon Berger has just published two “retro-thrillers” – *The Berlin Dossier* and *The Kremlin Betrayal* – that aim to return to the era of well-written, readable novels of intrigue and suspense.

Both novels are available online at www.chapters.indigo.ca and www.wordsworthbooks.com.

La Cache’s Greene store to close



As previously reported (September 16, p. 3), La Cache’s parent company is undergoing a bankruptcy/reorganization. The store on Greene Ave. is in liquidation and may close as early as December 19.



Ville de Westmount
City of Westmount

Veuillez noter qu’il n’y aura pas de collecte d’ordures les jeudis 25 décembre et 1^{er} janvier.

Exceptionnellement, elle aura lieu UNE JOURNÉE PLUS TÔT, soit les mercredis précédents : le 24 décembre et le 31 décembre, à la même heure que d’habitude.

La collecte des matières recyclables qui se fait normalement le mercredi demeure INCHANGÉE.

UNE JOURNÉE PLUS TÔT!
Collecte d’ordures - Période des fêtes
Garbage Collection - Holiday Schedule
ONE DAY EARLIER!

Please take note that there will be no garbage collection on Thursday, December 25 and Thursday, January 1.

Exceptionally, garbage collection for affected streets will instead take place ONE DAY EARLIER on the preceding Wednesdays, December 24 and December 31 at the same time of day.

Please note that recycling collection, which normally takes place on Wednesday, remains UNCHANGED.

TRENDSETTER

MAUD HURLEY

Maud Hurley is a Westmount resident who attends Marianopolis College's liberal arts programme. She is also a member of the school's Model UN, a group of students that participates in conferences to learn about global problems and seeks to find diplomatic solutions to them.

WI: Do you like shopping for vintage clothing?

MH: I like vintage shopping not just because I am on a student budget, but also because I like clothes that have a story behind them. I go to church sales and even buy stuff like old teacups and things that I find cool. With vintage, nobody has the same thing as you. Lots of what I wear is really cool stuff from my mother. I have an excellent skirt from my grandmother from the 50s, which she had bought for her honeymoon.

WI: What is your favourite fashion era?

MH: Probably the 19th century, which isn't the most practical. I really like history and I love to read. I love turn-of-the-century things, like *Anne of Green Gables* and even a bit earlier, like *Little Women*. Apart from that, I like everything up until 60s mod. I am not really into 60s hippie. The 20s are beautiful with flapper dresses. Wartime clothing is amazing. I love how people made things out of nothing in times of need. The 50s were so elegant and the 60s were just funky and a lot of fun. I like the free spiritedness of the 70s, although I am not into that lifestyle. The 80s and the 90s were tragic [in terms of fashion]. Things are picking up a bit now. I like things that feel old: old clothes, old books and old artifacts... things that have a sense of history.

WI: What are you reading now?

MH: I read a lot. I was reading *The Great Gatsby* the other day. I recently re-read *The Secret Garden*, which was one of my childhood favourites.

WI: Who are your style icons?

MH: Can I pick more than one? I don't know about ones in the world today... I would have to say Beatrix Potter, Jo March, Anne of Green Gables, Mary Lennox from *The Secret Garden*, French actress Clemence Poesie, Audrey Hepburn and silent film star Lillian Gish. Another one of my biggest style influences is Lux from *The Virgin Suicides*.

In terms of modern actresses today, I like Kirsten Dunst and Zooey Deschanel. Apart from that, I don't really take inspiration from people, but from things that I revolve around. I try not to follow the Hollywood trends. I don't like feeling like a number. I wouldn't go to school wearing black leggings or UGG boots.

WI: Do you have a favourite label?

MH: I have many, not that I can afford them. But labels for everyday shopping? I often shop in kids' stores, because I am petite and because I can often find things. Gap Kids, Zara Kids, Simons... H&M is always fun, but you run the risk of someone else wearing the same thing as you. They copy trends off the runway, which is fun. And they are affordable. I occasionally shop at American Apparel.

WI: Who is your favourite designer?

MH: I have many: Luella Bartley, Olivier Theyskens (for Nina Ricci), Paul Smith, Thomas Maier (Bottega Veneta), Kate & Laura Mulleavy (sister designers behind label Rodarte), Miuccia Prada (for Prada and MiuMiu), Oscar de la Renta, Valentino. Also, Cacharel, Betsey Johnson, Karen Walker, Charles Anastase and Alber

Elbaz (Lanvin) are all pretty high up on my list of designers to befriend if I win the lottery.

WI: Which fashion magazines do you read?

MH: Not many, because they are so expensive and it's a waste of paper. Most of it is advertising. But I do buy *Teen Vogue*. If I could look like something out of the pages of *Teen Vogue*, I would be happy. I also buy *Lula*, a bi-annual magazine from Britain. It's really fairy-like and young. It's more geared to selling prettiness than sex.

WI: Would you go into a career that involves fashion?

MH: I would love to, but I am not sure how realistic it is. It is a hard milieu to pierce into. I would love to work at a publication like *Teen Vogue* or *Lula* that has a bit of an intellectual edge. I often feel awkward around fashion people because I find that there is nothing more to them. I do love fashion, but I also love other things: I like to read, I love history and art. I would like to go into an environment like PR or styling.

WI: How do you describe your style?

MH: I like to look young... I figure that I only have a few years to look young. Not like a child – although I do sometimes because I am small. I would like my style to be a reflection of who I am and to show that I am original and maybe interesting. Two days ago I decided to dress all in blue.

WI: What is your favourite item in your closet?

MH: My absolute favourite item in my closet is my vintage Chanel purse. I also dearly love my cape from Simons. It's almost like something that a *grande dame* would wear to the opera. I have a great pair of boots that look like a cross between something that an old man and Mary Poppins would wear.

WI: What is your favourite city?

MH: I still have a lot of the world to see. London is really great. An incredible mix of old and new. I love how England is still a monarchy with a sense of tradition, but is also the breeding ground of The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. Paris is always so elegant. Having said that, Montreal is a really great city too.

WI: If you could have a front row seat at any fashion show, which designer's would



Photo: Robert J. Galbraith

it be?

MH: Nina Ricci, because the clothes are not necessarily practical and functional. Especially these past few seasons. But it's a real show, which I think would be fun to see.

WI: If you could raid anyone's closet, whose would it be?

MH: Queen Victoria. I wonder what kind of underwear she wore.

WI: What is in your cosmetic case?

MH: I don't really wear makeup. My staples are mascara and lip-tint. I use a pink lip stain from The Body Shop that is fun.

WI: What do you always have in your purse, no matter what?

MH: Keys and usually a book.

WI: What is a treat for you?

MH: The opportunity to travel, a good book, hot tea or just dinner with friends.



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ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Floralies des Fêtes

Rendez-vous au Conservatoire pour l'exposition de poinsettias. Ces floralies se poursuivront pendant toute la période des Fêtes.

Fête de la Hannoukah

La Ville de Westmount, le Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom et la Congrégation Shaar Hashomayim désirent inviter toute la communauté à une fête de la Hannoukah le dimanche 21 décembre. Joignez-vous à nous au Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom au 4100, rue Sherbrooke Ouest à partir de 15 h pour des activités, de la musique et un goûter traditionnel. Une cérémonie de l'illumination des chandelles de la Hannoukah suivra à l'hôtel de ville de Westmount à 16 h 30. Info : 514 989-5265. 🕯



TRAVAUX PUBLICS

Déneigement

Ne jamais placer la neige venant des entrées privées et sur les rues, ruelles et trottoirs publics. Il

est possible d'ajouter aux bancs de neige existants avant les opérations de déneigement, mais il faut toujours s'assurer que les trottoirs et la voie publique ne sont pas obstrués. Autant les propriétaires que les entrepreneurs sont passibles d'amendes pour non respect du règlement. Info : 514 989-5311.

Collecte d'ordures

Veillez noter qu'il n'y aura pas de collecte d'ordures les jeudis 25 décembre et 1^{er} janvier. Exceptionnellement, elle aura lieu **UNE JOURNÉE PLUS TÔT**, soit les mercredis précédents : le 24 décembre et le 31 décembre, à la même heure que d'habitude. La collecte des matières recyclables qui se fait normalement le mercredi demeure INCHANGÉE.

Arbres de Noël

Participez à la cueillette des arbres de Noël en plaçant votre arbre sur votre terrain à l'arrière du trottoir les jours de semaine à compter du 5 janvier. Assurez-vous de dépouiller l'arbre de TOUTES décorations, emballages ou sacs de plastique. Nous vous prions également de faire preuve de patience en raison du déneigement et des autres tâches pouvant retarder la cueillette. Info : 514 989-5311. 🌲



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Holiday Flower Show

Enjoy the display of poinsettias in the Conservatory, continuing throughout the holiday season.

Chanukah Party

The City of Westmount, Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom and Congregation Shaar Hashomayim invite the entire Westmount community to a celebration of Chanukah on Sunday, December 21 beginning at 3 p.m. at the Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 4100 Sherbrooke St. West. Join us there for traditional Chanukah activities, music and treats, followed by a candle-lighting at 4:30 p.m. at City Hall. Info: 514 989-5265. 🕯



PUBLIC WORKS

Snow Removal

Snow from private driveways and walkways must never be placed on public sidewalks, lanes or streets. During snow loading, snow may be added to the existing snowbanks prior to removal, but this

snow must never obstruct the public roadways or sidewalks. Fines may be levied on home owners and/or contractors who violate these regulations. Info: 514 989-5311.

Garbage Collection

There will be no garbage collection on Thursday, December 25 and Thursday, January 1. Exceptionally, garbage collection for affected streets will instead take place **ONE DAY EARLIER** on the preceding Wednesdays, December 24 and December 31 at the same time of day. Please note that recycling collection, which normally takes place on Wednesday, remains UNCHANGED.

Christmas Trees

Christmas tree collection will begin on January 5. Make sure your tree gets composted by placing it right behind the sidewalk at the front of your property at any time. You must remove ALL decorations, wrapping or plastic bags. Please be patient, as collection is ongoing and it may take several days before the tree is picked up, especially during snow removal. Info: 514 989-5311. 🌲

Heures d'ouverture pendant le temps des Fêtes

Décembre 2008 December 2008								Janvier 2009 January 2009						
	Lundi 22 Monday	Mardi 23 Tuesday	Mercredi 24 Wednesday	Jeudi 25 Thursday	Vendredi 26 Friday	Samedi 27 Saturday	Dimanche 28 Sunday	Lundi 29 Monday	Mardi 30 Tuesday	Mercredi 31 Wednesday	Jeudi 01 Thursday	Vendredi 02 Friday	Samedi 03 Saturday	Dimanche 04 Sunday
Hôtel de ville et administration City Hall and administration	8 h 30 - 16 h 30	8 h 30 - 16 h 30			Fermé Closed			8 h 30 - 16 h 30	8 h 30 - 16 h 30			Fermé Closed		
Bibliothèque Library	10 h - 21 h	10 h - 21 h		Fermé Closed		10 h - 17 h	10 h - 17 h	10 h - 21 h	10 h - 21 h		Fermé Closed		10 h - 17 h	10 h - 17 h
Conservatoire Conservatory	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45
Aréna Arena	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 17 h	Fermé Closed	12 h - 19 h 30	9 h - 21 h 45	12 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 17 h	Fermé Closed	12 h - 19 h 30	9 h - 21 h 45	12 h - 22 h 45
Victoria Hall et la galerie Victoria Hall and The Gallery														Fermés Closed
Police – PDQ 12 Police Station 12														Tous les jours de 9 h à 19 h Every day from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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Annie & Sophie

Westmount Art Scene

Adria Collins and Bobbie Burgers: the nature of surfaces

BY HEATHER BLACK

“The richness I achieve comes from Nature, the source of my inspiration.”
— CLAUDE MONET

Adria Collins at Galerie Sandra Goldie and Bobbie Burgers at Galerie de Bellefeuille both capture Monet’s sentiment. Yet each artist’s vision of nature is unique. Collins adds glitter to trees to promote social criticism; while Burgers defines petal and leaf in vibrant brushstrokes.

Collins chooses trees

For Montreal artist Collins, trees are the subject of choice. In “Seduction”, a leafy tree with sepia shadows evokes Venus on an opalescent globe. Painted in oil on canvas, this tree of life is a reminder of nature’s fleeting beauty. Yet sealed with a high-gloss and toxic resin, a destructive consumerism is conveyed.

Her most recent work continues the theme of commercialization. Sprinkled

with glitter, her trees suggest that beauty and ugliness are indistinguishable, and that life and decay coexist. In “Looks like Rain”, a majestic grove is marred by blotches of glitter. Resembling sticky fingerprints on a windowpane, the painting suggests that nature is viewed through a man-made lens.

Her paintings also convey the futility of permanence. In “All that Glitters 2” – a beautifully painted sunset with amoeba- or bacteria-like splotches of glitter – suggests a transformation of matter and Darwinian evolution. By using gloss and glitz surfaces, the artist conveys that nature is made toxic by man. But the beauty of the images causes the viewer to stop and consider the artist’s message.

Burgers becoming impressionistic

Known for realistic botanicals and bouquets, Vancouver artist Burgers’ style is increasingly impressionistic. Her raised acrylic brushstrokes define stem or blossom. Yet each robust stroke relates to the next to convey the movement of willows in the wind or fast-moving clouds in blue skies.

Painting the lush Okanagan Valley or the landscapes of Provence, Burgers increasingly interprets rather than records nature. Her technique and subject choice recall the work of Van Gogh. “Room for Interpretation” – a dynamic landscape of yellow, green and purple – conveys the fluid magic of “Wheatfield with Cypresses” (1889). And sunflowers – a common Van Gogh subject – are vividly portrayed in “A Means of Hope”.

Yet her fresh colours and keen compo-



“A Means of Hope”

sition captivate the imagination. Like the impressionists, the artist asks the viewer to appreciate the beauty of nature. Capturing the fleeting moment through vibrant surfaces, Burgers transports us – perhaps nostalgically – to an earlier era and a place of beauty.

New associations

Burgers and Collins increasingly use complex surfaces to convey their message. Both are inspired by and capture the richness of nature, yet communicate through two very different approaches – Burgers’ impressionistic brushwork and Collins’ glittering trees.

Adria Collins exhibits at Galerie Sandra Goldie, 4898 de Maisonneuve, Suite 100, while Bobbie Burgers’ exuberant landscapes are found at Galerie de Bellefeuille, 1367 Greene Ave.

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Anna Maria Ranieri

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Westmount Today, Yesterday and Before



BY DOREEN LINDSAY

Question: Where did this wayside cross stand on Côte St. Antoine Rd.? For answer, please turn to p. 14.

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Accord D
Desjardins

PAC chair recognized for long service



At the city council meeting December 15, architect Julia Gersovitz (centre), the outgoing chair of the city's Planning Advisory Committee, is recognized for her "hard work" and expertise since January 2002 by Councillor Cynthia Lulham, left, and Mayor Karin Marks. Many planning projects to be presented next year will bear her stamp, they said. Carole Scheffer, Paul Grenier and Philip Hazan compose the professional roster going forward.



Gift suggestions from the press

"Books for Christmas: our annual list of holiday gift suggestions from distinguished readers and writers: Conrad Black, Joe the Plumber et al." by Jonathan Aitken in *The American Spectator*, Dec/Jan 2009, p. 57.

"Best books of 2008: this round-up of our Bookmarks Selections from the past year provides great ideas for reading lists and holiday wish list." In *Bookmarks*, Nov/Dec 2008, p. 10.

"Du nouveau... des cadeaux écolos: cette année, on achète responsable" in *Fleurs, plantes, jardins*, hiver 2009, p. 48.

Holiday spirit for the young ones

The Nutcracker Doll by Mary Newell DePalma. Kepley's dream is to dance in *The Nutcracker*. When the audition letter arrives in the mail with the results, Kepley is thrilled. She's a doll!

Première neige: fantaisie en photos by Carl R. Sams and Jean Stoick. An enchanting tale of the seasonal changes in a forest filled with wild animals.

Of wines and men

La bodega by Noah Gordon. Traditions in 19th century Spain have it that the eldest son inherits the family winery. A younger son, Diego, will accordingly be disinherited and even has to flee his country because of war. He ends up in Languedoc, learns the tricks of the trade from a local winemaker and pursues his dream of

having his own bodega.

Le jugement de Paris: le jour où les vins californiens surclassèrent les grands crus français by George Taber. How Californian wines surpassed French wines in a blind tasting in 1976 and the minor revolution that ensued in the world of wine. The history of winemaking in North America is also presented.

La sélection Chartier 2009: guide des vins et d'harmonisation avec les mets by François Chartier.

Les 100 meilleurs vins à moins de 25\$: guide Aubry 2009 by Jean Aubry.

On the lighter side

Disquiet please: more humor writing from the New Yorker edited by Henry Finder. "An uproarious sampling of its funny writings."

More information than you require by John Hodgman. An absurdly funny almanac of lies told in the uncannily beige tone the author uses in his regular appearances on *The Daily Show*.

Listening to a book (on CD)

The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears by Dinaw Mengestu. A tender, enthralling debut novel about the hidden lives of immigrants who are caught between the brutal Africa they have fled and an America that will not fully admit them.

A Mercy by Toni Morrison. Set in the 1680s, this novel unfolds in the harsh northern climes of an emergent America. Here, on Anglo-Dutch trader Jacob Vaark's isolated homestead, Vaark's mail-order wife and three female slaves struggle against great hardships while forming shifting alliances.



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Comin' Up...

Thursday, December 18: *Centenary of Roslyn School* (play) by Dramatis Personae at the Westmount Public Library from 7 to 9 pm. Admission is free for members, \$5 otherwise.

Sunday, Dec. 21: Temple Emanu-El Beth Sholom hosts the annual community-wide Hannukah party from 3 to 4 pm in the community hall, followed by the First Candle Lighting at Westmount city hall at 4:30 pm. Enjoy Latkes, donuts, refreshments, Chanukah music, dreidel games and chocolate coins. Bring your family Menorah to display. 514.937.3575.

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Total budget at \$79.8 million

.....
continued from p. 1

up 4 percent.

The tax break was given to homeowners "because they are the ones that have been the most penalized" due to the merger with Montreal, until the demerged cities were able to regain their prior ability to redistribute the tax burden.

Cities' being able to collect all taxes, out of which they remit their shares directly to the island-wide agglomeration council, was one of the concessions received from Quebec and Montreal under the Bill 22 negotiations last June.

This year's taxes will be paid directly to Westmount in two installments due March 2 and June 1 to enable the city to remit its agglomeration costs on time.

The budget of \$79.8 million includes \$40.6 million in agglomeration costs for services such as police, fire and transit. The remainder includes \$29.2 million for the delivery of local services, \$3.9 million for debt service and financing costs, close to \$1 million for the Montreal Metropolitan Community and \$2.5 million in pay-as-you-go financing of the capital works budget.

Provision for uncertainties

A provision of \$1.2 million has also been made for "the uncertain economic climate which may impact elements of our budget and the weight of future obligations," explained finance commissioner Guy Charette in presenting the budget.

Also adopted was a capital works budget of \$7.3 million that includes \$1.2 million for Hydro Westmount and \$6.1 million for the upgrading of municipal buildings, parks, the fleet, water and sewer mains and streets (see *Westmount Independent*, December 2-3).

Electronic Independents available

Enjoy the Indie at supper time on Tuesdays!

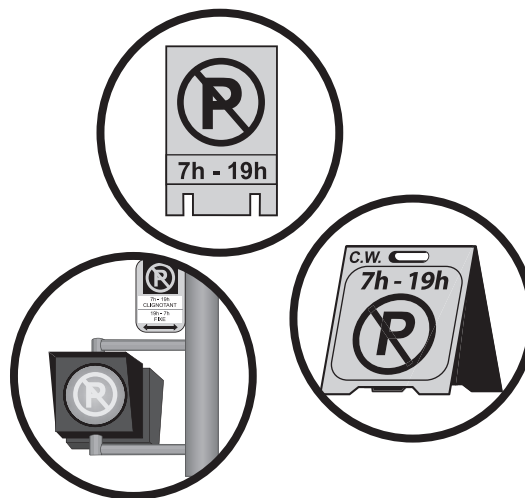
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Snow Removal Everyone has a role to play!

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Snow from Private Driveways

Snow from private driveways and walkways must never be placed on public sidewalks, lanes, or streets. During snow loading, snow may be added to the existing snowbanks prior to removal, but this snow must never obstruct the public roadways or sidewalks. Fines may be levied on home owners and/or contractors who violate these regulations.



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History quiz: Wayside cross

By DOREEN LINDSAY

Question from p. 11. Where did this wayside cross stand on Côte St. Antoine Rd.?

Answer: At the corner of present-day Lansdowne Ave.

A white painted cross was erected at the highest point of Côte St. Antoine Rd. The image reproduced on p. 11 shows the cross in front of the St. Germain house (built in 1730). It is from a photograph of a painting. The Westmount Historical Association is very pleased to have the photograph in its archives as evidence of the cross' existence. It was on the St. Germain family's land and family members considered it an honour to maintain it for their neighbours.

Côte St. Antoine developed as an east-west pathway as the native peoples walked through the forest between the old Iroquoian village of Hochelaga (situated south of where McGill University is today) to the west end of the island of Montreal.

Beginning in 1698, 45 years after they became seigneurs of the island of Montreal in 1663, the Sulpicians divided this area into 13 concessions cutting across Côte St. Antoine Rd. Seven of these concessions were granted to families who previously lived in the original settlement of Ville Marie on the St. Lawrence River. The St. Germain family, which had owned land between present-day Notre Dame and St. Jacques, came up the hill with their neighbours Louis Hurtebise, and Michel, Louis and Paul Décarie. Louis Langevin,

François Prud'homme and the Leduc sons also came for the excellent land and agreeable climate. At first, they cut trees from the forest to build wooden houses, then gathered stones to build more solid ones on the north side of the road, facing the river. As their farms developed, they all used this same route to transport their grain, vegetables, apples and melons to market in Ville Marie.

If you walk west on Côte St. Antoine from the flat lawn of Garden Point in front of city hall, you will feel the elevation increase as the road veers up and to the right. As you curve past the two remaining Metcalfe Terrace homes on your left (168 and 170 Côte St. Antoine) – built in the 1840s – you will see, on your right at Forden Ave., the milestone that measures the distance from the Sulpician *Fort de la Montagne* on present day Sherbrooke St. at Fort.

Today the cross and the St. Germain stone house have gone. Most of the original houses at Lansdowne and Côte St. Antoine Rd. are gone and we are left with a sloping triangle of land, which forms a small park between Côte St. Antoine and Belmont Crescent.

I ask my readers how we should commemorate the existence of this cross, which was of significance among our first settlers of Westmount.

Should we put up a plaque or should we commission a sculpture to mark the spot? Should we plant a tree?

Please let me know your thoughts.

Doreen Lindsay is president of the Westmount Historical Association.

A talk about the centenary of Roslyn school (1908), will be given on Thursday, December 18 at 7 pm in the Westmount Public Library.

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Caroling for a cause



Students from The Study went door to door on December 15 caroling to raise money. About \$500 was collected, which will be used for food baskets given by the school to St. Gabriel's Parish. Pictured are grade 11 students and Westmounters Chloé Tait and Shannon Romoff at the Meek house on Westmount Ave.

BUILDING PERMITS What's permitted

The following building permits for exterior alterations were approved by city council at its meeting on December 15.

444 Grosvenor: to install a fence on the northwest property line;

337 Metcalfe: to redo the rear balcony and replace the door and windows;

411 Clarke: to do some landscaping in the

front yard;

56 St. Sulpice: to install a mechanical unit on the roof and one in the back yard;

11 Winchester: to replace the front windows;

438-440 Mount Stephen: to replace apartment building windows.

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**Best wishes for the holiday season
and the New Year**

Sutton

*Let me take this opportunity
to thank all my clients, friends
and family for making 2008
a special year!*

*May 2009 bring
you all good health,
much happiness
and lots of success.*

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*2006, 2007, 2008

