WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly Vol. 20 No. 11b | *We are Westmount.* | November 10, 2026

Westmount remembers



The city's official Remembrance Day ceremony took place November 8 at the cenotaph in front of city hall. The Fusiliers Mont-Royal band began the proceedings by leading the Royal Montreal Regiment and the 34th Signal Regiment along Sherbrooke St. and Côte St. Antoine. See p. 17 for the story and p. 10 for more Remembrance Day coverage. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

Indie attends Rocky Horror Picture Show *again*



The *Independent* was again pleased to supply newspapers for this Hallowe'en's local showings of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Filmgoers and promoters are well known for bringing and providing props so attendees can act out what is happening on screen, including using a newspaper as an umbrella in one scene. In this photo, the edition being used is the issue showing last year's use of the *Independent* at the movie. PHOTO COURTESY OF KING-WEI CHU.

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'Largest-ever' number of artisans vie to exhibit this weekend

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A record number of artisans applied to exhibit their work at the 48th annual Artisans Westmount event at Victoria Hall November 14 and 15, organizers said this week.

"Whereas the number of applicants usually hovers around 100, this year we received 145 applications, which is a record number for us," said Emily Gamble, logistics agent for the Library and Community Events. As a result, "our jury faced some very difficult decisions when selecting for the 34 available spots."

Nearly half of this year's artisans are first-time participants, she explained. "I think it will be exciting for residents to get to peruse the work of so many creators they

continued on p. 3



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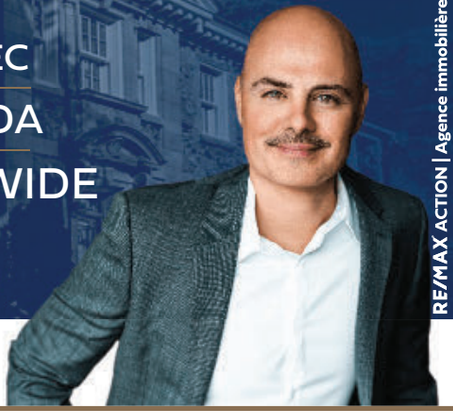
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Scan for more information on all featured properties

Time-change safety reminders

Public Security advises wearing easy-to-see jackets, carrying lights

By Laureen Sweeney

As darkness sets in earlier than many pedestrians and drivers are accustomed to with the recent change in time November 1, Public Security met November 4 with two Scouting groups (Cubs and Scouts) from the 2nd Westmount group at Roslyn School to explain the importance of pedestrian safety. They are aged 6 to 11, and 12 to 18.

Public Security director Greg McBain said the advice to both youth groups applies to anyone outside at night such as joggers and dog walkers.

This includes wear brightly coloured jackets, carry lighting devices, avoid wearing headphones and remain more vigilant than usual for traffic and drivers who might not see you as quickly as usual.

Contractor ticketed $472 for use of leaf blowers

The use of a "multitude" of gasoline-fired leaf blowers on Côte St. Antoine Rd. Saturday, October 31, at 10:14 am, resulted in a ticket of $472 to a contractor who previously had been warned, Public Security officials said.

Use of the devices is permitted only during the months of April, October to November and on Monday to Friday from 8 am to 4 pm.

The contractor's previous offence, which he claimed not to know about, was reported to have occurred on Summit Circle on Friday, October 23 at 4:28 pm.

Overheard

Woman into cell phone on Sherbrooke at Grosvenor, November 4 at 3 pm:

"... in my brother's Porsche to visit my sister... "

Correction
'Illegal' photo caption

The Independent*'s editor incorrectly described leaf-blower use at this location or near it as "legal" in a photo caption last week (p. 3; photo also reproduced below). He had focused on the (legal) time of day when compared to the infraction being described in last week's story. He apologizes for the error. – DP.*



Six leaf blowers in illegal operation at Victoria and Côte St. Antoine on Saturday, October 31 at 10:09 am. Photo: Independent.

Artisans, *cont'd from p. 1*

haven't seen before."

Because the front entrance of Victoria Hall is slated to remain under construction over the weekend of the event, "we will be putting out extra signage on Sherbrooke to draw in passers-by and make it clear that the event is still on."

The price of admission to the event remains at $2 or the donation of a non-perishable food item to the annual Public Security holiday food drive that typically kicks off at this event.

The Café Mouton Noir will also set up an area at the entrance.

THE TIMING!

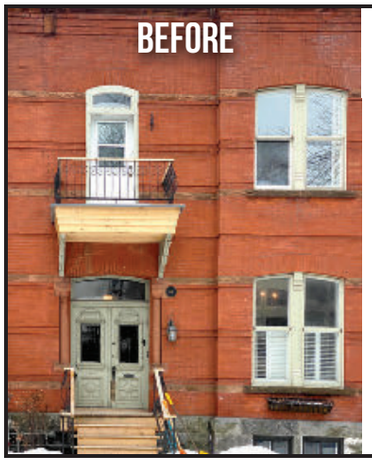
- Is there ever a perfect time to sell your house?
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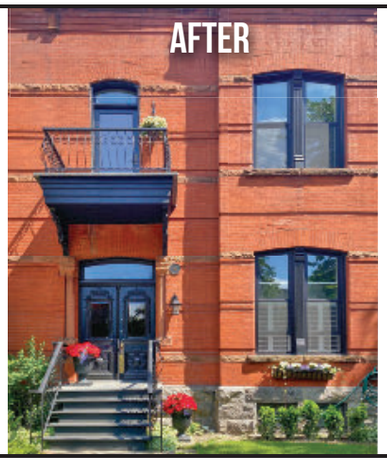
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Tradition vs. change, or both?

Mayor launches council's second year with what might lie ahead

By Laureen Sweeney

As Westmount's city council meeting opened to a full house November 3, Mayor Michael Stern issued what might be considered a blueprint for what lies ahead for the city in the coming year, the second one of the council's term since its election last year.

"As we begin the business of this month's public meeting, I'd like to share a few thoughts about something that matters deeply to me," that is "the relationship between tradition and progress."

"Respecting tradition and embracing change are not opposites," he explained. "The fact that something has always been done in a certain way doesn't necessarily mean it must always be done that way."

While some practices are required by law, "others have simply become customary over time. Both deserve consideration, but they are not interchangeable. The fact that something has always been done a certain way doesn't necessarily mean it must always be done that way."



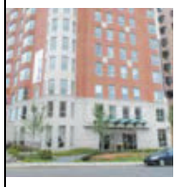
City hall on November 9. Photo: Independent.

What to preserve

The challenge to leadership, he explained, "is knowing what must be preserved, what can evolve and when change serves the greater good."

He concluded saying that "our responsibility is not only to those who built Westmount before us. It is also to those who will call it home long after we're gone... We honour our past not by standing still, but by ensuring that what makes Westmount special continues to thrive."

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Residents get head start

Sign-up for city's winter programs opens November 17

By Laureen Sweeney

While some leaves may remain on trees for a while yet, the city's winter registration opens November 17 for Westmount residents wanting first choice of times and activities from Sports and Recreation. These take place at the city's recreation centre and Victoria Hall.

The sign-up opens at 8 am online or in person at the Sports and Recreation office at 8:30 am. This provides a head start before general registration opens to all, including non-residents, on December 1.

"Spaces are not guaranteed," so register early, the city's information booklet advises. This is available online. A valid 2026 registration card is required along with proof of residency.

"Winter is a wonderful time to get out, stay active, try something new and spend time with family, friends and neighbours," states Sports and Recreation director Dave Lapointe in the 2027 recreation booklet. This lists all programs and times under youth, adult and senior categories as well as youth hockey, skating and figure skating.

Youth programs

Featured among the regular youth programs is "Babies on the Move" to help with baby development and head control from birth to 18 months. Another, open to ages 11 to 15, is babysitting given by the Red Cross with Atout Plus.

Stand-by favourites include basketball, breakdance, "Chanson Magique" and classical ballet in 12 different time slots. Among others are hip hop, karate, indoor soccer, discovering art and yoga.

Adult and senior categories

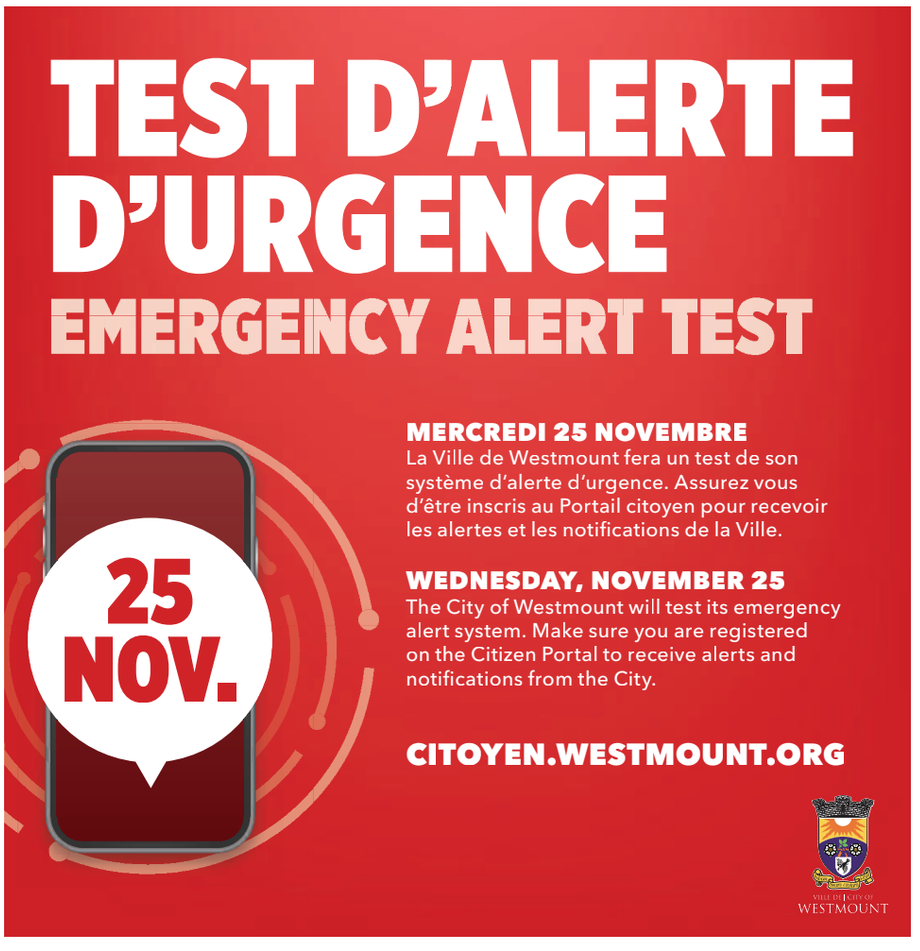
In the adult category, a new program listed for adults is figure skating for those with an "existing skating base" of expertise.

Among the many others listed on three pages are badminton, belly dancing, choir, boot camp, classical ballet, figure skating, pickleball, co-ed instructional hockey and first aid training.

Programs geared to seniors include low intensity fitness, gentle movement and gentle yoga – all three also available online via Zoom.







Letters to the editor

Thanks for the power, we barely had time to miss it

Kudos and thanks to Hydro Westmount for its instant attention to the two-hour power outage at the Ascension of our Lord Church and some homes on Kitchener Ave., which occurred at around 8:30 pm on Hallowe'en.

They were here within 15 minutes of my phone call and the problem was sorted out within a couple of hours.

The old adage about "not missing the water until the well runs dry" might easily be adapted to our electricity supply.

Wilfrid de Freitas
(along with many others),
Kitchener Ave.

A shout-out to caring students

About two weeks ago, when I fell onto the sidewalk at St. Catherine and Wood around 8:30 am onto my face and arm, I broke my glasses and ended up with bruises, lacerations etc. A group of students immediately surrounded me and waited with me, even engaging in conversation, until the police (and a wonderful Sergeant Wang) arrived and arranged for an ambulance.

Those students were so caring!

Immediately, they called 911 and offered me tissues so I could clean away the messy blood. Yes, I'm elderly so I couldn't easily get up.

And then a male student went above and beyond – he crossed St. Catherine, went into a resto and got a chair for me, then lifted me onto it!

I don't know how I could have "kept myself together" without their care and thoughtfulness.

I've told many people about this act of kindness. I don't have their names but I feel and continue to feel extremely grateful to them.

Anne Jeffrey, Olivier Ave.

Today's menace is tomorrow's heritage

The editor notes (editorial, November 3, p. 6) that, with artificial fields all around us, "the sun rises, every morning."

Westmount's newspapers have confirmed it for 128 years.

In 1898, borrowing to buy Westmount Park was "extravagant and uncalled for" (*Montreal Daily Star*, April 19, 1898). In 1927, the Murray property, now King George Park, was "not suitable for the purpose" (John H. Hand on the purchase of the Murray property, *Montreal Daily Star*, February 15, 1927).

In 2007, even an all-natural-grass plan for Westmount Park was "ominous" (Patrick Barnard in the *Westmount Independent*, October 17, 2007, pp. 4-5). In 2019, young soccer players were "badgering" council (Roger Jochym in the *Westmount Independent*, November 26, 2019, p. 10); in 2023, [possible] synthetic grass at the WAG was "Titanic thinking" (Rev. Neil Whitehouse, letter "Let there be grass at WAG, forever," *Westmount Independent*, May 30, 2023, p. 6).

The sun rose each time, even if the discomfort with change was real.

The sports change too, and thus their fields. Rugby in Westmount Park in 1897, cricket for 60 years, softball, touch football, now soccer.

My favourite: in 1972, "people playing frisbee or kicking footballs around" was a "misuse" of Westmount Park (letter, *Westmount Examiner*, May 4, 1972). By 2023, "frisbee, pick-up soccer" were cited as the very free play the WAG must protect (Patrick Barnard in the *Westmount Independent*, May 16, 2023, p. 7).

Today's menace is tomorrow's heritage.

The 1972 writer had a point, though: "no turf can stand up to this hard usage." Indeed. Our grass fields carry two to three times the hours that grass can bear. Lit turf at the WAG and junior field [at the bottom of Westmount Park] would add about 1,270 hours a season, about 40 percent more, and let Westmount Park's main field and King George Park thrive as safe, even grass.

The editor also warns that turf won't produce five European professionals per vintage of Westmount kids. Fair enough. Ironically, I write from Málaga, visiting my daughter at her pro club's academy, so this vintage is one down, four to go. The rest of us will settle for 1,270 more hours and fewer twisted ankles.

A surface is only a means. Safety and more hours of activity are the goals.

Jeremy Jonas, Kensington Ave.

Democracy means letting the elected majority rule

Councillor Shawn Moss's column, "The wrong direction for Westmount" (October 20, p. 7), frames ordinary exercises of council authority as threats to the city's character. Several of his specific complaints do not hold up under examination.

On transparency, Mr. Moss objects to the shift from formal general committee meetings [council meeting in private] that produced minutes to informal internal caucuses that do not.

The concern about a clear public record is legitimate in principle. However, the practical effect of the prior structure was often protracted process rather than meaningful accountability. Residents elected a majority to make decisions, not to preserve every procedural step that slows them down. Transparency does not require that every discussion be filtered through the same formal apparatus that previously delayed action.

On planning, Mr. Moss criticizes the council majority for occasionally setting aside recommendations of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) when granting variances and other approvals.

The PAC is an advisory body. Its role is to provide professional input. Final authority rests with elected councillors, who are accountable to voters. Treating an unelected committee's recommendations as binding would invert the democratic structure of municipal government. Council's willingness to depart from PAC's advice when broader considerations warrant it is not "government by exception;" it is the exercise of the authority residents granted.

On the one-way changes affecting Argyle, Kensington and Metcalfe, Mr. Moss presents the initiative as a case of consultation treated as a formality that damaged confidence. Meaningful traffic measures almost always generate opposition. The existence of objections and even a legal challenge does not automatically render the process defective or the outcome reckless. Residents who disagree remain free to organize and make their case. The alternative – treating sustained resident pushback as a veto – would make adaptive improvements in residential areas nearly impossible.

Westmount's motto, "Robur Meum Civium Fides," is invoked to support continuity with past practice. Continuity is valuable, but so is the ability of an elected majority to act on the priorities for which it was chosen. Procedural caution and advisory input have their place. They do not override the mandate of council.

Vincent Brie, Sherbrooke St.

Gas powered leaf blowers: They're baacckk!

Ah, the drone of gasoline-powered leaf blowers. Once silenced but now back with a vengeance. Open your window and listen. A big thanks to council for changing the previous council's decision to do a small thing to help the environment – same with getting rid of every-two-week garbage pick up to encourage Westmounters to compost.

Uh. Not.

Thanks to my councillor who voted against bringing these horrible machines back into our world. For the rest of council and the mayor: gas-powered leaf blowers are banned in lots of cities in Quebec (and the world) for good reasons, but no no no! Not in Westmount. If one of the richest cities in Canada and its citizens can't do one small thing to mitigate environmental degradation, who the heck will?

Certainly not the "citizens" who buy huge massive vehicles to tootle about the city, or leave their Yukon Extra-Larges or Tahoes idling unattended (hey dudes: unattended idling vehicles are illegal in Quebec so no more remote starting please) as they double park to pick up Dairy Queen for little Suzie and her friends, or "citizens" who are too lazy to compost – a major thing any reasonable person would want to do to reduce their environmental footprint.

But nooooo. *Pas à Westmount*. Which is to me, disgusting.

Well done, Westmount. Keep up the good work.

Thomas LaPierre, Chesterfield Ave.

Why bring back gasoline-powered leaf blowers?

What an ugly surprise awaited me at 8 am for a morning walk: the gasoline-powered leaf blowers are back! First, the suffocating stench of concentrated exhaust; second, the incessant, loud drone of machines; third, my eyes filled with flying dust.

I called Public Security to enquire on their legality, thinking they were banned and to be replaced by electric options in

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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Letters to the editor

May 2026. I was assured that, yes, they have been "exceptionally" reinstated. A "city council decision" was the reply to my astonishment.

So, my question goes to the city councillor(s) responsible: What short-term plan and narrow vision made you "exceptionally" re-introduce gas-powered leaf blowers after they were banned?

You must know we have a very serious climate crisis. Canada, increasingly affected by this, also happens to have one of the highest per capita carbon footprints in the world driven by oil and gas, and transportation. Just *one* hour of using a gas-powered leaf blower is the equivalent of driving a car about 1,700 km.

Their use totally ignores the obvious dangers to human health – not only for those using them, but for everyone nearby. In fact, these machines are bad for everything and everyone: they produce smoke, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and help disperse dust containing heavy metals and chemicals from herbicides/pesticides, animal faeces, pollen and mold spores. Exposure to these increase risks of lung cancer, asthma, cardiovascular disease as well as exposing young children to more concentrated levels due to their proximity to the ground.

Why have them back?!

One of the hurdles for conservationists is to provide alternatives to traditional ways of doing things so that a change to more environmentally responsible options is acceptable and easier to follow through. Also important, is understanding that compromise is necessary between opposing views. Banning gas-powered leaf blowers was a perfect example of this.

Rather than banning them outright, the alternative, acceptable solution was electrically powered leaf blowers. A compromise between both sides. It worked well – until whoever at city council reversed on this regulation.

Considering the seriously bad effects the gas-powered leaf blowers have on human health, society and environment, I am led to believe the reason they have been re-introduced is probably financial. It is what seems to be the most important bottom line.

*

I also noted editor David Price's reference in his November 3 editorial (p. 6) to gasoline-powered leaf blowers not being "the end of the world."

Sorry to say, but his position on this environmental and health nuisance is just as narrow minded and short-term driven as the city councillor[s] who reversed the ban on their use!

It is revealing that – even as he says "I am more interested in the future than opining on the past" (see January 28, 2025, p. 6) – he is doing the exact opposite.

Indeed "life WAS pretty good" (November 3, p. 6, capitals added) but because we spared hardly any thought to the damage all our activities did to the environment over the past decades. Life will not continue to be so good (for everyone worldwide – not only him) unless we take action for the future.

Sure, the sun rises every morning (Nov. 3, p. 6). We are lucky that we can see the sun – but check out Delhi where the sun rises too, but over a thick layer of smog.

And a small action, such as keeping highly polluting gas-powered leaf blowers banned, is a small step in the right direction.

Without small steps, where would we be?

It is precisely for this reason that I chose to study Environment at McGill University. As we all know, the world is not in a very good shape (whether you like to think it or not), and we have a duty to care for our environment, including – very importantly – for the next generations!

Caring for the environment does not automatically categorize a person as a "greenist" (read: activist).

Arianna Mina, Anwoth Rd.

Editor's reply: "It is the end of the world as we know it" – it would seem, according to resident Arianna Mina, and yet: "I feel fine."

This kind of gloomy eco-prognosticating has continued non-stop for decades, without any material changes to our behaviour actually happening, including – I often note – in the habits of speechifying politicians, activists and eco true believers. Given what must surely be Westmounters' above-average carbon footprints (compared to North America, never mind the world), it is hard to see their direct and indirect use of *leaf blowers* as material. Or, as I put it last week: "There is often less at stake than some seem to think."

Looking at the world in general, I have often remarked on a correlation between a belief in environmental apocalypse and airplane travel. At present, even the federal Liberals have 180-ed into oil-and-gas cheerleaders. Who will be found to throw the first stone?

Stones may not be necessary. If the doomsayers are right, we are cooked already, perhaps literally. We might as well enjoy the sunset, to swing back to the solar imagery. I won't hassle keen air travellers or the users of leaf blowers (two groups that I don't belong to), although none of us should expect the same courtesy from eco true believers, as seen in the tone of the letter above.

And let's not bother with PR. Not only is Mina's opponent an opponent, but the indifferent onlooker. (I don't think that I had ever even used the term "leaf blower" until the founding of this newspaper in 2007. Ban all of them (electric included). Or make them compulsory. Beer will taste just as good. But I will continue to think that there are more important municipal issues. Roads? Sidewalks? Buildings? Finances? The southeast? Take your pick.)

A final warning from me: in the eco-game, it seems that any price is worth paying – at least in speech and theory (and maybe by other people) – for even the smallest gain. This is not sound or proportional policy, and it tends to backfire. – DP.

Demo process good, but please make plans available beforehand

Our community-based democracy and civic engagement at its finest was on full display at the Demolition Committee hearing on October 27.

Mayor Stern wisely led a robust and civil debate while respecting time considerations for what turned out to be a very long evening. Councillor Aronson ably guided the hearing through the many legal hurdles. Residents with varied perspectives made valuable and thoughtful contributions to the debate.

I am not a regular at council meetings, but I was struck by how fortunate we are to have a mayor and a council dedicated to public service and committed to making the best possible decisions for our community.

Rather than focus on constant criticism, perhaps we should focus on how fortunate we are to have a council composed of intelligent, dedicated and determined members working to improve our city?

Where can the city improve? Demolition files have always been made available to residents for review *before* the hearing to ensure that the public can make informed and considered contributions at the public debate, following established decades-long practice and the rules adopted by the Demolition Committee some 20 or more years ago.

This explicit exception to any other kind of urban planning application process is rooted in the nature of a public hearing, as mandated by provincial legislation, which foresees that the public can have a say through a participatory, democratic process.

Full disclosure underpins that public involvement. Without adequate transparency, full and proper public participation and debate is stifled if not severely undermined.

Likely due to a gap in institutional memory rather than any desire to circumvent the rules, the long-standing practice has been abandoned by our unelected officials under less than convincing justifications.

We need to encourage them to follow the legal parameters in place and to fully return to our traditional, democratic process for demolitions.

The public hearing of October 27 amply demonstrated that the process and outcome are nothing to fear. Even if not perfect, our democracy works just fine.

Peter F. Hoffmann, de Maisonneuve Blvd.

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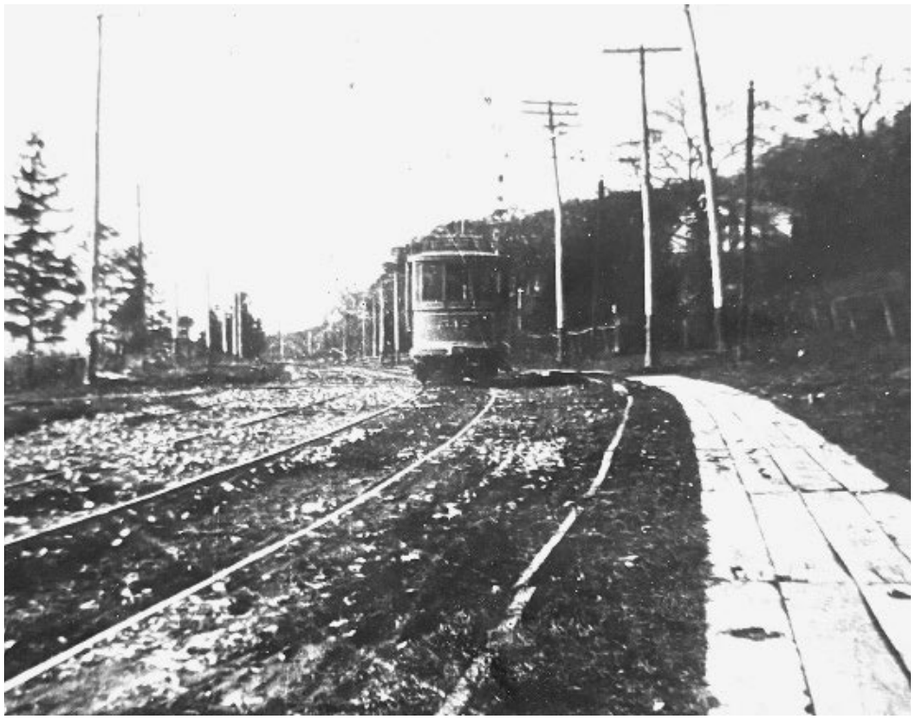
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Memories of streetcars and smash-ups



Looking north up Claremont Ave. from Sherbrooke St. in mid-October. In her book, *A View of their Own*, historian Aline Gubbay recounts the story of an out-of-control streetcar in January 1936 striking the storefront of Chatfield's grocery store, which was located at the southeast corner of this intersection at 4972 Sherbrooke, the current site of L'Occitane en Provence. The runaway vehicle, likely leaving these very rails, crashed into a window laid out to mark the passing of King George V. "People talked about it for years," said owner Duncan Chatfield, including embellishing the story by converting it into a yearly event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLES ANDERSON.



A trolley on The Boulevard in 1906. The building on the right is the old St. George's Snowshoe Club, the current site of St. George's primary school. Note the wooden sidewalk

.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

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Sainte-Catherine West, east of Greene Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, 1966, Edith H. Mather, 1966, (M2012.113.1.2.28P), courtesy McCord Stewart Museum

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From Westmount to Normandy

Remembering Lieutenant Thomas Windsor

By John Dekhane

The Second World War cast a long shadow across the world as the foundations of freedom came under threat. Throughout Quebec, countless men and women stepped forward to serve, driven not by reward or recognition, but by duty. Among the brave souls who left Montreal and never came home was Lieutenant Thomas Alfred Lee Windsor.

Born November 10, 1914 in Montreal, Thomas was the eldest son of Cora Wheeler and Alfred Windsor. His father worked in the inspection department of the Bank of Montreal.

Grew up in Westmount

Thomas grew up in a loving household in Westmount, surrounded by his siblings and sharing countless cherished memories that would remain with him throughout his life.

Thomas was educated at Queen's School before attending Westmount High School.*

After completing his studies, he began working for the T. Eaton Company in Montreal. Over the course of seven years with the company, he earned increasing responsibility and eventually became a department manager, demonstrating the leadership and reliability that would later serve him on the battlefield.

In 1937, Thomas married the love of his life, Roma Helen Jackson. The young couple made their home at 4799 Upper Grosvenor Ave.,** dreaming of spending a lifetime together.

Tragically, their happiness was shattered when Thomas's mother, Cora, died shortly after their marriage. Yet Thomas and Roma continued making plans for the future, unaware that their lives were about to change forever.

Volunteering

As war swept across countries and continents, Thomas made a life-altering decision. Determined to play his part in the struggle for freedom, he enlisted in the Canadian forces in Montreal in April 1942 and later became a proud member of the Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment, Royal Canadian Armoured Corps, 27th Armoured Regiment.



Lieutenant Thomas Alfred Lee Windsor. Photo courtesy of J. Dekhane.

A natural leader, Thomas was dependable, responsible and courageous, qualities that led him to officer training in Brockville, Ontario. There, he completed his training and was commissioned as a lieutenant.

In May 1943, Thomas embarked for England, where the long preparation for the Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe began. For months, Canadian troops trained relentlessly for the day they would cross the English Channel and confront Hitler's forces in Normandy.

When the invasion finally began on June 6, 1944, Thomas went into battle with his men, leading from the front as Canadian armoured forces fought their way inland against determined German resistance. The following day, as the advance continued through Buron towards Authie, the Sherbrooke Fusiliers encountered the fanatical 12th SS Panzer Division. The fighting was fierce, and amid the chaos of battle, Lieutenant Windsor was captured.

The Abbaye d'Ardenne, an ancient religious site near Caen, had been taken over by the 12th SS Panzer Division and was being used as the headquarters of Standartenführer Kurt Meyer. On the evening of June 7, Canadian prisoners captured during the fighting around Authie and Buron were brought there.

Eleven were selected for execution. Thomas was among them. One by one, the prisoners were taken into the abbey garden. There were no cries, no pleas – only silence and dignity.

Executed

Thomas Windsor, a lieutenant who had crossed the Atlantic, trained for the invasion and led his men into the fury of D-Day, was executed in cold blood. He and his fellow Canadians were then buried in the garden of the Abbaye d'Ardenne. Their bodies were discovered in 1945.

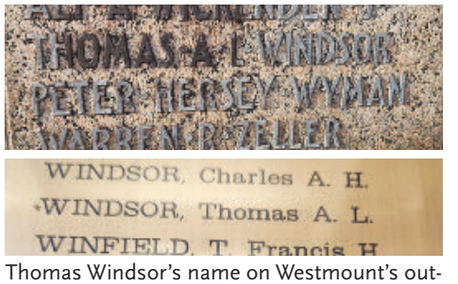
Today, Thomas lies at Bretteville-sur-Laize Canadian War Cemetery in Normandy, among thousands of Canadian servicemen who also gave their lives for peace and liberty. Beneath open skies, the wind moves gently across a landscape once torn apart by war, where rows of graves now stand in quiet formation. Each one marks a name, a story, a life lost in an unforgiving war.

When his country called, Lieutenant Thomas Alfred Lee Windsor fulfilled his duty with pride and courage. Now it is our responsibility to honour and preserve his memory, ensuring that his name is never forgotten. France will always remember the sons and daughters of Quebec who came to its aid in its darkest hour and paid the ultimate price for its liberation.

This article was offered to the Independent *at no charge by John Dekhane. He is based in France and often writes tribute articles dedicated to fallen World War II heroes "with the sole goal of keeping these often-forgotten stories alive." The* Independent *thanks him for it.*



Thomas Windsor's grave in Normandy. Photo courtesy of J. Dekhane.



Thomas Windsor's name on Westmount's outdoor cenotaph east of city hall and on the wall of honour in Victoria Hall. Photos: Independent.

**Queen's School was on Olivier Ave., where the 220 Olivier Ave. apartment building now is. It closed in 1964. Westmount High at this time was located at what is now Westmount Park School. – DP.*

***There is at present no such street. The* Independent *guesses it is 4799 Grosvenor Ave. in Côte des Neiges, just north of city limits. – DP.*

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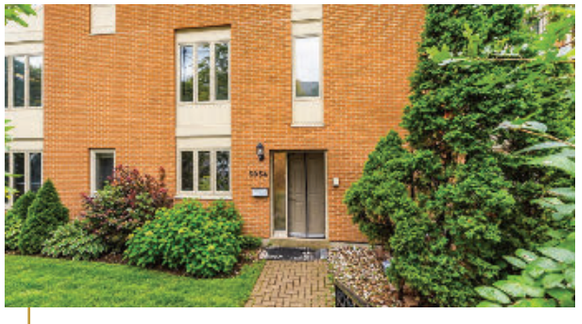
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Why break into new concrete?



A reader wrote to the *Independent* decrying work that began November 2 to break up this just-poured sidewalk on the south side of St. Catherine St. at Victoria Ave., as seen November 4. City communications director Mugisha Rutishisha told the *Independent* the same day that the work related to a water-main break and should be wrapped up on November 14. This water-main break took place before the major one November 4 (see p. 20). PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

Westmount's dragon 'amasses' $2k

BY JENNIFER BALL

While the dragon at the de Maisonneuve and Melville Ave. home may now be in hibernation, at least until next Hallowe'en, it has so far helped to raise $2,093 for the Montreal Children's Hospital, according to the fundraising campaign page on the hospital's website.

See October 27, p. 6 for previous coverage.

Overheard

Man into cell phone on de Maisonneuve at Greene, November 5 at 12:15 pm:

"What do you think they work on when they are off for a week and they are all off in Amsterdam?"

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Police Report

Police investigating latest Temple attack as potential hate crime – No 'real' gun used

By Martin C. Barry

Police at Station 12 say an investigation by a specialized police department unit is under way to determine whether projectile impact marks found on windows at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom on Sherbrooke St. at Wood Ave. are evidence of a hate crime.

Around 11:45 am on October 30, according to an incident report filed by officers at the Stanton St. station, Montreal's 9-1-1 emergency phone service received a call regarding the impacts on windows located at the rear of the synagogue.

"On site, police officers noted several impact marks in the building's windows," said Station 12 community relations officer Emmanuel Provencher.

He said an initial analysis suggested the impacts were caused by a BB rifle or an air gun used for shooting plastic projectile pellets, but "not a real firearm," according to Provencher.

He said the damage could amount to several thousand dollars. As part of the investigation, the police were able to locate nearby security cameras that recorded images of the scene around the time of the incident.



The back of Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom on October 30, showing projectile damage to one of its windows. Photo: Ralph Thompson.

As of late last week, according to Provencher, the police hadn't yet determined whether they were dealing with more than one suspect. However, he confirmed that the investigation was taken over by the Montreal police's hate crimes division.

According to a recent report in the *Canadian Jewish News*, security footage viewed by Temple rabbi Lisa Grushcow revealed that someone shot nine pellets through the windows of two separate rooms around 10:30 pm on October 29.

It was the third time Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom has been targeted over the past two years. In February 2025, a swastika was spray-painted on the side of the building. Then in June 2026, a man was arrested in connection with an attempted arson attack at the synagogue.

When asked how soon the police might be able to announce results of the investigation and potentially charge suspects, Provencher replied, "There are some things that I cannot reveal to you concerning things like details that we received during the investigation."

But he continued, "I think we have good chances of resolving this case, but I cannot tell you exactly how long it's going to take."

The police made no mention of the similar event that had taken place by lunchtime on October 29 at the former Church of the Advent, located one block south of the Temple (see November 3, p. 12). Its red-brick building currently houses the House of Prayer of All Nations and Grace Montreal churches.

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A country lane appears in Westmount



This previously nondescript strip of land to the west of the Château Westmount nursing home at 4860 de Maisonneuve, corner Victoria, has recently transformed into this pleasant space. "It looks like a lane in the Shire," said *Independent* editor David Price, "although I have yet to see any hobbits or ringwraiths."

PHOTO: D. PRICE.

At bonap food court in Alexis Nihon

Grillades Torino moves out – Second Pizza moves in



Second Pizza's counter in Alexis Nihon on November 4.

BY JENNIFER BALL

At the bonap food court in the Alexis Nihon shopping mall, Grillades Torino, which is a Quebec-based fast-casual restaurant chain specializing in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern-style (*halal*) grilled meats, left earlier this year, while Second Pizza, which serves pizza, poutine and chicken wings moved in in October.

The shopping mall is located at 1500 Atwater Ave. It is mostly in Westmount between Atwater Ave., Wood Ave., St. Catherine and de Maisonneuve.

The company that owns Alexis Nihon is Cominar REIT. It owns and manages office, commercial and residential buildings, mainly in Quebec.

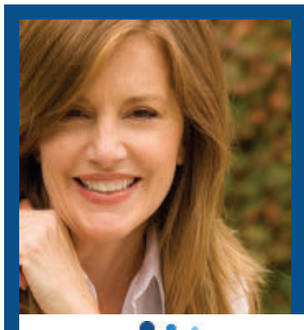
Sandra Lecuyer, chief culture and brand officer at Cominar REIT, told the *Independent* on November 4, "There was a newcomer at bonap in replacement of Torino who left earlier this year."

A spokesman for 2e Pizza told the *Independent* on November 4, that they opened in bonap in mid-October.

According to Alexis Nihon's website, "Second Pizza serves traditional pasta and pizza, along with Quebec classics such as poutine and a selection of hearty salads, all at affordable prices."

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City marks Remembrance Day, for 100th time



City dignitaries along with five-year-old Ethan (kneeling on right) listen attentively to the act of remembrance.



From left, Capt. Kenneth Ouellet, Warrant Officer Gilles Luke, Mayor Michael Stern and Major Jocelyn Blanchet stand in city hall in front of the bell from the *HMCS Westmount*, a World War II minesweeper.

By Ralph Thompson

The city's Remembrance Day ceremony took place November 8, for once under blue skies and pleasant conditions. A large crowd gathered in front of the cenotaph just before start time at 2 pm.

A large contingent from the military began things by marching along Sherbrooke St. led by the Fusiliers Mont-Royal band and escorted by police.

The ceremony followed its usual schedule. The national anthem was followed by a recognition of the native peoples including the Kanien'kehá:ka.

The Rev. Patrick Wheeler of St. Matthias' Anglican Church read the Lord's Prayer and there was a reading of Laurence Binyon's "We will remember them."

Trumpeter Corp Hernandez played the "Last Post" and the "Reveille" following two minutes of silence. Pipe Major Adam Wilson played "Flowers of the Forest." Dignitaries laid wreaths and the event closed with "God Save the King."

Mayor Michael Stern and city councillors Matt Aronson, Antonio D'Amico, Jonathan Chomski, Jeff Shamie, Shawn Moss, Paul Levine and Kathleen Kez were in attendance. Also seen were Anna Gainey, member of parliament for NDG-Westmount, and Eliaz Luf, consul general of Israel.

The city stated that this was the 100th Remembrance Day ceremony, but it is not clear in which years there was not one since the cenotaph was inaugurated in November 1922. Mugisha Rutishisha, director of communications at the city, said they are researching this point but have not managed to identify the missing years yet.



A view of the crowd.

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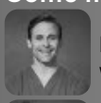
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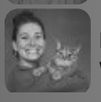
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Lysanne Fowler

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If you would like more information on this beautiful companion, please refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.spca.com, then scroll to Nala's information page by her identification number, 2000504072.

On the right-hand side of her page, you will find the black "Fill out the form" black rectangle. By clicking there, you will be sent to fill out the information sheet that is provided to the adoption coordinators, who will then be able to contact you to discuss your interest and an adoption of Nala.

Please enquire for her, a little friend in the home for the everyday. Nala would impress you greatly with her friendly personality and active interests.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne

Your favourite catnip mice selection



9 Lives

Lysanne Fowler

Here are some wonderful, colourful and artistic catnip mice toys for your favourite felines. They are available at our neighborhood Little Bear pet supply boutique. This is a timely November reminder that it would be great to bring one or two toys home for cozy playtime.

These handmade knitted mice are plump with organic catnip, and then beautifully finished with contrasting ears and tails. Their seasonal styles make perfect gifts as well for friends with felines that enjoy a surprise.

In keeping up with adoptions, Gerdy's Rescue has recently taken in a lovely mother cat named Angel who has given birth to kittens this week, so I am looking forward to presenting more information next week.

This fundraising through catnip mice sales will help cover the veterinary healthcare for this little family.

Please drop by Little Bear at 4152 St. Catherine St. at the corner of Greene Ave. for all your pet accessories and nutrition needs. You can also call the Little Bear staff at 514.935.3425.

Let us also take this great opportunity to offer joy, as the holidays are coming and this adorable gifting is well appreciated by cat owners.

More news on precious Angel and her little family should be published shortly, with wonderful photographs as well.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne





Mayor's lawyer declines to answer **Independent's *questions***

Stern loses second motion on contested recording in ethics case, gets ready to head to Superior Court for 'round 3'

By David Price

Mayor Michael Stern has lost a motion to have the contested part of a video recording kept from the public ("sealed") during his upcoming ethics hearing, although his lawyers are planning to take the debate about the tape to the Superior Court via a legal process called judicial review.

His lawyers had previously argued, unsuccessfully, to keep the recording from being considered in any way by the judge in this administrative matter (see November 3, p. 9).

The contested part of the recording came into being when Stern and councillors Jeff Shamie and Paul Levine continued to talk to each other at city hall May 22 after a remote Microsoft Teams meeting with city employees had ended. The software continued to record them by mistake and without their knowledge.

The prosecutors of the Quebec Municipal Commission (CMQ) are alleging that Stern "was disrespectful and impolite" towards city employees on various occasions, with this contested evidence being offered as proof by the prosecutors for five of the seven allegations.

Stern's substantive hearing was to take place November 5, 6 and 10, but "day 1" was taken up with a request to seal this recording.

When alerted, at the judge's request, by the mayor's team that they were asking that this part of the tape be sealed, the *Independent* wrote to the judge opposing such an action without formally intervening in the proceeding (see box at right for our letter). The *Independent*'s letter was shared by the judge with both parties, and both alluded to it in their arguments on November 5. No other media outlets seem to have intervened, although reporters from *La Presse* and *The Gazette* were present at the hearing, along with three Westmount residents. *The Gazette* had been copied on the same email from the mayor's legal team that informed the *Independent* of the request to seal the tape.

Judge rules

The ruling regarding the request to seal this evidence was issued in the evening of November 5, but communicated to the public just before the hearing time on November 6.

Judge Mélanie Robert ruled that most of the contested parts of the tape would be heard in open court and not sealed, with small portions dealing with legal advice being kept aside due to solicitor-client privilege.

An articling student, Toby Delisle Doray of Fasken, held down the fort alone for the mayor's side in a short court session on November 6, explaining to the judge what the mayor's lawyers were working on in regard to his case.

The prosecutors seemed unhappy with any delay, especially if it were to continue indefinitely.

In the end, Judge Robert decided on a postponement of two weeks, until Friday, November 20, with a case-management meeting between the lawyers and the judge to occur Friday, November 13.

CMQ spokesperson Audrey Paris indicated later on November 6 that the CMQ had not yet received the judicial review material from the mayor's team.

The *Independent* asked the mayor's principal lawyer, Frédéric Legendre of Fasken, for clarity on several points, but he declined the opportunity to elucidate (see box at left for that correspondence).

Editor Price opposes attitude of mayor's legal team to press' questions

"I disagree with the decision of the mayor's lawyer not to answer our questions," said *Independent* editor David Price.

"The press did not create this issue for the mayor. It did not advise him to say what he said, it did not record him, it did not forward the tape to the Quebec Municipal Commission, it is not the one prosecuting him, and it will not be the one to judge him.

"Nevertheless, it is our job to try to explain this legal tangle to the residents of Westmount, his constituents.

"Lawyer Frédéric Legendre's email reply to me is unresponsive on its face. The first of my questions regarded something that had already happened. How can it be too 'preliminary' to reply to a question about it?

"We are not asking for the top-secret trial strategy of the mayor's lawyers, but for basic information to help the readers whom we represent understand the to-and-fro of this increasingly complicated case.

"I encourage the mayor to instruct his legal advisors to answer reasonable questions from the press in the future. Westmounters deserve to understand what is going on."

Correspondence with mayor's lawyer

Independent's *email to mayor's lawyer*

November 6, 1:46 pm
Dear Maitre Legendre,

The reporter covering the mayor's hearing and I both attended this morning's event (one in person, one remotely). Speaking for myself, I got the gist of what was going on, but I was not expecting more procedural/evidentiary wrangling and I want to check some things.

So that we have our facts right for our readers, who are also the mayor's constituents, would you kindly answer these questions:

1. What is the precise term for what you were requesting the tribunal to do this morning?
   at the Superior Court:
2. Are you asking for leave(s) to appeal, or are you able to just appeal?
3. Are you (now or if you get leave) appealing the October 26 ruling regarding the second half of the May 22 tape being evidence for the court?
4. Are you (now or if you get leave) appealing the November 5 ruling regarding your request that the second half of the recording be sealed?
5. Are you filing any other motions at this time?
6. We are also all ears if you have anything else to share.

Best regards,

David Price, editor

Reply of mayor's lawyer

November 6, 2:18 pm
Hi Mr. Price,

Thank you for reaching out. At this preliminary stage, we are not in a position to comment on the proceedings.

Thank you for your understanding.

Frédéric Legendre

What the *Independent* wrote to the court...

Judge Mélanie Robert asked Mayor Michael Stern's lawyers to tell the media that they had applied for a confidentiality order regarding the contested part of a May 22 recording containing a conversation at city hall between the mayor and city councilllors Jeff Shamie and Paul Levine (see November 3, p. 9 for previous coverage).

To the best of the *Independent*'s knowledge, this order, if granted, would keep the contents of the tape from the public and the press, even though it would be used by the judge to come to her conclusions.

The English part of the *Independent*'s email to the judge is reproduced below.

*

November 4, 2026
Dear Judge Robert,

I apologize for writing in English, but I don't want to subject you to my written French. I do read French and I have reviewed the DeepL translation included below. Nevertheless, the English version is likely a better and more nuanced version of my views.

*

I gather that Mayor Michael Stern's team is asking for the second half of the May 22 recording to be sealed.

We are the weekly newspaper in Westmount and we do not have the resources to formally intervene legally in the proceedings, but I did want to convey our thoughts to you.

You have ruled that the recording is admissible for the substantive part of your proceeding. Given that choice, I think that our readers will want to know the contents of the tape. If you finally rule against the mayor, they will know what is not permitted by an elected official. If you finally rule for the mayor, they will know what is acceptable (or at least legal) behaviour. In all cases, they will be curious what their elected official said and did in their city hall, what their unelected employees objected to, what the province's prosecutors decried, and what the province's judge decided.

These details are the meat and potatoes of the law, of a free press and of democracy. Without them, the hearing will have a hollow feeling to our readers, which I doubt was the legislature's intent when it passed the laws in question and set up the Municipal Commission of Quebec.

We support having the tape heard in open court and filed publicly for all to see and hear, including the press.

Best regards,
David Price, editor
Westmount Independent weekly newspaper
514-935-4537

250 Kensington floods, Westmount High closed due to water cut-off

Westmount: City of Montreal work on water network causes several breaks

By Jennifer Ball

On November 4, scheduled work by the city of Montreal on its main water network caused a higher-than-expected increase in pressure, according to the city of Westmount, and the surge led to several water main breaks, leaks and loss of water here.

A November 5 statement on the city of Westmount's website indicated that "city of Westmount crews worked throughout the evening and overnight, in constant contact with Ville de Montréal, to limit damage and restore service. Ville de Montréal crews intervened to stabilize the pressure, which has returned to normal in most areas. Water quality was not compromised at any time, as confirmed by Ville de Montréal."

On November 5, the media relations department of the Montreal fire department told the *Independent* that they were on site on November 4 at 250 Kensington Ave., between de Maisonneuve and St. Catherine, to "pump water out of a basement in the building due to a water leak."

Mugisha Rutishisha, director of communications for the city, provided a statement to the *Independent* on November 6 that indicated which areas were most affected in Westmount, namely parts of Kensington Ave., St. Catherine St. and Greene Ave. Rutishisha said, "A limited number of addresses experienced water service interruptions, pressure fluctuations or related issues, and city crews followed up directly with affected residents."

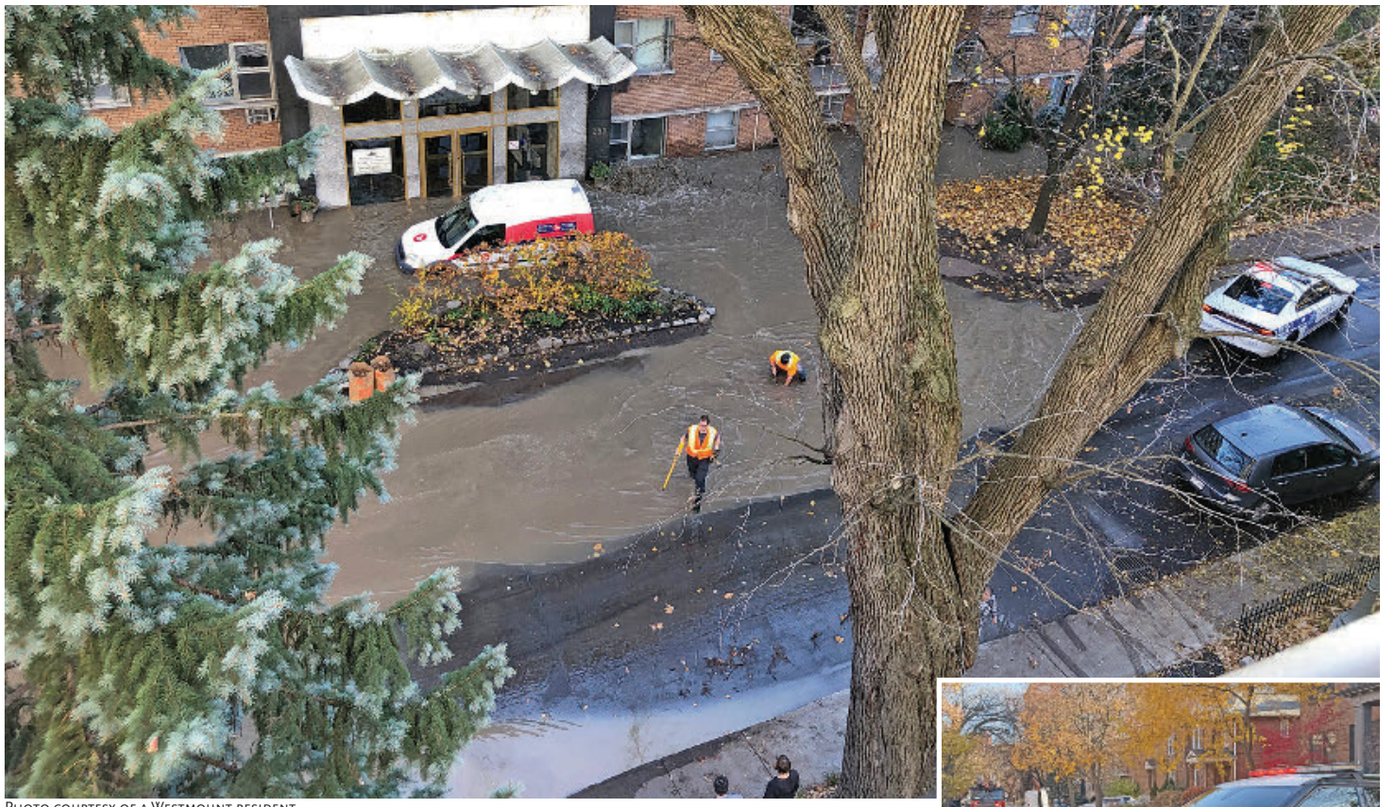


Photo courtesy of a Westmount resident.



Westmount Public Security was at the corner of Kensington Ave. and de Maisonneuve on November 4 contributing to an operation of the Montreal fire department to pump water out of the basement of 250 Kensington Ave.

He said the issue at 250 Kensington Ave. was isolated to that property. City crews responded quickly, and it was determined that the break occurred on private domain.

Westmount High School was closed on November 5 because the water supply to the building had to be shut off to allow repairs to a nearby water line.

Other areas, other issues

A November 5 *Gazette* news report by Abby McLaughlin indicated that 600 downtown Montreal addresses were also without water after a pressure surge flooded streets. Her reporting noted that the "city of Montreal confirmed Wednesday night that work on the main water network had caused pressure to rise higher than anticipated, resulting in several breaks and leaks in the borough."

According to Rutishisha a separate interruption affected Victoria Hall, which also houses the kitchen of the Manoir Westmount seniors' residence.

"Water was supplied by the city to the facility while repairs were completed, and service was restored within approximately four hours...

"The situation has now been stabilized and water pressure has returned to normal in most areas. Some localized repairs and follow-up work are required in the days following the incident."



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Social Notes

Veronica Redgrave

Pollack Hall re-opens, with full family support



Maurice Pollack Foundation members Josh Pollack, Sophie Harper, Nancy Strohl, Stuart Pollack, Owen Harper, Lana Harper, Caroline Manson, Gillian Harper, Ian Pollack, Jon Pollack and Russell Harper.

A recent cocktail reception had a cultural cachet: the re-opening of Pollack Hall after a two-year renovation.

The hall is named after the late **Maurice Pollack** (1885-1968), a Canadian philanthropist of Ukrainian descent. Maurice's granddaughter **Lana Pollack Harper** and **Joan Ivory** organized a pre-concert reception in celebration of the new space.

The Pollack family was further represented by Maurice Pollack's granddaughter **Nancy Strohl**, grandson **Jon Pollack**, grandson **Stuart Pollack**, Lana's son **Russell Harper** (with his children **Owen** and **Sophie)**, and daughter **Gillian Harper** (incoming president of the Maurice Pollack foundation) with her daughter **Caroline Manson**, and Jon's sons **Ian** and **Josh.**

Guests noted included McGill University's **Deep Saini**, president, and **Sean Ferguson**, dean Schulich School of Music; **Ann Birks, Constance** and **Marc Médalsy, Linda** and **Eric Lenczer, Lilliana Simpson** and **Cary Leclaire, Linda** and **Peter Leus, Gillian**

continued on p. 22



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

and **Bryan MacCormack**, **Caroline Labelle**, **Mia** and **David Goodman**, **Cynthia Price**, **Alice Goldbloom**, **Cynthia Gordon** and **Jewel** and **Paul Lowenstein**.

Also seen were **Brigitte** and **Jacques Vachon**, **Chantal** and **Pierre Anctil**, **Julie** and **Anthony Wait**, **Arthur Kaptainis**, **Martha de Francisco**, **Diane Cohen**, and Westmount Lawn and Bowling and Croquet Club members **Naomi Sharp**, **Izak Rubin** and **Christopher Roper.**

From the faculty advisory board of the Schulich School of Music were **Suzanne Fortier** (former McGill president), **Joan Ivory** and **Barry Garber**.

After the reception, guests enjoyed a concert by the McGill Symphony Orchestra with artistic director/conductor **Alexis Hauser.**

Meagan Foster performed the Jennifer Higdon's Percussion Concerto. Pieces by Beethoven and Brahms were also featured.

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