

Seeking more control for Westmount, suburbs

Trent becomes new head of suburban mayors

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount mayor Peter Trent, newly elected leader of suburban mayors, has taken his first steps toward fighting for a better demerger deal, including more control over local services.

Describing his first meeting of the agglomeration council, December 3, as an “eye-opener” in the allocation of shared costs, he told the *Independent* he would be sitting on the agglo’s *ad hoc* committee to look into the 2010 island-wide budget.

“Since 50 percent of the taxes Westmounters pay go to agglomeration services, I see my role as trying to find out whether tax bills are really going for these or simply for camouflaged Montreal expenses. I want to ensure that every bill going to us is a legitimate expense.”

Trent, who was chosen president of the

Association of Suburban Municipalities (ASM) – the mayors’ group – two days earlier, said he expected the position would allow him to sit on the board of the Union of Quebec Municipalities as per convention.

This would enable him to speak on behalf of Montreal’s 14 suburban mayors and take their battle to Quebec and the minister of Municipal Affairs, “the arbitrator of last resort” and “where the game is won or lost.”

Describing the agglo as “a very awkward, bizarre and undemocratic structure,” he noted that suburban mayors had “zero power” with only 13 percent of the vote though they pay 20 percent of agglo services.

“What was a real eye-

continued on p. 3

Westmount’s SWAT team storms the arena



The Senior Westmount All Star Team (SWAT) co-chairs Norm Richer (left) and Jim West (right) pose with, from left, Christian, Martha and Nicolas Matossian. See p. 17. Photo: Isaac Olson

Don’t Miss It
The Olympic flame will be at city hall, December 10. Events take place between 4 and 6:30 pm. See p. 9 for details.

Arena project under microscope

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Westmount’s arena/pool project is being put under the microscope with plans for moving forward to be relayed to the arena committee at its second meeting Monday, December 7, after the *Independent*’s press time.

“There’s no question we’re looking at the whole thing from scratch to assess needs and decide how to proceed,” Mayor Peter Trent said. “We’re taking a whole new look at the current plan and not taking the plans as shown.”

“We have to go back to first principles.” He and the committee chair, Council-

lor Patrick Martin, had started to work as soon as they were elected by acclamation and have already met twice with the architects. They have been obtaining basic information on the latest plan and preparing a process to recommend to the full arena committee, he said.

At this point, they have not explored other possible sites. “The needs come first. We have a \$20-million grant based on the current site. And as far as I’m concerned, we have to get moving on the project fairly quickly.”

Once a decision is required on a needs analysis, Councillor Kath-

leen Duncan will be in- continued on p. 16

See our listings p.13

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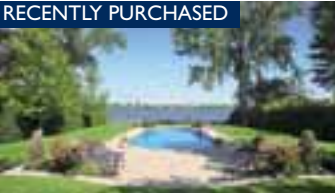
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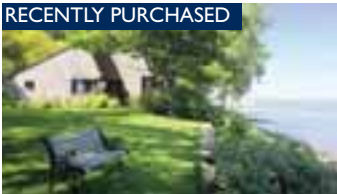
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Mountainside and ECS get cookin’

BY ERIN STROPES

A group of students from Miss Edgar’s and Miss Cramp’s School recently visited Mountainside United Church’s kitchen to learn about its community meals-on-wheels program.

The visit was part of an ECS 100th anniversary project that brings women in various fields to the school to speak about community involvement.

The grade 3 and 4 students, joined by their teacher Rebecca McGay and coordinated by social worker and ECS graduate Sheila Goldbloom, observed what goes

into cooking and serving meals to the Westmount and NDG seniors and shut-in residents who benefit from the program.

They also made cards for the servers to deliver to the elderly clients. Program coordinator Betsy Zukow said the girls were full of questions for the cooks, drivers, and the grade 9 students from Sacred Heart School who served the day’s meal.

Mountainside is always looking for volunteers to cook, deliver, or serve meals on Mondays and Wednesdays. For information about volunteering, contact the church office at 514.486.1165.



Grade 3 and 4 ECS students visited Mountainside United church on November 9 to see its Meals on Wheels service in operation. Among the students, from left, cooks Jim Tremaine and Kerine Moore and coordinator Betsy Zukow, See story, p. 3.

Argyle: Help exists for sex addicts



Westmounters Dr. Joan Keebler (left), the director of the Marriage and Family Therapy Training Program at the Argyle Institute, and Moira Luce (right), one of the group’s marriage and family counsellors, flank Dr. Stefanie Carnes at the “Cybersex and Sexual Addiction” seminar. Keebler and Luce organized the seminar, at which Carnes was the main speaker.

Sex and pornography addiction is taking a high toll on North American families, businesses and individuals. That was the message to the public coming out of the Westmount-based Argyle Institute’s “Cybersex and Sexual Addiction” seminar for mental health professionals, held December 4 at the Montreal General Hospital. Contrary to stereotype, only 75 percent of the sufferers are male.

But the institute’s board president, Carmela Mindel, also had a message of hope for sufferers: “It is an addiction, and it is important to talk to someone.”

She also pointed out that, despite feel-

ings of betrayal, the behaviour is not directed at spouses. It is more a process of “numbing oneself out.”

Like many mental health issues, its roots are often in depression and loneliness, which the behaviour then reinforces. Mindel was also careful to distinguish addiction from sex offences, “We don’t want to give offenders excuses.”

Principal speaker Dr. Stefanie Carnes reinforced Mindel’s hopeful message: “There is treatment,” and resources for addicts. She also clarified that not all users of pornography are addicts.

Agglo a ‘real eye-opener’

continued from p. 1

opener,” he said, was discovering that some of the expenses tabled for approval involved the suburbs paying up to 50 percent. “I don’t know how long that’s been going on for.”

As a newcomer to agglo meetings, Trent said his “opening salvo” was to address the first session since the municipal elections during the question period. “I told (Montreal mayor Gérald) Tremblay that while we don’t see eye to eye on the governance of Montreal and the region, we do on the need to declare war without mercy on municipal corruption.”

In this respect, Côte St. Luc mayor Anthony Housefather led the suburban mayors’ attack on the water meter scandal. Whereas the mayors had voted unanimously against the meter contract in November 2007, he noted, Montreal had unanimously approved it “in 60 seconds.” Therefore, he reasoned, suburban mayors felt they should not have to be charged penalties to cancel the contract.

Trent said he wanted Montreal to reserve the right to seek legal annulment of the contract if an inquiry finds it involved collusion. All those points were turned down.

While Montreal has yet to name its members of agglo standing committees, Trent said he expects to represent the ASM on the finance and administration committee.

Other executive members of the ASM

are Baie d’Urfé mayor Maria Tutino (vice-president), CSL mayor Housefather (secretary) and Dollard des Ormeaux mayor Ed Janiszewski (treasurer).

Westmount has led the mayors’ group for many years. Trent’s previous presidency was followed after demerger by previous Westmount mayor Karin Marks. She was instrumental in obtaining some increased powers for the demerged municipalities as part of Bill 22 adopted in June 2008.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CITY SHOULD SCRUTINIZE MEGA-HOUSES

On December 3, the *Westmount Examiner* (p. 15) published a Notice of Application in regard to a massive reconstruction at 3283 Cedar Ave.

This particular building lot has had a sad and storied history, commencing in 2002, when the owner was deemed responsible by three courts for the complete demolition of the existing Category I home (circa 1868), in clear violation of the renovation permit.

Current plans call for an enormous home whose mass would dwarf, not only the site, but all the traditional Westmount houses around it including numerous Category II homes designed by the famous Montreal architect Percy Nobbs.

Unfortunately, what is currently being proposed is virtually identical to the partially completed structure which these owners were forced by court orders to demolish in 2006.

It is very hard to believe that the city of Westmount has not learned its lesson from the previous court cases. They are once again considering approving an enormous house that would impinge excessively and negatively on the homes around it. Isn't this the sort of thing that Quebec's Site Planning & Architectural Integration program (PIIA) was implemented to protect us against? It was during litigation

concerning the construction at 3283 Cedar Ave, that the Quebec Superior Court ruled against the owner, in that the PIIA should be considered equal in importance to the far more lenient Westmount building and zoning by-laws. So why is the city now allowing this ambitious project to move forward again?

As a Westmount resident and neighbour, I am deeply disturbed that the city is not using its existing by-laws to control the appropriateness of mega buildings in mature neighbourhoods. Every Westmount homeowner has experienced how difficult it is to satisfy the city's incredible scrutiny when replacing windows, decks, etc. Should not such scrutiny be even more intensely applied to multimillion dollar houses?

If the proposed house were to be approved, this would undermine the trust which all Westmount residents place in their city to preserve the architectural integrity of their neighbourhoods.

MAUREEN KIELY, THE BOULEVARD
Ed's note: According to Westmount's Urban Planning director Joanne Poirier, the city's Planning Advisory Committee is not making a favourable recommendation regarding the proposed building.

'RETIRED' ARCHIVIST STILL DELIVERING

What a delight to read Eiran Harris' ar-

ticle "Shaar Hashomayim's secret history" (November 17, p. 13). The style and content reflect the meticulous efforts of this "retired" archivist to get it right.

At the same time, Eiran himself has been an eyewitness to much history. Of special interest were his trips as a boy with his father David to the old Ben's Deli on de Maisonneuve. David was surreptitiously negotiating arms deals on behalf of a yet-to-be-reborn Israel, using the menu board for code and young Eiran as window-dressing.

JOE KING, CÔTE ST. LUC

FEAR THE VACCINE MORE THAN THE FLU

I disagree vehemently with Yoanna Skrobik who argued in her letter in the November 17 issue (p. 8) that taking the flu vaccine is better than eating vegetables or doing yoga to protect us from the H1N1 flu virus. On the contrary, it is the flu vaccine that is cause for grave concern, not the flu virus itself.

The H1N1 vaccine has not been proven safe or effective. The following toxic ingredients are in the vaccine, as disclosed by Health Canada:

- Squalene MF-59 which causes severe autoimmune disorders and Guillain-Barré ascending paralysis,
- Thimerosal which is a form of mercury and causes neurological damage,
- Polysorbate 80 which can cause severe allergic reactions,
- Formaldehyde which causes cancer.

Even if this flu vaccine didn't have all the poisons listed above, there is no guarantee it will help anybody!

Influenza vaccines are among the most ineffective shots in the history of vaccines. In healthy adults, the estimates of effectiveness range from a low of zero percent to a high of 96 percent – depending on the study. In the elderly and immune-suppressed, the figures hover between 21 and 25 percent effective.

It's absolute madness that governments are administering this vaccine, and there should be a public outcry. How is our government protecting us? The fact is they are not.

Manufacturers have been granted full immunity against injury and claims. Even if thousands of people suffer adverse side effects from the vaccine, the companies will be insulated from lawsuits.

Almost every person has a strong defence for this "scary" virus, and it is 100 percent natural: your immune system. For added protection, we can all boost our immune system through vitamin D3 supple-

ments, exercise and a good diet. Above all, know that you are stronger than the fear being fomented.

Daily vegetable eater and yoga enthusiast,

MARK BERGER, SHERBROOKE ST.

Dr. Yoanna Skrobik's responds:

Nearly 300 people have died in Canada of AH1N1 related illness, many of them children or young people with no obvious underlying illness. Millions of Canadians have been vaccinated, and only 24 adverse effects have been noted, most of them minor. In considering the relative risks and benefits of vaccination, it is useful to review credible information, or to take the advice of knowledgeable experts. Bits and pieces of data cut and pasted from internet sites do not make terribly compelling arguments. The college of physicians in Quebec recently considered that recommending against vaccination should be considered medical malpractice. Did the governing body for this profession not consider all the relevant data? Unlikely. I am largely vegetarian, exercise regularly, take vitamin D and go to yoga classes. I consider these general good health measures and encourage them in those around me, whether healthy or ill. I also got vaccinated – two defences are better than one. The risks associated with this flu are serious – death or debilitating disease, even in otherwise healthy, active people. The risks associated with the vaccine are vanishingly small. Get vaccinated, and get your children vaccinated.

DR. YOANNA SKROBIK, INTENSIVE CARE SPECIALIST, HÔPITAL MAISONNEUVE ROSEMONT AND REDFERN AVE. RESIDENT

5 SAISONS, OBVIOUSLY

Dear Mayor Trent,

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to you for negotiating the temporary reprieve of 5 Saisons, which was slated to close December 5.

It has been obvious to all those who have frequented the store over the last 25 years that closing it would greatly diminish the city's social and economic fabric.

No longer would seniors have their exercise and social interaction; no longer would countless area residents and workers be able to shop locally; no longer would employees of 5 Saisons have jobs; and no longer would merchants benefit from all this human traffic.

Bravo to you and those involved in representing us! Let's hope the developers' eyes remain open to the obvious!

DIANE DERUCHIE, WOOD AVE. AND MARY CHANCER, SHERBROOKE ST.

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Lulham, Forbes and Duncan to make changes

Consultation to be required before permits for new construction

Public consultation on permit applications for new buildings, an innovative link to community volunteer organizations, and an investigation on how data is collected on pool and arena use are all promised, as city councillors settle into their new and revised commissionerships.

With Peter Trent back as leader of the suburban mayors (see story on p. 1), there is a sense we will be represented on the island government at the highest level that the law allows. That was the case with Karin Marks during her terms as mayor.

But the workload the agglom brings is bound to put pressure on Trent's time for Westmount affairs, and so it will be up to the councillor-commissioners to share the load. I spoke to three of the veterans on how they will approach their new mandates.

Lulham

Longest serving councillor Cynthia Lulham (District 7) is promising a major change to the planning application procedures for new buildings or additions.

In a dramatic move, much requested for many years – even decades – a public consultation process will be introduced before permits are issued for a new building or additions to an existing one.

"It's important for neighbours to know what is happening before a large hole appears and machinery shows up," emphasized Lulham, who continues as Urban Planning commissioner. She intends to streamline the entire permit process consistent with "maintaining our heritage values and quality of life."

Complaints about the planning procedures were a feature of the fall election campaigns in all districts. Lulham received many herself.

"It's important for neighbours to know what is happening before a large hole appears and machinery shows up." – Cynthia Lulham

When she developed the H1N1 influenza, she campaigned from her bed.

"I made over 300 calls and people even phoned back, some particularly wanting to know about permit questions," she reports.

She is promising to please citizens with less arduous application procedures. "People don't want unnecessary changes to their neighborhood, so there will be more consultation."

Lulham believes she "went through the



Civic Alert

DON WEDGE

learning curve" while chair of the Planning committee under the mayorship of Karin Marks during the last four years. In the previous 10 years she was responsible for recreation, sports and culture.

"Plus we can also call on Peter Trent's experience and enormous knowledge."

Also scheduled for legislative updates are the sanitation laws, which will attempt to overcome complaints about garbage.

Forbes

Nicole Forbes (District 6) has added the Library to her Community Events portfolio and has a completely new assignment – Community Outreach. She will be the council's link to the many volunteer organizations such as Contactivity, Centre Greene, the Open Door and the YMCA.

It is the first time that council has recognized the need for such a role.

"In the past, the Community Services Committee, which no longer exists, would meet with the different organizations in rotation to hear about their missions and progress," Forbes explained.

"Instead, beginning in January, I will visit one of them each week to discover how we can help each other."

Forbes sees bringing Community Events and the Library under the same umbrella as an opportunity to present more integrated programs and present them more strongly.

Working with the city's webmasters, she hopes to make the website more topical and interactive in detailing current events.

More performances are also on Forbes' agenda. "It is wonderful to be able to bring someone like Daniel Taylor – a world-class counter-tenor – to Westmount. He has been here twice and hopes to come again."

She also intends to work with the Montreal Conseil des Arts for more similar attractions. "But, like Taylor, they have to be performers Westmounters will appreciate."

For staging these events and the many celebratory functions such as the Winter Carnival and St. Jean Baptiste celebration, the staff is helped by volunteers from the Community Events Action Committee (CEAC), for which Forbes is actively re-

cruiting members. Already on their schedule is another Art Westmount tour for October 2010.

Forbes has also been appointed to the Healthy City Project Steering Committee and already participated with the community life group chaired by Barbara Moore.

She is a committed composter. After a life-time in single-family homes, in September Forbes became an apartment tenant, but continues to compost her kitchen waste.

Since then, Forbes has only filled one garbage bag. "The rest went into recycling or composting," she proudly reports.

As the city doesn't yet provide door-to-door service for apartment buildings, she makes two deliveries weekly to the collector bins in the Public Works yard. (She also helps elderly neighbours on her floor to do likewise.)

Duncan

Kathleen Duncan (District 4) has exchanged her Library portfolio for Sports and Recreation.

"I was asked many questions about permits as I went door-to-door before the elec-

tion, but overall it was the arena-pool renewal project that far-and-away provoked the most comments," she recalled.

"Residents wanted to know about every aspect: the cost, the appearance, the facilities, parking and so on. I am looking forward to finding solutions with my council colleagues."

More immediate benefits may come from a review of the registration system, which the department has begun. "I'll be very happy if we can make that easier for everyone, even before eventual computerization."

"Also I'd like to see some changes in the usage data collected by the department," she said. "Statistics are the catalyst for providing the best possible service to citizens."

Clearly the new council will be pushing ahead with some much needed reforms!

Citizen activist Don Wedge's email address is dwedge@sympatico.ca.

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Hallward connects happiness, philanthropy

BY ISAAC OLSON

Westmounter John Hallward, chair of The Hallmont Foundation and founder of GIV3, discussed the relation between happiness and philanthropy during an edition of the Atwater Library Lunchtime Series on December 3.

“If we all were a little bit more caring,” said Hallward. “If we were all a little bit more giving, and if we all devoted a little bit more time to volunteering, Canada would be a lot better off.”

GIV3 is a newly established non-profit initiative focused on encouraging Canadians to give more through increased volunteer work and monetary donation.

The organization sets a standard of three percent of salary given to charity and at least three hours a month volunteered, because a set measure of giving, said Hallward, is something Canadians are losing sight of without strong influences such as religion setting a base giving criteria.

The actual act of giving, said Hallward, is scientifically proven to stimulate a physical reaction in the brain, much more so than material things. The pursuit of happiness is a natural genetic component of human beings, he said, and that pursuit has motivated humans to create so much in such a relatively short time. But, especially in more recent history, evolution has

replaced “needing” with “wanting.”

Using studies and data to back up his talk, Hallward noted the richest countries in the world, like Canada and the US, are not necessarily the happiest. He correlated this lack of happiness to the fact that Canadians, in general, are not big givers. Numbers put forth illustrate this: 50 percent of all Canadians give less than \$120 a year, and the average donation rate is 0.8 percent of income, with wealthier households (\$100,000 and more) giving 0.5 percent.

“Be philanthropic,” said Hallward. “It is very rewarding. The data shows it leads to greater happiness and a more fulfilling life. So get involved, help people and encourage others to do the same thing.”

Hallward, an author and market researcher, said more information can be found at www.GIV3.ca.



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John Hallward talks about happiness and giving at the Atwater Library on December 3.

Photos: Isaac Olson



From left, Susan Sambrook, GIV3 partnership developer, and GIV3 founder John Hallward, both Westmounters, with GIV3 director Nancy Erickson.

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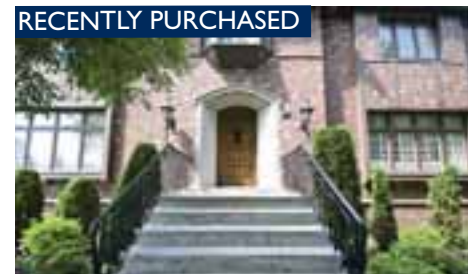
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Rector: The Reverend Kenneth M. Near
 Music Director: John Wiens

Mountainside United Church
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Christmas at Mountainside
 Sunday, December 13th 11 a.m.
 Advent III

An Intercultural
 Christmas service/White Gift Sunday
 Crib Corner & Children's Church
 Teen Group & Youth Band

Minister: The Rev. John R. Forster
 Director of Music: Margaret de Castro

www.mountainsideunited.ca



Westmount Park United Church
 4695 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W
 corner Lansdowne
 (514) 937-1146

Christmas Service -
Saturday, December 19th
 4:30 at p.m.

Christmas Eve Carol
Service - Wednesday,
December 24th
 at 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Frank Giffen, Minister
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Check out our website at:
www.westmountparkuc.org

Legal Corner

Westmount, Hydro-Quebec and Churchill Falls

The government of Newfoundland's power company, the Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation, asked Hydro-Quebec on November 30 to renegotiate the terms of its 65-year, fixed-rate contract for electric power signed in 1969. Westmount law firm Irving Mitchell Kalichman (IMK) provided the principal legal opinion for Newfoundland's position.

Churchill Falls currently sells power to Hydro-Quebec at a low fixed rate, which is then resold at market rates in the US and elsewhere.

The company's contention is that under Quebec's Civil Code, parties must act in good faith during the performance of contracts and Hydro-Quebec should renegotiate the deal in light of changed circumstances since 1969.

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Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams has estimated that Quebec made \$1.7 billion last year from Churchill Falls power, while Newfoundland made \$63 million. He also described his legal advisors as "some of the most eminent and brilliant legal minds in Quebec."

Westmounter Colin Irving, a senior partner at IMK, declined to comment further on the case.

Westmount versus Iran

In another case, IMK is representing Stephen Hashemi in his lawsuit against the Iranian government.

Hashemi's mother, journalist Zahra Kazemi, was allegedly raped, tortured and killed in Iran by the Iranian government in 2003.

The legal case faces a steep obstacle: Canada's State Immunity Act, which bars civil suits against foreign governments. IMK partner Kurt Johnson is arguing that the act violates the Canadian Charter of Rights, and the lawsuit should be able to proceed.

"This is a tough case but one well worth arguing. We look forward to further advancing our arguments next week," Johnson told the *Independent* on December 4, halfway through the proceedings.



The Parish of the Ascension of Our Lord

(Sherbrooke St. at the corner of Clarke Ave.)

Welcomes all to our Advent and Christmas Celebrations!

Advent Communal Reconciliation Service: Wednesday, December 16th at 7:30 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday, December 19th from 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve – Thursday, December 24th

Family Eucharist: 7:30 p.m.

Choral Service - Ascension Choir under the direction of Dr. David Szanto: 9:30 p.m.

Solemn Eucharist: 10 p.m.

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Saturday, December 26th: 5:00 p.m.,

Sunday, December 27th: 10:30 a.m.

New Year's Eve - Thursday, December 31st - 5:30 p.m.

New Year's Day - Feast of Mary, Mother of God - 10:30 a.m.

We invite all parishioners, former parishioners and visitors to join in celebrating with us this Holy Season.

Msgr. Sean Harty, Parochial Administrator

Rev. Patrick Donnelly, Associate Pastor

Olympic torch comes to Westmount

Don't miss Westmount's events planned around the arrival of the torch, in front of city hall on Thursday, December 10, between 4 pm and 6:30 pm.

According to the city, the torch itself is tentatively scheduled to arrive at 5:47 pm.

The torchbearer will leave city hall after a brief ceremony, and will move east down Sherbrooke St.

Activities will include Olympic-themed games, a free hot dog barbecue, music and crafts (in the Lawn Bowling Clubhouse).

Former Olympian

Former summer Olympian and former Westmounter Andréanne Morin, who

placed 4th with the Women's Eight rowing team at the 2008 Beijing games, is scheduled to appear.

Local schools

Local schools are participating in a banner contest, and the entries will be judged and the winners recognised during a special ceremony before the torch's arrival.

For more information, visit www.westmount.org.

What would the ancient Greeks say?

Westmount's Olympic torch organizing committee is on Facebook. The keywords are "Westmount torch."

McKenty and Fales visit the shoreline

Two Westmount authors, Douglas Fales (*Last Blacksmith of Apple Hill*) and Neil McKenty (*Inside Story*), will be at the Shoreline publishing house's book fair on Sunday, December 13 from 2 to 4 pm at

the Pointe Claire Curling Club (250 Lanthier Ave. in Pointe Claire).

Both have been profiled in the *Independent*: Fales (June 16, p. 18) and McKenty (June 9, p. 17).

Comin' Up

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

- The **UN Refugee Agency** presents "Celebrating Human Rights Day" at the Westmount YMCA, 7:15 pm. Info: 514.962.8705.
- Mini-Bazaar at **Contactivity Centre** (4695 de Maisonneuve, corner Lansdowne), 10 am to 2:30 pm. Handknits and unique gifts.
- Centre Greene's **luncheon for seniors** – a three-course home-cooked Christmas dinner served at 12:15 pm. Cost: \$5. Info: 514.931.6202.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

- **Centre Greene's** annual general meeting, 7 pm. 1090 Greene Ave. Info: 514.931.6202.
- Actor Barrie Baldaro reads **A Child's Christmas in Wales** by Dylan Thomas at the Atwater Library (1200 Atwater Ave.), 12:30 pm. Free, donations welcome.
- **Olympic Torch** – Welcome the flame to Westmount, from 4 to 6:30 pm at city hall. Info: David Lapointe 514.989.5410.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

Jeri Brown and Lydia Lockett perform jazz and poetry at London Bus Café (4126 St. Catherine St., corner Gladstone), 6 pm. Cost: \$15. Info: 514.931.5571.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14

- The Montreal Press Club presents "**Reporters without Borders**" with speaker Dennis Trudeau at Atwater Library (1200 Atwater Ave.), 7 pm. Free. Info: 514.875.0964.
- **Westmount Municipal Association's**

open meeting in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Library, 7 pm. Info: 514.931.8690.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16

Community Chanukah Celebration candle lighting at city hall, 5:30 pm, then at the Congregation Shaar Hashomayim (450 Kensington Ave.) at 6 pm. All welcome.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17

The **Robert Harvie** photographic album presented by Doreen Lindsay of the Westmount Historial Association, 7 to 9 pm at the Westmount Library. Free for members; \$5 for non-members at the door. Info: 514.989.5510.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18

Chanukah at Temple Emanu-El Beth Sholom, family dinner, 6 pm. Cost: \$25, adult temple members, \$36 non members; \$20, university students with ID (up to 22 yrs); \$12 children (under 12). Bring your own wine. Reserve: Anita at 514.937.3575, ext. 212.

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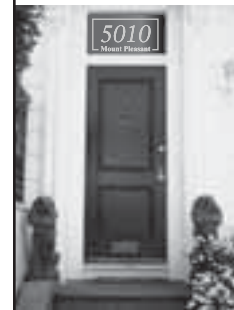
- The **Westmount Toastmasters Club** meets every Tuesday from 7 to 9 pm at Victoria Hall (4626 Sherbrooke St.) The general public is invited. Info: Madeleine Rouleau 514.876.8968.
- **Pilates**: Every Tuesday and Thursday at Centre Greene (1090 Greene Ave.), 9:30 to 10:45 am. Info: 514.931.6202.

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Children's rights in Canada: No small matter

"Whereas the true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children..." This phrase opens Bill C-418, "an act to establish a Children's Commissioner of Canada". Initiated by MP Marc Garneau as a private member's bill, it was first suggested by local school commissioner Ginette Sauvé-Frankel.

Do we need a children's commissioner? Topics in the news, such as the cyber child-porn bill, "The 2009 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty" and Canada's "Home Children" suggest that we do.

The role of Children's Commissioner

Children – a quarter of all Canadians – have no voice in Parliament. But an independent Children's Commissioner would ensure that "their voices are heard" and that Canada's obligations under the "United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child" are met. The UN currently calls on governments to improve youth justice, reduce prejudice and resolve asylum issues.

The commissioner would also advance the principle that children are entitled to special safeguards, care and assistance, including appropriate legal protections." This includes "health and safety, material security, education and socialization". With 9.5 percent of Canadian children living in poverty, these are important guarantees.

But the bill also includes a "sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born." This is certainly not the reality for all Canadian children. Many need protection both at home and at school.

Mistreated at home and school

Canada, for instance, is the world's second largest supplier of child porn images – a fact prompting a stricter cyber child-porn bill. The non-governmental organization, Canadian Centre for Child Protection, reports that half of the images feature children under eight, and a third of these are sexual assaults.

The effect of abuse – physical or psychological – is long lasting. Not only is school performance and self-esteem affected, the abused often become abusers. And recently, a University of Toronto study found that the cancer risk increased by 49 percent for those who experienced childhood abuse.

School bullying is also a form of abuse – a situation that needs action. In Massachusetts where 25 percent of high school



*At second
glance*

HEATHER BLACK

students report being bullied, the state legislature is currently studying 11 different "anti-bullying" bills. The most popular, "House Bill 483", would require teaching staff to report all cases to the police.

Solutions include teaching children what constitutes abuse. Again, a Children's Commissioner of Canada "would develop and conduct information programs to foster public understanding of the Convention." Another is government acknowledgement of past abuses like those relating to Canada's "British Home Children".

The "British Home Children"

From 1869 to 1967, over 100,000 poor or orphaned children arrived in Canada to work in homes and fields, to "pursue a healthy and moral life." Sanctioned by governments, churches or philanthropies, some "in care" were sent without prior consent of their families.

But worse, an estimated two thirds were mistreated here – some were molested, others were worked to death, while some committed suicide. But even then, the forced separation from families at such a young age also took its toll. Elsie Hathaway, now 93, was only six when she and her 10-year-old brother arrived in the Maritimes. Separated from her brother and forced to work as a domestic, all requests to write to him were refused.

Others were considerably luckier. One described his experience as "heaven on earth". What becomes obvious is that the well-being of children was – and still is – subject to luck.

Canada's future

Children are our future. While kindness cannot be mandated, legislation does send a message of what is and is not acceptable. By bringing issues to parliament, monitoring Canada's compliance with the U.N. convention and acting as a liaison between provinces, a Children's Commissioner would facilitate that process.

To read the bill, visit Marc Garneau's website at www.marcgarneau.ca.

Heather Black is a Westmount communications designer. Contact her at: blackheajea@gmail.com.

Harmonia festival a 'great' success



Harmonia presented two concerts at Chapelle Notre Dame de Bon Secours on November 29, as part of the church's Christmas series of free concerts.

Photo: Paul Maclean

By JOANNE PENHALE

Choristers from Harmonia Westmount women's choir rang in the beginning of the holiday season with their three-day Festival of Lights over the weekend of November 27.

"We had a great weekend," said Westmounter Elizabeth Dupéré following a performance at the Chapelle Notre Dame de Bon Secours, November 29. The 1771 domed church was filled with the choir's 45-minute repertoire, which included a French version of "Silent Night", Hebrew "Rounds for Peace" by Launy Grøndahl, and selections from "A Ceremony of Carols" by Benjamin Britten.

Artistic director Frédérica Petit-Homme invited guests in the pews to join in singing the recessional from the Britten piece – a series of melodic alleluias.

The festival included two performances at the Old Montreal church, performances

in two Westmount seniors' residences – Château Westmount and Manoir Westmount – and an evening of music at Victoria Hall on November 27, which launched the festival.

More than 120 guests filled the Westmount concert hall, which was decorated with stark white trees, white and blue lights, snowflakes and silver ornaments. Donations made that evening exceeded \$1,000.

"We were really, really happy," Dupéré said of the donations. "It's good for the choir because it costs a lot to pay for music and pay the director and everything."

The 32-member amateur choir has been rehearsing weekly since late September. It will begin rehearsals again in January for its spring season and new choristers are welcomed.

For more information on Harmonia: email harmoniawestmount@gmail.com or call 514.932.2026.

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Celebrating 100 Years of Scouting in Westmount



Mathew Cox explains how magnetism can move a needle that's floating on water, without touching the needle. Jacques Chagnon (background) looks on with curiosity. Cox, a Venturer, is studying physics and chemistry, and he likes explaining science. His ambition is to become a paediatric psychologist.

Photos: Ralph Thompson, PhotoImagerie



Marc Garneau talks with John Neysmith, who has been a Scouting volunteer for 41 years. For the past 17 years he has been involved in the international side of Scouting. He holds Canada's highest award The Silver Wolf, and the African Award of the Lion.

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Westmount Scouts celebrated its centennial at a spaghetti dinner, November 28 at Victoria Hall, with a number of prominent Westmounters.

Notables included local MNA Jacques Chagnon and MP Marc Garneau; Mayor Peter Trent; John Neysmith, member of the Geneva-based World Organization of the Scout Movement; and Glenn Bradley, Council Commissioner, Quebec Council, Scouts Canada.

Scouts Canada is a Canadian Scouting association that, in affiliation with the French-language Association des Scouts du Canada, is a member of the World Or-

ganization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). Scouts Canada provides programs for all young people, ages 5 to 26.

"There are close to 30 million Scouts in the world," said John Neysmith of WOSM, "comprising boys, girls and young adults. 160 national Scout organizations are members of the World Organization. The newest member countries are National Association of Cambodian Scouts, Association of Scouts of Montenegro, Scouts of Syria and National Organization of Scouts of Ukraine

In 2007, Scouting, founded by Robert Baden-Powell at a small island camp, celebrated its 100th anniversary worldwide.

Memories of Scouting's first days

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With the celebration this year of 100 years of Scouting in Westmount, handwritten notes of one of the original members provide first-hand insight into the informal beginnings of the first two troops.

Providing his personal recollections 60 years later, Eric Slessor related how several informal groups in the Montreal area had sprung up in summer 1908, a year after the Scouting movement began in England.

"One such group, of which I was a member, came into being in Westmount quite spontaneously, made up of what I suppose would now be called a neighbourhood gang centred about Arlington, Strathcona and Lansdowne avenues. This group, which used to tear about on their bikes playing "Cowboys and Indians", building shacks in the bush and fields – then still existing in Westmount and NDG – had become interested in wireless."

When a copy of Robert Baden-Powell's

book *Scouting for Boys* fell into their hands "it was unanimously decided to turn the gang into a Scout Patrol," he wrote.

In 1910, when a more formalized Scouting structure emerged, a recruiting meeting at Victoria Hall attracted so many boys that two troops were formed numbered 6th Montreal (1st Westmount) and 7th Montreal (2nd Westmount).

The first two years, they met together in the basement of Ellis Almon, one of the patrol leaders, at 539 Grosvenor.

After a couple of years they gravitated to Victoria Hall, still operating almost as a single unit.

With the outbreak of World War I in 1914, many of the older boys joined the militia and eventually served overseas as did Slessor. Some were killed in action, their names now recorded on the Westmount cenotaph.

Editor's note: The above extracts of the late Eric Slessor's notes were provided by Former District Commissioner Maggie Shaddick, who noted that the author went on to pursue an army career but retained an interest in Scouting.



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Argyle Institute fundraiser

Therapists to Westmount: 'Think gold!'

Westmount's Argyle Institute of Human Relations is hosting a "gold party" on Friday, December 11 from 1 pm to 4 pm at its offices at 215 Redfern Ave, #120.

People are invited to sell their unwanted gold items for "top dollar, while being treated to an afternoon of snacks

and fun." Stones can be taken out on the spot.

Ten percent of the proceeds will help fund the Argyle's sliding-scale and need-based programs. The Argyle is a private association of psychologists, social workers, counsellors and therapists.

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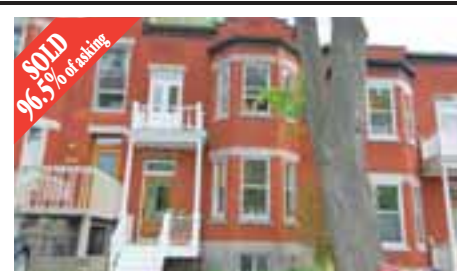


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Ruminations

GEORGE BOWSER

Mommy, where does food come from? I just saw the movie *Food Inc.* Watch it yourself, and you may never eat chicken again. Watch it, and you may never eat beef or pork again. It will almost certainly give you indigestion if you try.

It's a documentary and it's a horror film. It shows us a piece of the hell on earth that is the meatpacking and poultry-farming industry in America, and when we can't bear it any more, it takes us to a farm that closely resembles the farm on which I grew up in southern England in the 1950s and 1960s.

On this traditional English farm, there are animals grazing, clucking, and grunting. There is life, and there is death, and there is food. Good food. Tasty food.

The farmer stands shoulder to shoulder with his assistants, talking to the camera while he slaughters, plucks, cleans and guts chickens in the open air. He says simply, "Shouldn't we just ask our food producers to sell us food that tastes good, and doesn't make us sick?"

This traditional farm is located not far from a poultry-farming centre, where mutant, sick creatures stagger about in the dark, smeared with their own feces and surrounded by their dead and dying fellows, bearing stubby wings and grotesquely enlarged breasts, waiting to be turned into cling-wrapped, shelf-ready packages. The owner who permitted the filming was subsequently bullied out of business by the corporate buyer on which she depended.

Surprise, surprise.

"Cluck," or "Yuk"? See the film. You decide.

For a while, I'd rather chip a tooth on a shotgun pellet while snacking on goose from the hunter's bag than eat factory-farmed chicken. I'd rather go to the near-

est farmers' market and strangle the chicken myself. At least, until the shock-horror impact of the movie wears off.

Then I'll probably go back to the fast-food pre-packaged food aisle of the local supermarket because it's cheaper, because I can't be bothered, and because my brain is addled by all the hormones and drugs I've been ingesting for decades from factory-farmed meat. It's a wonder I haven't grown breasts myself. Well, maybe I have. Actually, they're not bad.

City people don't know everything. Sometimes they are unaware of their own ignorance, and that's just wrong. I used to

be amazed when I would take my dog for a walk, and when she stopped to relieve herself, some dimwit would bark at me, "I hope you're going to pick that up." Evidently it was an urban busybody who didn't know that bitches squat to pee.

Bob Dylan said it best "to think I'd make contact with the one who tries to hide what he don't know to begin with."

We don't know where our food comes from, and it would be better if we did.

I support the environment lobby when they call for any measures that encourage us to eat food produced locally, organically, and humanely.

MGH Auxiliary hosts musical fundraiser



From left, Iwan Edwards (choral conductor), Donna Williams, Barbara Whitley, Ginny Heward and Judy Cowling.



From left, Tibie Flanders, Michael Cooper, Yvonne Mass and Joelle Maturo.

Photos: Robert J. Galbraith

Remembering Hélène Saly, pioneering Westmount historian

By DOREEN LINDSAY

In the 1960s, Hélène Saly was responsible for reviving interest in the local history of Westmount. As the French specialist at Westmount High, she encouraged her students to study local history – from writing a French composition in class about "Ma ville et son histoire" to compiling an 88-page book in 1967, entitled *Old Westmount*, 2,000 copies of which were printed. They sold out quickly.

Her love of researching the history of her adopted city of Westmount continues in our research today.

Her friendship with Alice Lighthall, the energetic woman who saved the Hurtubise family house on Côte St. Antoine Rd. from destruction in 1955, led to reviving the Westmount Historical Association.

Dr. Saly told me how they would meet in the home of Elinor Earl and her sister Una Wardleworth on Côte St. Antoine Rd. Dr. Saly even organized a birthday party for Miss Lighthall in the Hurtubise house. Aline Gubbay and Sally Hoof were part of that small group. Gubbay and Hoof later expanded on their research and published their own books on the history of Westmount, which we also use today.

Dr. Saly expanded access to the boxes of papers and photographs that were the

Westmount Historical Association's embryonic archives in those days, opening them up to her students to begin their research. I thank her on behalf of all Westmounters and especially the current members of the Westmount Historical for collecting, organizing and preserving material from days past. In 1967 she became archivist of the Westmount Historical's files and continued in that role for many years. I thank her for being aware of the need to preserve the past for the future. I have always admired "Loly's" determination, intelligence and strength of character.

Her life had its own interesting history. In 1951 she and her husband George, with their son George, immigrated to Montreal where she began her teaching career and soon integrated into the Westmount community. Their second son Peter was born here. At first they lived in an apartment on St. Catherine St. before it was torn down in 1960 to build Westmount High. In 1970 they bought their house at 352 Kensington Ave.

Born in Budapest, Hungary in 1920 Hélène Zirczy (Saly) published her first book of poetry when she was only 16. She then completed her doctorate in philosophy in 1942 before escap-

continued on p. 20

Westmounters were out in force on November 30 at the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul (the A&P) to support the Montreal General Hospital auxiliary's concert by the I Medici ensemble, which is

largely composed of doctors from the hospital.

Proceeds will be used to purchase a stress echo table for the cardiology department.

Greta bites the Big Apple



Colourfully Yours

GRETA VON
SCHMEDLAPP,
MUSE TO AURÉLIEN
GUILLORY

Well hello my dear, dear Design Friends.

Recently, I took a little trip to New York. Here's my tale of our recent adventure visiting friends in the Hamilton Heights area of Harlem's Upper West side.

It is always super to visit a city with a native, so Aurel's old friend, the director of Visual Presentation at Steuben Glass, gave us some new directions for design experiences in the Big Apple.

This time, we toured the Soho and Greenwich areas. Highlights are Moss, for the exotic and avant-garde, *objets de luxe* and *outré* home furnishings and jewelry – the hip offspring of Crate & Barrel called CB2. I found the most elegant giant smoke and clear, solid base fluted Martini glasses.

Just as there is a huge difference between Moss and Crate & Barrel in the Soho area, Bloomingdales and Bergdorf Goodman's are a study in contrast and richness in Midtown. Bloomies has revamped the perfume area to mod-Art Deco. The bedding section merits a thorough tour. It's the best Aurel has seen anywhere.

It's always good to see the best, so you know what to look for when you're shopping at the discount malls. The ultimate luxe is epitomized by Bergdorf's windows. Their motto is More is More, and the theme this holiday season is personal computers. Each window has been filled with opulent glamour. The "Princess and the PC" has a magnificent lacquered and crystal-encrusted PC tucked between the stack of damask mattresses!

The baroque, and Victorian approach to the holidays are back with a vengeance – one doesn't think of recession here in these glossy halls. Aurel found a special birthday present of French lavender and rosemary soap. It was gift-wrapped in layers of tissue nestled in a lustrous box of lilac, with a royal purple ribbon. I wish you could have seen the birthday boy's eyes that evening at dinner!

I must tell you that the colour and design holiday trends are A: Abstract geometry with aqua, silver and yellow; and B: baroque revival with richness of gold, ruby

Atwater Library scores over \$400k from feds



Atwater Library president Ellen Bounsall (left) thanks whom she called the Atwater's "godfather," Senator David Angus (right).

Thanks to the federal government's stimulus and infrastructure program, the Atwater Library and Computer Centre is \$425,000 closer to its goal of raising and spending \$4,526,000 to refurbish its 90-year-old building.

Senator David Angus was on hand December 4 to make the grant official. He talked about the importance of the Atwater's roots as a mechanics' institute, as well as the heritage value of its current

site.

Also present were Mayor Peter Trent, councillors Theodora Samiotis and Victor Drury, city director general Duncan Campbell and Urban Planning director Joanne Poirier from Westmount, and councillors Helen Fotopulos and Sammy Forcillo from Montreal.

Renovation goals include preserving the building's skylight, and increasing accessibility and safety.

and emerald. I also like the colours of terra cotta with olive, rather than the bright traditional clear red and green. We also saw Aurel's fave of cobalt blue with silver and crystal.

Whenever possible, we like to return to the hide-away at Grand Central Station: the Campbell Apartments. My dear Design and martini fiends...you simply must go! During the building of the extraordinary railroad hub, one of the major investors, one Mr. Campbell, requested an "apartment" at one of the corners of the massive complex. Good taste and money are not always companions, but he was blessed with both. It was derelict and moth-balled for years, and now has been

restored. He created a giant room with rich Tudoresque, double-height walnut panels. There is now a large bar beneath the superb glowing glass window, and it is open to the public. The martinis there are best with Hendrick's Scottish gin, and a crisp slice of English cucumber. If you look closely, you may find my tiny brass plaque that awards them the Golden Martini.

Enough for now. Do keep those comments coming, and make sure to snazz up your holidays with some of these ideas.

Cozy Hugs, your Greta von S.

PS: Aurelien's email is aurelien@colorsbyaurelien.com

Arena plans

continued from p. 1

volved in the process as commissioner of Sports and Recreation. And if the WAG as a possible site is involved, the district councillor, Theodora Samiotis, will be included.

"We have a plan on the table and once we do our homework and have a better understanding of it we'll look at ways it could be tweaked or made better," said Martin.

Martin had initially proposed the WAG as presenting a cost saving. He and Councillor Cynthia Lulham, a committee member, have repeatedly stated that challenges of terrain at the existing site were adding to construction costs, pushing the project to an estimated \$37 million.

Along with Trent, Martin and Lulham, the committee includes councillors Victor Drury and Gary Ikeman.



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Retail Watch

BY ERIN STROPES

Must Boutique

Must Boutique opened in late September at 4909 Sherbrooke St. The shop sells contemporary women's fashion, and is an expansion from a long-standing location on Laurier St. in Outremont.



A Must visit?

DD Dog

DD Dog has opened at 342A Victoria. The shop sells clothes and fashion accessories for dogs. Grooming for large and small breeds is also available. Owner Wieeny Li was a dog groomer in Hong Kong before moving to Montreal.



DD Dog owner Wieeny Li, with store mascot Xiao Fei.

Pity you weren't at the party



A joyous time was had by all at the Underdog Club-sponsored Pitty Party at the club's gallery, December 6. Visitors dropped in to eat cake, meet the several homeless pit bulls, who mingled happily amongst the crowd, and learn about the traits wrongly associated with pit bulls. Several animal rescue workers were on hand to provide information and answer questions. For more information about pit bulls, drop by the gallery on weekends.

Photo: Kristin McNeill

SWAT tournament raises money for children's hospitals

BY ISAAC OLSON

While American SWAT teams ice criminals to save lives, a local SWAT team saves lives by hitting the ice.

The Senior Westmount All Star Team (SWAT) held its 21st annual hockey tournament at the Westmount arena, from December 3 to December 6, in support of brain tumor research and neurosurgery conducted at the Montreal Children's and St. Justine hospitals.

Between the silent auction, raffle and other fundraising, Howard Hoppenheim, SWAT treasurer, said this year is shaping up to be the most successful fundraiser to date.

"It's the individuals on the SWAT team that make this happen," said Hoppenheim, describing efforts to garner community support, sponsors and auction donations. "The guys put a lot of effort and time in before the tournament."

The late Nicolas W. Matossian was the inspirational force behind the annual tournament. In the face of terminal brain can-

cer, then 16-year-old Matossian initiated fundraising activities for the two hospitals so that other children and families would benefit from bettered medical and surgical care.

His parents, Nicolas and Martha Matossian, as well as his brother, Christian, have worked with family friends to keep the successful fundraiser going for more than 20 years since the death of their son and sibling.

Last weekend eight teams competed for the championship trophy and the fourth annual Termite mini-hockey tournament was played just before Sunday's championship game – lining the arena with proud parents.

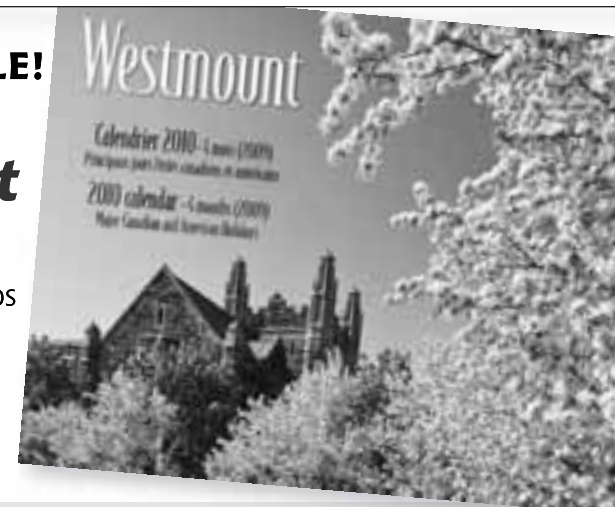
"The greatest thing about all this is it's not just our family anymore," said Christian Matossian. "Family friends have completely taken over organizing the tournament and raising money. It's a competitive tournament, but it's really all about having a great time."

See p. 1 for photo.

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Westmount Independent, 310 Victoria Ave., #105



Sorting through the bull on the pits

Pits galore

BY ANGELA ATTAR, GRADE 8, ECS

Following a pit bull-only weekend event at the Underdog Gallery (see p. 17), here are five bulls who desperately need people with open minds and big hearts to take them in or support them financially.

Squeaky is a 1-year-old pit bull and a total lover-boy. He's obsessed with dogs, as



Squeaky

well as cats and loves to cover kids in wet kisses. Poor little Squeaky was beaten by his previous owner with a metal chain. Not cool. He somehow got away and ended up in a dog pound in Lachine. But he's looking to relocate to a Westmount home that's willing to give a little love and compassion.

Charlie is a Doberman-pit bull cross and loves anyone who loves him back. He's house-broken, crate-trained and knows basic commands. It's hard to believe he keeps getting turned down by rescue organizations and has ended up very close to being euthanized. As Charlie gets older, he only gets bigger. With close to 100 lbs of muscle and love, this giant baby needs a strong owner. He's an amazing pooch looking for a light at the end of his dog tunnel.

Jamie is one of those pups who has had



Charlie

a real hard-knock life. He was dumped at the SPCA with an inverted eyelid. It



Jamie

caused the poor guy incredible pain, irritation and infection, not to mention costly medical bills. He's recovered amazingly though he still needs prescription eye drops for life, which is really not a lot to ask for. Jamie would like a home all to himself since he likes to hog all the love. (He'll give twice as much back, though.)

Demystifying some myths

BY JESSICA GHERSI

Can we please stop hating on pit bulls? It's so '80s. And all you're doing is adding to their already dog-poop reputation. So stop. Get another life. One that doesn't get dogs killed every year. Okay, I'm done yelling at you now. I think you're ready for the facts. And not the bull (pun alert!) the media likes to feed you.

BULL: Pit bulls are dangerous and attack for no reason.

TRUTH: Pits are no more vicious than golden retrievers or beagles. Ask the American Temperament Testing Society (ATTS), which did the fancy research. If you ask them, they'll say: A pit who's raised in a loving environment will be just as friendly as any other dog.

BULL: Pits have lockjaw.

TRUTH: Definitely not. They have the same exact bone anatomy as any other breed. They're just a lot stronger.

BULL: Pit bulls that attack other animals will go after humans too.

TRUTH: You've got aggression towards animals and aggression towards humans – two totally different things. Pit bulls were once trained to fight bulls (hence the name) and bears, so some may have a bit of that still left in them. At the same time, they were bred to not have aggression towards people. So any pit bull that shows any sign of it is considered *not typical* of the breed and should be evaluated by professionals.



McKenzie

McKenzie's had a rough life. She had drug-addict owners and lived in a crack house until she was sold for drug money and then abandoned. Obviously certain side effects come with that life and she now suffers from separation anxiety. Nonetheless she's easy to please and loves cats, dogs and most of all children. McKenzie really needs a family willing to give her their time, pa-

continued on p. 22

BULL: Pits and kids don't mix.

TRUTH: Pit bulls are known for their ability to handle kids and their rough horseplay. They make great companions and family pets when properly socialized. (Just like kids.)

BULL: Adult pits with unknown backgrounds should not be adopted.

TRUTH: This one's especially painful because it's one of the main reasons why so many incredible dogs are euthanized every year. Papers don't mean dogdoodie. Plus, responsible dog shelters and rescues always temperament test their dogs to make sure they're adoptable. And if they're not, then they either get euthanized or remain in shelter care until they die..

BULL: They make great guard dogs.

TRUTH: Yeah, maybe if ice cream broke into your house. Pit bulls would rather lick a robber to death than eat him. However, they're one of the most loyal breeds, so if they feel a threat, they'll protect their owner. Remember, if a pit is taught to be aggressive, then aggressive it will be, true to the training they were given. So it's all about responsible ownership.

Like they say, "Punish the deed, not the breed."

Update

Bring in your dog to the Underdog Club Gallery to have his terribly attractive holiday portrait taken. It makes a great gift – and helps out homeless dogs. Seriously, what's not to love?

The shoot "Did someone say cheese?" will run December 13 and 20, from 11 am to 5 pm at 4922 Sherbrooke St. W. For info please contact 514.969.3376.



ATHENA – LIZANNE'S PUPPY

I have written often in *The Independent*, the "Nine Lives" column and other articles on animal welfare issues. I stopped writing when my puppy Athena was diagnosed with myocardia.

I devoted my time to working with veterinary specialists in order to find the drugs that could help her and the treatments she would need. On Tuesday, December 1, 2009, we lost our battle and she has gone to puppy heaven. Our family and friends wish to thank veterinarians and staff at DMV, Baker Animal Hospital, Animal Health Clinic, Hôpital Vétérinaire de Westmount. A special mention to Pearson Pharmacy for compounding her drugs. An event is being planned at the Underdog Gallery in her honour and a Dog Walk on the Summit is being organized: more details to come.

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Westmouter receives Award of Merit

Jason Kenney, minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, presented an Award of Merit to Westmouter Dr. George Tsoukas on October 25 at a brunch organized by the Hellenic Congress of Quebec.

Arriving in Canada from Greece at the age of 10, Dr. Tsoukas started out as a furrier before following his vocation of medicine, specializing in endocrinology – a path he has continued for 40 years.

He is currently a professor at the MUHC and is also an accomplished artist. His oil paintings were for sale at the event, with proceeds being donated to the Pa-



*Social Notes
from Westmount
and beyond*

VERONICA REDGRAVE

pachristidis Chair of Hellenic Studies at McGill University.

The Tsoukas family was out in force. Noted were George's sons, Michael (a cardiology specialist, who came in from Boston for the event), Alexander and Orestes (both docs in residence at McGill),

and Philip (studying medicine!) as well as his mother Anastasia (an elegant 91-year old), and his brother Dr. Chris Tsoukas.

Amongst the 850 guests were Westmouters Maria Karnoutsou, Consul General of Greece; Dr. Bill Papanastasiou; Frank Pappas, and Marika Coulourides, whose father was the consul general of Greece in Canada from 1942-1967.

If you are interested in sponsoring this page, kindly contact Arleen Candiotti at 514.223.3567.



Westmouter Dr. George Tsoukas and Jason Kenney.



Vickie and Nick Vouloumanos.



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ON THE SHELVES

Among the new arrivals at the Westmount Public Library singled out by staff:

Adults – Pain management

The Pain Survival Guide: How to Reclaim Your Life by Dennis Turk, PhD and Frits Winter, PhD.

Healing Back by Stella Weller – This book explores the causes contributing to back and neck pain, ways of coping with it and strategies for healing.

Adult French

33, *chemin de la Baleine* by Myriam Beaudoin – A man, after his father’s death, finds a collection of love letters and visits Eva, the now elderly and mentally confused woman to whom the deceased wrote the letters.

Vieillir et se réaliser pleinement by Joan Chittister – This collection of reflections on old age is from a nun, who is the au-

thor of more than 40 books on topics ranging from feminism to non-violence and Benedictine wisdom. A witty and inspirational book that downplays regrets and accents the rewards of a mature life.

Picture books

À l’aide! une histoire d’amitié by Holly Keller – When Hedgehog asks Mouse why he is hiding in the bushes, Mouse tells him that he is afraid of Snake, then Mouse falls into a deep hole. All his friends try to help him, but the only animal who can pull him out is Snake! Mouse realizes that he should not have been afraid of a good friend.

Hurry Up and Slow Down by Layn Marlow – When Hare is ready for his bedtime story, he suddenly wants to linger over every picture and surprises Tortoise by telling him to “hurry up and slow down” as he reads the book.

Books on CD

Juliet, Naked by Nick Hornby – When the magic fades from their relationship, Duncan cheats on Annie, effectively ending their life together. After the split, Annie begins an online correspondence with Duncan’s idol, musician Tucker Crowe. As the two share their painful past, they develop an unlikely friendship.

My Sister’s Keeper by Jodi Picoult – All her life, 13-year old Anna has helped her sister fight leukemia. Anna has provided platelets, bone marrow and even stem cells to ensure Kate’s survival. But when their parents ask her to donate a kidney, Anna has had enough. She enlists the aid of a lawyer and announces her intention to sue for control of her own body.

Magazines

“Swine Flu: Fact versus fantasy: As if the misinformation multi-
plying on the Internet continued on p. 21

Irish rugby, Irish whiskey



Some of the “Irish” players, from left, Andy Plimer (former coach), Jamie Lockwood (treasurer), John Weller (junior coach) and Westmounter Jim Kellett (vice-president).

The Montreal Irish Rugby Football Club held a fundraiser at Westmount’s Oeufrier restaurant on November 26.

Approximately 50 players and well-wishers attended what club vice-president Jim Kellett described as “technically a whiskey-tasting and art exhibition,” which featured the wares of the Cooley Distillery, as well as paintings for sale.

Cooley is the resurrection of a 19th century firm that, along with most Irish distilleries, was felled by a combination of British embargoes, American Prohibition

and two world wars. Prior to that, more Irish whiskey had been sold in the US than Scotch. Entrepreneur John Teeling founded Cooley in 1987 to try to break what had turned into Irish duopoly for whiskey production. The firm’s whiskies are now winning awards.

So it turns out that Irish whiskey is thriving despite what the night’s sommelier and emcee Martha Harrison of Cooley Distillery described as “terrible events like Prohibition.”

Saly

continued from p. 15

ing with her parents from Hungary to settle in Paris, where she completed post-doctoral studies at the Sorbonne.

Dr. Saly was a French specialist with the

Quebec Protestant school board from 1951 until her retirement in 1978. In 1994 we named the archives of the Westmount Historical “The Saly Heritage Collection” in her honour.

Notaries

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Best wishes to you and your family for a happy holiday season and a prosperous 2010.

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Pit bulls

continued from p. 18

tience, love and energy so that she knows that she will never be forgotten again.

Tesla is a female pit bull who's insecure and at the same time dominant. This combination of temperament makes her stand out, so the rescue groups don't have much hope for her. She's only a year old, but

she'll probably be put down if she doesn't find a home. She's a smart and gorgeous girl, but not the easiest. She needs someone to reinforce a little confidence in her, just like the rest of us. Hopefully you'll be up for the challenge.

Visit underdogclub.org or call 514.938.8114 to find out about local adoptable pits.

On the shelves

continued from p. 20

weren't bad enough, even official advice is sometimes failing to keep up with the latest findings on 2009 H1N1 flu" by Debora MacKenzie in *New Scientist*, October 31, 2009, p. 40.

"Shots in the Dark: To Prevent a Devastating flu pandemic, the government is relying heavily on vaccines and antivirals.

Some experts say both are quite possibly useless" by S. Brownlee and J. Lenzer in *The Atlantic*, November 2009, p. 44.

"New Culprits in Chronic Pain: Glia are nervous system caretakers whose nurturing can go too far. Taming them holds promise for alleviating pain that current medications cannot ease" by R. Douglas Fields in *Scientific American*, November 2009, p. 50.

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Westmount's contribution to light pollution

Many older Westmount residents remember the nights when you could look up to see myriads of stars in the dark sky above.

Nowadays, the sky over the city is no longer so dark and only the moon and brightest stars and planets are clearly visible to the naked eye. This is the result of light pollution. The city of Westmount is doing little to curb its substantial contribution.

Lighting accounts for about a quarter of all electrical energy consumed worldwide, with street lighting using a significant portion of electrical power. Westmount's street lights are extraordinarily inefficient, expensive to maintain, and wasteful of both energy and money.

Two types of street lights

Westmount has two types of street lights: the handsome Washington lamp and tall cobra lamp. The latter, of which we have 665, are commonly seen on highways and have been correlated with increased speeding. The purchase of the Washington lamps was authorized by city council in the mid-eighties when light pollution was not widely understood. There are 1,305 of these, using various inefficient types of light bulbs (incandescent or mercury vapour). These have a relatively short life span with associated labour costs.

The major problem with both these types of lighting is the way they proliferate

Living sustainably

EVE ASPINALL

light – upwards into the sky and sideways into bedrooms, and generally creating glare. This glare throws the light directly into the eyes of motorists, causing the pupils to contract, which diminishes vision. One should not be able to see the light source.

What are needed are fully shielded light fixtures that beam virtually all their light where it is required – on the sidewalks and the road. There is less total light, which requires less electrical energy. The light source itself should be energy efficient, ideally yellow-tinted LED bulbs or yellow, low pressure sodium bulbs.

The LED bulbs cost more, but last longer and are five times more efficient. Blue or white lights should be avoided because they suppress the production of melatonin needed for a good sleep. They also scatter more than the yellow/orange bulbs.

Less light pollution and greater savings can be realized by using no more light than is required. Too much light and poorly shielded lamps ruin adaptation to night lighting, and blind us when we most

need help to see clearly.

Overkill adds glare, wastes energy, and gives a false perception of security. There is no statistical evidence that more light reduces crime. Criminals need light to operate. The bright so-called “security lights” provide this and may even attract their activity. For effective security, shielded, low-level, motion-activated lights are a safer option.

Lack of awareness

Lack of awareness is the major problem in controlling light pollution, not resistance. It costs money to pollute but simple energy performance solutions do exist, as well as better management of power resources. Greater expertise can be found in companies such as IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America – www.iesna.org) to strengthen communities and their educational offerings by providing tested solutions, leveraging partnerships, promoting synergies, or Light Lab (www.lightlab.ca).

If the Megantic region with an area of 8,000 sq.km. and a population of 200,000 can do it, why not Westmount with an area of 4 sq. km. and a population of 20,000?

Much of the foregoing is excerpted from the work of professional astrophysicist Dr. Tony Moffat, a member of the Healthy City Project.

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