

Trent, Pomerleau: Pool work schedule coming soon

Sports & Rec: Early August opening possible

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As the swimming community hopes for news of an opening date for the new pool, Mayor Peter Trent told the *Independent* last week he expects the schedule to be better known in a week or two.

This follows a meeting he had April 10 at city hall with contractor Pierre Pomerleau, at which many aspects of the Westmount recreation centre were discussed, Trent said.

Trent had told the council meeting April 2 he would be contacting Pomerleau, "but Pierre called me. We had a long meeting, and he's going to get back to us with

a schedule as soon as possible.

"Any work site is a moving target," he added, "and this one is no exception. As soon as we get the date confirmed, we'll make it known."

While the contracted delivery date for the pool is May 31, swimmer Catherine Bond said that Sports and Recreation officials had told some members of the Dolphins swim team who met with them April 3 that construction of the pool could take some 16 weeks after the start of excavation last week.

"Needless to say, we were very disappointed," she said, noting that would bring the opening date to the start of August.

Trent said he was awaiting the schedule *continued on p. 21*

Nolan runs through April snow for Terry Fox



Photo: Michael Moore

Hundreds of Westmount students braved the unseasonable snow on April 12 to cheer on Roslyn caretaker and cancer survivor Eddy Nolan as he marked the 33rd anniversary of Terry Fox's Marathon of Hope. Of the schools invited, students from Roslyn and Westmount Park School were in attendance and lined Sherbrooke St. in front of Westmount Park, chanting "Go, Eddy, Go!" See p. 8.

Lindsay wins WMA volunteer of the year. See p. 10.

'Greening' of Vic village revealed at vision meeting

Plan does not address concerns, many say

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A second public consultation meeting April 8 on updating the urban plan for the southwest sector of Westmount focused on "greening" of the Victoria village area and creating a Prince Albert public square as a meeting "piazza" for the community.

Other features include the narrowing of key intersections to enhance walkability, and creating small planting and seating

areas at the "bumped-out" corners.

But while most of some 50 residents and business people attending the event at Victoria Hall seemed pleased with this aspect, many asked for a more specific development vision as suggested at the first public meeting October 3, 2012.

Concerns included the need for measures to reduce the impact of the super-hospital, to integrate the abandoned train station *continued on p. 4*

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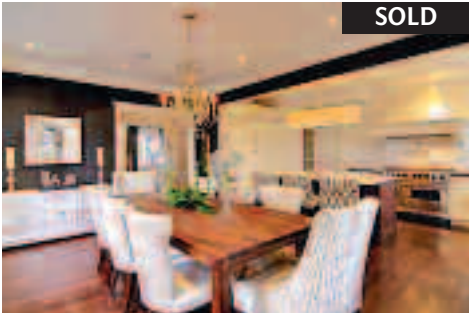
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Leja cited by Quebec, city plans quiet remembrance



BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The late, much-decorated bomb disposal expert, Sergeant-Major Walter Leja, who suffered critical injuries defusing a terrorist bomb in Westmount April 17, 1963, was officially recognized for his heroic efforts by the Quebec legislative assembly April 11.

Bomb one of many

The bomb was one of many that had been set to go off in Westmount by the Front de Libération Québécois (FLQ) and had been put in a mail box at Westmount Ave. and

Lansdowne near Roslyn School.

Mayor Peter Trent said last week that the city would probably hold quiet remembrance on the actual 50th anniversary of the event April 17.

Trust fund for Leja family

The city, which had set up a trust fund for the Leja family, officially honoured him at a ceremony in which a memorial tree was planted and a commemorative plaque installed at the northwest corner of West-

mount Ave. and Roslyn shortly after his death during Trent's first term as mayor.

Leja, a member of the Royal Canadian Engineers, remained at St. Anne's Veterans' Hospital until his death in November 1992 at age 71.

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Plaque at memorial tree outside Roslyn School pays tribute to Sgt.-Maj. Walter Leja.



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Citizens weigh in on ‘green’ and many other plans

.....
continued from p. 1

into the community, to improve parking and to find ways to revitalize the commercial sector and restrict further building activity.

Some questioners also suggested a public square might attract late-night noise, more litter, graffiti, people asking for money, smoking and increased need for public security, especially for the adjacent residential area to the square just off the side of Sherbrooke.

“Today I saw a landscaping plan well presented,” said longtime architect and urban planner Andrew Hoffmann. “I would like to see plans dealing with prob-

lems.”
“My understanding was that the whole exercise was to create a guiding plan for years to come,” said local resident Gerard Fellerath, president of the Sherbrooke/Victoria Merchants Association and owner of Folklore 1. While “no one is against beautification,” he said, people do not want massive development.

But in opening the meeting billed as a “south-west sector vision,” Councillor Cynthia Lulham said that “tonight we’re showing you the second part” following the October meeting.

The parking and related hospital-impact issues are to be studied in a separate parking

continued on p. 5


City’s ‘guiding principles’ for Vic village

While references were made at the April 8 meeting to the guiding principles for the southwest sector vision, they were mentioned only briefly for those attending the latest meeting.


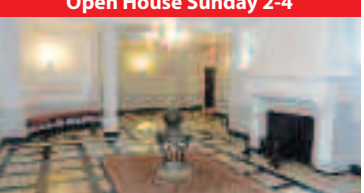















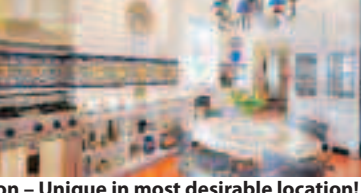






They had been discussed at the initial public meeting October 3 last year as: revitalizing the commercial area to provide convenient local services, ensuring that new building or modifications har-

monize with the existing area, ensuring an efficient use of land and that any new project should contribute to the walkability of the area.

Key issues were also identified as the greening of the area, walking and cycling, the commercial aspect, the future of the Victoria train station and the effect of external development (see October 9, 2012, p. 21).



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for Vic village at second public consultation meeting

continued from p. 4

study of the area while recommendations on zoning changes regarding four potential “buildable” lots are to come from council for further consultation, she said.

Complex issue

“I know this is the start, and a complex issue,” stated architect and urban designer Jerry Miller from the audience. But he said he had hoped to hear the city tell “the public and developers” what is not going to happen. “Landscaping is very interesting but it is only a small part of an urban plan.”

Lulham recalled that the city had already dealt with much of the development issue by prohibiting the use of doctors’ offices in houses as well as medical clinics at ground level.

Other recent zoning changes included one to ensure that a grocery store remained at the Metro site by rezoning it for an 18-foot ceiling on the ground floor – a particular requirement for grocery establishments. As well, only commercial occupancies would be permitted at ground-level moving forward (see July 3, 2012, p. 1).

Buildable sites

The meeting began with an overview of four potential “buildable areas” and a look at how their redevelopment would integrate into the streetscape under the maximum sizes of buildings now permitted.

These are the Esso service station, the Metro grocery store and parking lot, a parking lot on de Maisonneuve between Prince Albert and Victoria belonging to an office building, and the former Darmo

auto body shop on Somerville between Victoria and Prince Albert.

This was followed by a presentation of ways to green the area including the public square (see separate story) and a lengthy question period and discussion.

Merchants led off

Three merchant representatives led off noting concerns over parking, scheduling and whether the plan would have neighbourhood input, such as in the choice of plants. Lulham suggested there could be, but “at some point the city has to take leadership.”

Michael Wertheimer, a resident of Somerville, said that others near Claremont were living close to “an 800-pound guerilla” – the large vacant lot at the south-west corner of de Maisonneuve whose future development, possibly by the MUHC, “is going to change our lifestyle dramatically.” It is owned by Provigo. (See story October 9, 2012, p. 21.)

While the property lies just outside Westmount in Montreal, he said the presentation did not address this aspect, though Lulham replied that greening the area would enhance the residential aspect.

“I think the greening of the area is part of the answer to protecting it,” said city Urban Planning director Joanne Poirier.

Doreen Lindsay of the Westmount Historical Association suggested that the historical significance of Victoria could be incorporated in different ways. She noted in particular how some of the early buildings were both commercial and residential – examples “of people living and working in the same place.”

Some residents on or near St. Catherine close to Prince Albert and York com-

plained the street was a very public corridor for people walking east from the Vendôme Metro station. One suggested the city parking lot on the north side should be sold off to residents whose homes back on to it to provide them with parking.

And what would happen if the post office building, soon to be for sale, were demolished? What would be the impact of a new building, Lulham was asked. Rated Category II on the city’s heritage scale, it likely would not be demolished, she

replied.

Among others who spoke, long-time resident Betty O’Connell described the meeting as “wonderful,” saying, “Never before have we had this type of consultation.”

**See story on
public square, p. 12.**



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Questioners at the meeting April 8: Somerville resident Michael Wertheimer, left, and architect Andrew Hoffmann.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BUBBLE DOWN THE METERS

Gaz Metro’s remotely read meters transmit their readings every two months when they are paged to do so, and no one seems to find that objectionable. Similarly, Westmount Hydro’s remotely read watt-hour meters transmit their readings once every two months when they are paged to do so and if that was the only time that the meters transmitted anything, people would probably not be requesting the alternative of a manually read meter.

However, the remotely read watt-hour meters installed by Westmount Hydro also “bubble-up” and emit very short-duration radio frequency (RF) transmissions every 30 seconds. As a result in every two-month billing period, the meters are emitting an additional 173,000 “bubble-up” RF transmissions, which are useless because Westmount Hydro has no installed collector network to receive them and would never need the transmissions even if they could be received.

It is ridiculous to suggest that the totally useless “bubble-up” transmission feature cannot be suppressed. Westmount Hydro’s first shipments of remotely read watt-hour meters were purchased and installed without any knowledge that the meters were transmitting in the “bubble-up” mode; however, there is no reason to provoke ongoing controversy by perpetu-

ating that mistake.

Therefore, all on-going procurement for remotely read watt-hour meters should specify that the “bubble-up” feature be disabled and new meters should only be purchased from a supplier who agrees to meet that requirement.

JOHN DOREY, VICTORIA AVE.

LET NATURE DO ITS THING

The photo [below] was taken at 8 am April 13 from my balcony showing vehi-



Photo courtesy of David Asch

cles endlessly sanding, scraping and salting wet roads at Lansdowne and St. Catherine with temperature at 5°C and rising to 8°C today...and much warmer tomorrow according to the forecast.

Why doesn’t the roads department save the expense, environment as well as wear and tear to the equipment and the roads on days like this by checking the forecast and allowing nature to do the job – for free!

DAVID ASCH, LANSDOWNE AVE.

Crane walker



A worker walks across a crane suspended more than 14 storeys above ground at the 215 Redfern condo construction site the afternoon of April 8.

Photo courtesy of Pascale Delhaye

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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Presstime: Monday at 10:30 am

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SNOW REMOVAL AND ‘BEDROOM’ NOISES

On Friday, April 12 after 11:30 pm, a Public Works subcontractor with a front loader spent at least half an hour dropping the loader very hard on the pavement and returned around 2 am for more! Public Security was called the first time. Nothing came of it. Yet a couple engaged in intimate activities late at night got ticketed even though nobody was being disturbed! Here many residents were who couldn’t get to sleep.

Are we paying taxes to be kept awake and for such poor reasoning? Everything melted the next day!

MARY MAJOR, VICTORIA AVE.

THUMBS DOWN TO WESTMOUNT VISITOR

I found it quite hilarious to read one visitor’s assessment of Westmount from Tripadvisor.com (“Thumbs down post visit to Westmount,” April 2, p. 20).

The poster’s main complaint, that Westmount is not tourist-friendly and caters mainly to its residents, is like call-

ing the pope Catholic. What did they expect, really, on a cursory visit to a residential area?

While I have been critical in these pages of what I perceive to be defining issues and attitudes in Westmount, I also think that Westmount is doing a lot of things right – and conscientiously. There is a real effort here, yes, to create and encourage a sense of neighbourhood and belonging that is sadly lacking in other boroughs and at city hall downtown.

The downside is just that it seems a lot of the time that it’s the best community spirit money can buy.

In any case, this is exactly the kind of tourist the world does not need.

LOREN CARLE, NDG

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Martin casts rare opposing vote on Argyle permit

2 major building projects approved by council

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council approved building permits for two major house extensions April 2 that were singled out from a list of other

permits for their size. One is at 4302 Montrose, the other at 591 Argyle. Both are located in fairly congested neighbourhoods. While most permits recommended to council by the city's Planning Advisory

Committee (PAC) are approved unanimously, Councillor Patrick Martin cast a lone opposing vote for the Argyle project. The permit allowed an extension on three storeys in the back yard as well as


balconies on the second and third floors, and for the replacement of some windows and doors. Martin later said he felt the house would be too large for the neighbourhood. *continued on p. 9*




A rear extension is planned for 4302 Montrose, overlooking Severn below.



At 591 Argyle, just south of Westmount Ave., a three storey extension was approved.




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Szilasi's work features on new postal stamp

BY MICHAEL MOORE

The work of Westmounter Gabor Szilasi is being featured in a new Canada Post stamp series honouring the country's photography icons.

"I was very surprised and very proud to be selected," said Szilasi. "I've been around for such a long time and haven't stopped photographing for 50 years."

The Hungarian-born Szilasi is one of seven photographers featured in the new "Canadian Photography" series, homage to Canada's photographic history ahead of its 150th birthday in 2017.

The series, released on March 22, features Szilasi's "Andor Pasztor" photograph on a permanent domestic stamp. Part of a two-year project, the 1978 photograph is split into two frames: one a coloured shot of a wall and bureau showcasing dozens of picture frames; the other, a black-and-



Gabor Szilasi holds a copy of his "Andor Pasztor" photo at his Westmount home on April 10.

white shot taken a few steps to the right featuring a man sitting in a chair, staring out the window.

Some of the scene's intricacies, including the more than 30 photographs hanging on the wall, are lost on the 30 mm by 36 mm stamp, however. A large print of the two photos is currently on record with the National Gallery of Canada.

The series is the culmination of a two-year selection process by Canada Post, which enlisted a jury of curators and art experts from across the country to sort through 150 years of Canadian photography to find the finalists.

Szilasi was unaware of the series until

being contacted in January, when he was asked if he would be willing to allow his photo to be used.

"They asked me how much I would charge, but I totally forgot to tell them a price because I was so happy to be on a stamp," laughed Szilasi.

The series will run until Canada's sesquicentennial in 2017, with a new selection of photographers chosen each year.

In addition to Szilasi, the initial run also includes photos by Thomas Coffin Doane, Geraldine Moodie, Margaret Watkins, Jim Breukelman, Arnaud Maggs and Rodney Graham.

City may employ second application

New street-line paint could fade even sooner

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The annual ritual of street-line painting is expected to start shortly in Westmount but under new environmental regulations that mean the markings could fade even sooner than in the past. As it is, after the winter, many of the bike path markings have disappeared.

New Environment Canada restrictions on volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in street-line paints – both water- and solvent-based – went into effect last September after Westmount's line-painting work for the season was completed.

The issue of the durability of line painting was raised April 2 by Paul Marriott, a resident of Grosvenor, when city council was awarding a two-year contract for \$171,122 to Lignes Rive-Sud Inc.

City director general Duncan Campbell stated that the city was hiring a new contractor this year and suggested that in certain "vulnerable" locations, a second paint application might have to be added before the start of winter.

He said the city was in the process of cleaning the asphalt now to prepare for better adhesion. Both the cleanliness of the road surface and the temperature at time of application play a role in the end result.

The difficulty of holding the contractor to a performance contract, Mayor Peter Trent said, as suggested by Marriott, was that many factors beyond the contractor's control could play a role in scraping off the road markings, including snow removal equipment.

Shaking spray can but not causing trouble

Four young men were put under surveillance at the foot of Abbott as they walked west along the railway tracks shaking a spray can April 6, Public Security officials said. They eventually climbed the railway security fence at St. Catherine and Prince Albert, and were watched until they reached Grey in NDG without incident. They were not seen using the can and no fresh graffiti was found.

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EMSB joins call for national Terry Fox Day

BY MICHAEL MOORE

The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) has joined the push to establish a national Terry Fox Day, honouring the late Terry Fox and his iconic Marathon of Hope.

Inspired by Roslyn caretaker Eddy Nolan, who has also suffered from cancer and who has supported the Terry Fox Run for over three decades, the school

board passed a resolution last month designating April 12 as Terry Fox Day.

Backed by the EMSB, Nolan is petitioning the federal government to officially recognize the day nationally. A run was held in every Canadian province on April 12 to raise awareness for the project.

"We've still got a long way to go. The party hasn't even started," said Nolan.

See photo, p. 1.

Station 12 Reports

Police catch business burglar in 'targeted' patrol

BY ISAAC OLSON

The following news story is based on information from police reports provided by a Station 12 constable in an interview with the reporter.

In response to the recent rash of Westmount-based business break-ins, Station 12 police managed to, in what they refer to as a targeted patrol, catch a burglar red-handed, according to Station 12 constable Annie Grondin.

On April 7, just before 1 am, two officers were patrolling the businesses around the intersection of St. Catherine St. and Olivier Ave. on the look-out for burglars. From their patrol car, they heard a loud noise, said Grondin. The police quickly investigated, tracking the noise to Net-toyeur Daoust, where they saw a man leaving the dry cleaners.

The man, she said, wasn't carrying anything suspicious, but the officers saw him leave the store, whose front door had been forced open. Inside, she said, the officers found the shop was in disorder, especially around the cash registers. Drawers were

removed from the registers, she said, but were left by the front door. In the report, she noted it wasn't clear as to why the man was leaving the store empty-handed.

Regardless, the officers arrested 32-year-old Stéphane Diot and discovered he was already wanted by police. He was charged with breaking and entering the commercial establishment, she said, and more charges will likely come as police investigate the matter.

In the March 19 edition of the *Independent* (p. 13), Station 12's Constable Caroline Gauthier outlined seven recent business burglaries on streets like Sherbrooke and Greene. In those cases, police suspected two different burglars both aged between 30 and 40. However, police are still investigating to see if the suspect is connected to these crimes or any others in the area. Grondin said police are continuing to investigate this issue with patrols looking specifically for these types of burglars.

In the meantime, police say it is important that merchants remain vigilant in securing their business each night. Before

setting the alarm and locking up, merchants should empty the cash register, even of its coins, and display the empty

drawer to the window so criminals casing the business will see there is nothing to steal.

Permits, cont'd. from p. 7

"It just goes against the spirit in which Westmount was built up in which people had respect for their neighbours," he told the *Independent*, though he offered no reason during the vote.

The house, just south of Westmount Ave., will almost double in size extending on three storeys farther into the rear of the property beyond other houses with the result that neighbours will look onto the sides of the addition rather than a backyard, he explained.

Martin voted in favour of the Montrose extension but only after asking if the permit included a retaining wall and was assured it did not, though no explanation was provided.

This property on the south side of Montrose backs onto a steep incline as the land falls down to the backs of houses on Sev-

ern. A high retaining wall would be required to level the back yard if a swimming pool were to be installed, a possibility, according to Urban Planning director Joanne Poirier. This, however, was removed from the actual building permit and would require a separate landscaping permit, which made approval of the building permit acceptable to Martin.

Two on the roof

Two young men were seen on the roof of Centre Greene April 6 by a public safety officer passing nearby at 4:49 pm. As the officer was parking he saw the two walk down the stairs. Police were called but all was found in order. The youths were warned not to go onto the roof and the grandparents of one were informed.



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Library’s WiFi leads to arrest of wanted

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

It took place so quietly and quickly that many employees and users at the Westmount Public Library scarcely knew what was happening, according to library director Julie-Anne Cardella.

Police in plainclothes came to her office late in the afternoon April 10 asking her permission to question some of the staff about an individual they were seeking for allegedly posting threats against a police officer.

“Just by accident, it turned out he was in the library at the time,” she said.

On being informed of his whereabouts

by the staff, the investigators called in uniformed officers, and two of them came in and quietly took him away, she said. He offered no resistance. “It happened so quietly and professionally that I didn’t even know until afterward.”

Anatoliy Vdovin was reported to have made a brief appearance in court the next day facing a charge “he did counsel persons to commit an indictable offence” – the murder of police commander Ian Lafrèniere, who heads the police public affairs division.

The suspect, who had been seen previously at the library but was not a cardholder, used his own computer, she noted,

and was tracked down through the library’s WiFi system.

“WiFi’s not as secure as people think,” Cardella pointed out.

In fact, explained assistant Public Security director Greg McBain, investigators had been to the station and the city’s Information Services department a couple of times the previous week “and using our security cameras were able to obtain information on his use of the library.

“It shows the importance of our cameras and that you can be tracked down using WiFi.”

WMA gives Lindsay annual volunteer award

The Westmount Municipal Association is giving its Volunteer Citizen of the Year Award for this year to Doreen Lindsay. She is president of the Westmount Historical Association and a history columnist for the *Independent*.

She will be honoured during the WMA’s annual general meeting Wednesday, May 8 in Victoria Hall.

The award is presented to a Westmount resident who has “over many years given outstanding volunteer service to our community through any of its diverse groups.”

The deadline for nominations was April 8.

Book sale raises more than \$16,300

Taylor’s swan song

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As the spring book sale for the Westmount Public Library raised some \$16,305 over the weekend, it was a bittersweet occasion for a volunteer who has been a driving force behind the semi-annual event.

While the latest sale generated more than the spring one ever has, it was the swan song for Lee Taylor, its co-organizer almost from the start with Carolyn O’Neill, president of the Friends of the Library, which has now generated close to \$220,000.

Taylor plans to move to The Netherlands in June where her daughter, Jane Barrett, and family live. That’s when Taylor will retire from a career teaching English as a second language at the High School of Montreal Adult Education Centre.

“She’s such a trooper,” O’Neill said, adding “You wouldn’t believe how many books we received this time – thousands and thousands” – for a total of 766 cartons.

Taylor already has plans to continue her volunteer work in The Netherlands. “I’m planning to take courses to learn Dutch,” she says. She also hopes to launch a children’s story hour in English at the local library, inspired by her two young

grand-daughters – Helena and Kiki, her teaching career and her library volunteer work as well at her daughter’s former schools.

“I feel that volunteerism is really important for strengthening the community,” she explains. “And we’re very lucky in Westmount to have the structures and organizations that can really be enriched by volunteering.”

Her own involvement began with the city’s perennial plant exchange and escalated as she became an integral element of the fundraising effort to preserve the Westmount train station through the sale of heirloom seeds for the Montreal melon.

“I think that was my time of glory,” she recalls. “We raised so much money for the station’s new roof. It’s really sad it’s been abandoned and there’s still nothing in the station.” She believes the station would make a wonderful base for the Westmount Historical Association.

And while Taylor is still hopeful this may happen, she has the satisfaction of seeing how much the fruits of her efforts are being transferred directly to sustain a number of programs at the library, all because of the book sales.



Taylor at work April 14.

Roofing piece a hazard in wind

A piece of roof about to fall over the front entrance of a house on Melville was removed by public safety officers April 4, Public Security officials said. A neighbour reported it hanging dangerously in heavy wind at 6 pm. In the absence of residents, a note was left informing them of the incident.

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Prince Albert square aims to bring community together

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Design details of the new public square to be created on Prince Albert south of Sherbrooke were revealed at the public meeting April 8 by city urban planning consultants Cécile Baird and Julie St-Arnault of Atelier B.R.I.C.

The square, they explained, would extend out from the sidewalk on Sherbrooke south to the back of the commercial buildings with space either side for terrasses.

Planted areas of thyme would be used along with concrete pavers to provide permeable ground cover for storm water management. There would also be some flowering and smaller trees.

Space for public art

Park benches and planters of wood would express a “Westmount look.” There would be space for public art displays and a buffer of trees to protect the residential area.

Two parking spaces would be removed from Prince Albert but could be recuperated elsewhere, Lulham said. There would be parking for six bikes on Sherbrooke and four on Prince Albert. Lighting of the

square would be sufficient for security but “we don’t want it to be over-lit,” St-Arnault said.

While plans had not been finalized, work has tentatively been scheduled for the public square starting late August or September in conjunction with the reconstruction of Prince Albert from Somerville to Sherbrooke, said Public Works engineer Elisa Gaetano.

A much larger project to build the public square and esplanade at Greene and de Maisonneuve has to be completed first, she explained.

Driver shaken after hitting wall

The driver of a car was reported to be shaken but unhurt April 6 after hitting a small landscaping wall on Roslyn south of Sherbrooke at about 12:23 pm, Public Security officials said. She was reported to have reached an agreement with the property owner to pay for any damages. The car had to be towed away when damage to the front bumper prevented it being driven. Public safety officers drove the woman to her residence on Bonavista.



Looking east, the image shows how the proposed public square will extend south on Prince Albert from Sherbrooke to the back of commercial buildings.

Image courtesy of the city of Westmount



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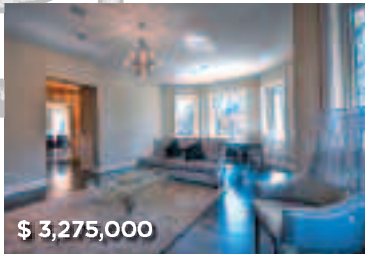
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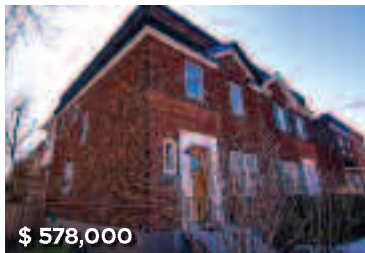
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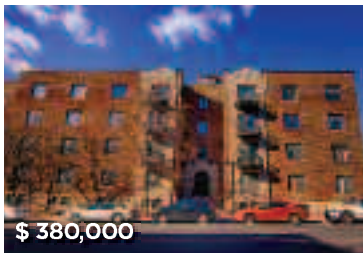
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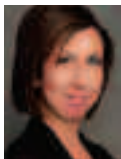
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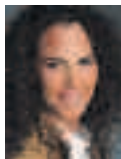
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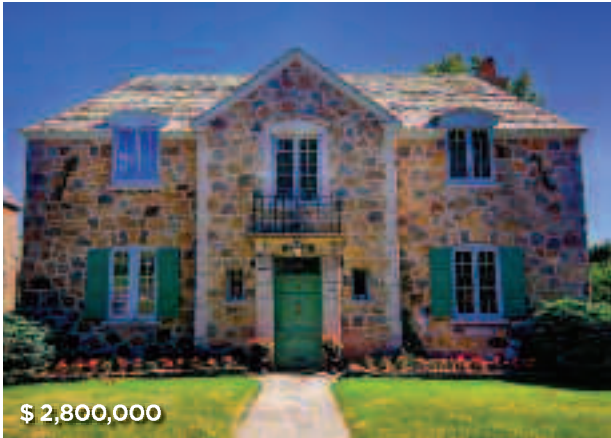


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Mood of the Market

ANDY DODGE, CRA

The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings, which were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in March 2013. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses and prices cannot be made public but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph on p. 19 offers a picture of these trends over time.

Prices moved up but volume was very low in March this year, with three \$2-million-plus sales reported by local realtors as they heralded what is usually the busiest time of year for the local market.

Only nine sales have been logged as accepted offers in March, which typically sees about 20 sales, while last year recorded 16. It is down from 13 sales in February and is the lowest volume for the

month of March since 2001. The three sales over \$2 million – including one over \$3 million – and four more between \$1,200,000 and \$1,710,000 were enough to bring the average of the nine sales to \$1,755,833, even with the two lowest prices below \$900,000.

The average mark-up is 39 percent, the highest ever compared to the 2011 valuation roll, but it is boosted by one sale at well over double the municipal tax value. With that plus other extremes removed, the adjusted price goes down slightly in March but certainly not enough to indicate that the market has turned down.

In considering the first-quarter average for 2013, the value of the “typical” Westmount house is up 5.5 percent compared to the previous quarter and is now at its highest quarterly average ever, basically \$1,550,000.

Three condominium sales were reported in March, bringing the total for the first quarter to six, of which only one involves a share of a triplex; all the others are apartments. With the triplex flat at \$360,000 continued on p. 19

Spring not quite here



An unseasonable storm struck Westmount April 12, dumping about 12 cm of snow, casting a white glow once again onto the city. This robin had to resort to eating berries rather than worms as snow covered up the lawns and park fields, where the birds normally forage. This one was perched on a tree outside the Shaar Hashomayim along Côte St. Antoine.

Photo: Robert J. Galbraith

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City blood drive collects 97 units



City of Westmount employee Phyllis Montgomery gives blood for her first time at Westmount's blood donor clinic held at Victoria Hall April 10. Héma-Québec employee Lola Mirville of Anjou monitors the process. The city confirmed April 15 that 97 units were collected at the Westmount drive, just short of the organization's goal of 100. Héma-Québec says it needs to collect about 400,000 units of blood yearly to meet the needs of hospitals throughout Quebec.

Photo: Robert J. Galbraith

New art gallery to open on Victoria

By MARTIN C. BARRY

A new gallery opening on Friday, April 19 at 344-A Victoria Ave. is helping to turn a short stretch of the street into a veritable artists' row.

DO Studio's owner, Oleg Dergachov, who came to Canada from Ukraine seven years ago, is a painter, sculptor, cartoonist and art teacher.

"It was my dream for many years to have such a gallery," Dergachov told the *Independent*. "Victoria Ave. is a very artistic area. That is why we decided to open on Victoria."

In addition to offering his own creations and those of a select number of other artists, Dergachov will be teaching advanced courses in anatomical drawing. He is currently an anatomy drawing instructor at Gallerie Synesthésie at Place des Arts.

He said he will also be providing workshops at his gallery in formal composition, courses for children in cartooning, 3-D modeling, sculpture and drawing comics, as well as basic drawing instruction for those who want to take their first steps in art.

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Re-formed Equality Party 2.0 hosts info session in NDG

BY MICHAEL MOORE

Under the shadow of ongoing Bill 14 hearings, the Equality Party is trying to rise from the political ashes 24 years after leaping to provincial prominence in the linguistic debate.

“French people can’t educate their kids in English. English parents can’t educate their kids, period,” said interim party president Allan Finkelstein.

“It’s you. It’s us. We let it happen,” he told the crowd.

The freshly-minted Equality Party 2.0, resurrected after a decade-long hiatus, hosted an information meeting on April 8 at the NDG Royal Canadian Legion, near the western edge of Westmount.

“Nothing has changed in the last 40 years. It’s pathetic,” said party leader Mark Bergeron.

“To this day, we feel the economic repercussions of these discriminatory [language] laws ... Laws that are applicable to each and every one of you on the basis on linguistic segregation,” he said to the audience.

The Equality Party originally formed in 1989 after then-premier Robert Bourassa invoked the constitution’s notwithstanding clause to override a Supreme Court of

Canada ruling declaring parts of Bill 101 unconstitutional.

Building on that linguistic upheaval, the party would go on to win four provincial legislature seats in the 1989 election, but couldn’t replicate that success, never winning another seat and eventually folding in 2003.

Finkelstein admits that a decade later, much of the party’s core has abandoned the Quebec linguistic battleground.

“At one point, we had 10,000 members. Some are dead, some moved to Toronto, the rest are burned out after 20 years,” he said.

In order to gain official recognition from the Quebec government, the party needs to either officially register 100 verified members or be represented by 10 riding associations with 25-plus members.

Roughly 40 audience members showed up to the Q&A session at the NDG Legion to meet the party’s leadership, an audience size that drew the ire of disappointed Bergeron.

“Some of the people who I expected to be here love to rant on Facebook, but for some reason they haven’t showed up. I’m not happy,” said Bergeron, angrily.

Finkelstein, a veteran of the party’s first incarnation who returned to Montreal



Equality Party 2.0 leader Mark Bergeron spoke to some 40 audience members at the NDG Royal Canadian Legion on April 8.

after a 20-year absence, adopted a more philosophical outlook on the audience size.

“This is what we’ve got. This is how the

Equality Party started 20 years ago: a handful of dedicated people. Everybody is waiting for the other guy to do something. There is no other guy,” said Finkelstein.

Real estate, cont’d. from p. 16

and one apartment selling for \$700,000, all the others are between \$515,000 and \$585,000.

Mark-up

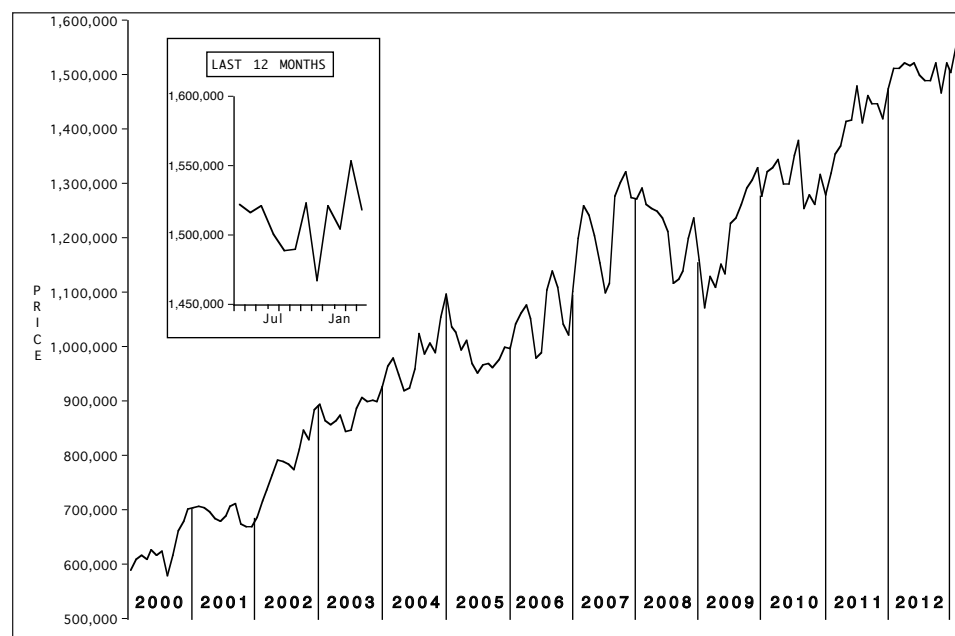
The mark-up over valuation in the quarter is 26 percent compared to 32 percent for one- and two-family dwellings, so the difference is hardly significant.

Three of the nine home sales in March were on the market for less than 10 days and one more less than a month, but the others had been listed for quite some time; this indicates that there is plenty of demand for Westmount real estate, and the problem is supply, at least in the range of \$1 million to \$2 million.

Westmount adjacent

Adjacent Westmount saw four single-family sales: two in eastern NDG, one on Circle Rd. and one on Richelieu Place in downtown Montreal. So far this year there have been eight home sales in adjacent-Westmount, of which three were \$1 million or more.

Average adjusted price of a typical Westmount home by month from Jan. 2000 to March 2013 based on accepted offer dates



Source: Andy Dodge & Assoc. Inc.

Undercover PSO watches lookout

While a public safety officer in an unmarked vehicle was watching two young men at the Summit lookout at 12:15 am April 7, one who appeared to be drinking beer suddenly threw a beer carton into the park below.

Public Security officials said the 20-year-old Montreal resident was ticketed \$37 for littering and asked to put the case in a trash can, which he did. A \$52 ticket was also issued for their car that had been parked illegally.

The two were described as co-operative and no tickets were issued for consuming alcohol. They were given first-time warnings.

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Arena construction

Artists’ renderings no longer necessary

Photos: Westmount Independent



The structures of the two above-ground pavilions are now clearly visible from de Maisonneuve and the bike path, as seen on April 10 looking south.



Most of the dirt in the foreground must be removed for the pool area and pools, as seen from St. Catherine St., taken on April 11 looking north.



The roof is going up on the larger entrance pavilion and, to the right, the shape of the half-underground offices and changing rooms is visible from Lansdowne, as seen on April 11 looking east.



The pools’ changing rooms level was visible on April 10 and useable for two workers at left, but the dirt to the south has to be removed to get it to the same level. Also, the pools themselves have to be excavated one layer lower.



The contribution of the larger pavilion to the southwestern Westmount “skyline” could be seen from the eastern edge of the gated soccer fields on April 15, looking west towards Academy Rd and Lansdowne. Note the MUHC in the far background.

Gasoi to perform at fundraising event



From left, Westmounters Angela Lehrer Vineberg and Dana Caplan Goodman stand with singer/songwriter Jennifer Gasoi April 9. They were preparing for a show on Sunday, April 28 to benefit Auberge Shalom, a centre for abused women and their children. Photo: Westmount Independent

Both mothers of three and long-time Westmounters Angela Lehrer Vineberg and Dana Caplan Goodman organized their first benefit for Auberge Shalom in 2008 in the form of a comedy show for adults. This year, they said they wanted to change the format but continue to raise money for the shelter, which is “a grass-roots organization, where every dollar

counts,” said Caplan Goodman.

Musician Jennifer Gasoi is known in the children’s entertainment industry and has been nominated for a Juno award this year.

The family concert takes place Sunday, April 28 at Oscar Peterson Concert Hall in NDG. Ticket information can be obtained by calling 514.731.0833.

Pool opening, cont’d. from p. 1

from Pomerleau before commenting.

After touring the site April 5 with Councillor Patrick Martin, Trent said he found it “truly impressive to see just how much of the area has been opened up” by building the two rinks below ground.

In a letter to swimmers, Martin stated that the pool changing rooms and wash-rooms for families and women as well as the first-aid room were “well advanced.” Drainage pipes for showers and other facilities were in place though not yet connected to the sewer. The pouring of concrete for the men’s changing room was expected soon.

In other work, the now fully enclosed structure was ready for the installation of French drains. Work had begun on the installation of heating, ventilation and air-conditioning ducts. The framework for the entrance pavilion had also been installed (see photos April 9, p. 7 and 22).

Chihuahua has happy homecoming

A Westmount Chihuahua running around alone on Summit Circle April 4 was rescued just after 10 pm by two women who called Public Security. Once the small dog was picked up from the women, officials said, it was kept at the station in hopes the owner would call looking for it since it wore no identification tags.

At 1 am, however, an observant officer patrolling on the summit happened to spot a lost-dog notice on a pole and the dog was linked up with its owner. The woman, who lives on Sherbrooke, reported the dog had run off during a walk in the area earlier that night and that she had just posted the notice. She was advised to keep the dog’s licence on the collar.

Left in squealing Lamborghini

A resident of Lansdowne north of Sherbrooke called Public Security April 6 at 12:39 am to report four men talking loudly on the street. Officers told them about the complaint and two left in a Mercedes.

The others drove off in a Lamborghini, tires squealing, Public Security officials said.

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More than 10 AA meetings in Westmount

Documentary on AA founder screened at Victoria Hall

By MICHAEL MOORE

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) hosted a screening of *Bill W.*, a 2012 documentary on the alcoholism recovery group’s founder, William Griffith Wilson, for the organization’s members and the public on April 6 at Victoria Hall.

“People will be able to take away what it means to be sober and take it one day at a time,” said Michael Olson, who helped organize the screening, to the *Independent* before the film started. “Everybody has their struggles when becoming sober, but if you stick with it, everything will work out.”

An audience of roughly 200 people turned out to AA’s public information evening to view the feature-length documentary, which depicts Wilson’s battle with alcoholism and his subsequent creation of the international addiction assistance group. The documentary’s title

shortens Wilson’s name to his commonly used nickname, Bill W., an adherence to the group’s twelfth tradition of anonymity.

Unlike the group’s closed-door recovery sessions, the open-to-all film screening was publicized and hosted by AA’s public information department to increase awareness about the group in the community.

“Everybody is welcome to come watch as long as they protect our anonymity,” said Olson, a former Westmount resident, before the event.

According to Olson, the documentary had previously been screened at a Park Ave. location, but after many members were unable to attend, the group rescheduled in Westmount.

“There are between 10 and 15 AA meetings held in Westmount locations a week, and people wanted to do the movie here,” he explained.



Some 200 people attended the screening of *Bill W.* on April 6 at Victoria Hall.

Loud party-goers dispersed on Strathcona

Public safety officers and police were called April 6 to help disperse a noisy crowd of young party-goers leaving a house on Strathcona at 2:55 am, Public Security officials said. A neighbour reported the noise, and officers found about 25 guests in the throes of departing. The host was described as “intoxicated and sleeping.”

Police were called and the area was cleared by 3:25 am as the guests left in taxis. It was the second time in recent weeks that intervention was required after a house party. A crowd of some 60-80 rowdy teens was reported to have caused a commotion March 22 after a house party on Rosemount (see April 2, p. 10).

Man ducks in and out on Arlington Lane

It was during heavy rain that a public safety officer working under cover at 1:47 am April 9 spotted a man in Arlington Lane repeatedly disappearing into private properties, Public Security officials said. While he was not seen to be involved in criminal activity, his behaviour was suspicious and police were called. The man was described as uncooperative during questioning and public safety officers were


asked to watch out for him again and report future incidents. He was aged about 40 and living in the Rosemount district.

Referring to several recent incidents involving people acting in suspicious ways, assistant Public Security director Greg McBain said, “We’re picking them out of laneways, off roofs and private property so hopefully they won’t return.”

McCall Smith speaks to sold-out crowd



Author Alexander McCall Smith spoke to a standing-room only crowd at Victoria Hall on April 9 about his series of books on detective Isabel Dalhousie. The latest in the series is called *The Uncommon Appeal of Clouds*.
Photo courtesy of The Westmount Public Library



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Persephone's 'Lost' plays twice at Vic Hall



The one-woman play "Lost: A Memoir" by Cathy Ostlere and Dennis Garnhum was performed at Victoria Hall April 13 and 14. It was directed by Christopher Moore. Ostlere (played by actress Karine Dion) travels to Madeira in search of her brother David, who was lost at sea. This emotional play is based on the poems and a true story authored by Ostlere herself. Her brother set sail from Ireland, heading for Madeira in August 1995 in a boat named Mugwump. He and his fiancée Sarah were never seen nor heard from again. The photograph in the background is the ship that Ostlere sailed on during her adventurous times before David's mishap. The play was presented by Persephone Productions and continues until Sunday, April 21 at L'Espace 4001 on Berri.

Photo: Ralph Thompson

Tkalec gets 'Spinning for ALS' event going for 5th year



Diane Tkalec, April 12.

Westmounter Diane Tkalec is heading up her fifth annual fundraising and awareness event for ALS, a neuro-degenerative disease.

On Saturday, April 20 at Midtown Le Sporting Club Sanctuaire, people can participate in a spinning event for as long as up to three hours. They must raise \$125 to participate, \$300 for teams or \$50 for children. There is also a silent auction, which closes that day.

Tkalec spearheaded the event five years ago following the loss of her 49-year-old husband, a physician specialist and triathlete to ALS. She said there needs to be more awareness about this disease that cannot ini-

tially be detected through a blood test and can lead to very quick deaths in some cases.

She said hopes her efforts at raising money for the ALS Society of Quebec will lead to improving the quality of life for patients and their families and promoting research into what causes the disease. Some 90 percent of cases are sporadic, which means the medical community has no idea how the patient got the disease, she said.

For more information on the event, contact Tkalec at dianetkalec@sympatico.ca or 514.947.9226.

City's 'spring soirée' back on after 3-year hiatus, tickets on sale April 22

Tickets go on sale April 22 at 4:30 pm at Victoria Hall for the "Scheherazade – une Soirée au Souk," a fundraiser for the Westmount recreation centre taking place May 31. The cost is \$140 per person. More information can be found at www.wrc2013camaign.com or by calling Community Events at 514.989.5226.

Committee members are Sada Reddy (chair), Helen Campbell, Sue Jameson, Janet Faith, Rosalind Davis, Andrew Sofin, Jillian Barnes, Virginia Elliott, Nicole Forbes, Alison Fripp and Bunny Berke.

Comin' Up

MONDAY, APRIL 15

City council meeting, 5 pm at city hall.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

- "The Art of Tabla Solo in the Benares (Varanasi)" with musician Shawn Mativetsky, 7 p at the Westmount Public Library. Register at the circulation desk or call 514.989.5299.

- Michael Tritt reviews *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes, 9:30 am for coffee and pastry, 10 a, for review at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom. Cost: \$8.

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

"Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, first synagogue in Westmount," presented by Victor Goldbloom, 7 pm to 9 pm at the

Westmount Public Library. Part of the Westmount Historical Association lecture series. Admission free for members; non-members \$5 at door. Info: 514. 989.5510.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

Seraphim choir performs "Music of the great poets," as part of the city of Westmount's Sunday concerts, 2 pm at the Gallery at Victoria Hall. Tickets: \$12, advance tickets \$10. Refreshments served.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

Westmount Youth Orchestra performs a symphony orchestra "Voyage through time and space: The music of Beethoven, Brahms, Prokofiev and Holst," 7:30 pm at Victoria Hall. Tickets: adult \$10' free for

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9 Lives
LYSANNE FOWLER

This is our second column presenting cats saved from a hoarding nightmare by the SPCA and offered for adoption at the SPCA Annexe.



Phoenix



Hesse

A hoarding situation doesn't look bad when it starts out. Maybe a few cats are not sterilized, they have kittens and this new group is then added to the hoarder's collection, which they believe they are saving from abandonment.

The problem is that there are just too many cats for this person to care for properly.

The SPCA is often alerted to such situations and takes the legal steps to remove the cats from hoarders and put them up for adoption.

So, this week, we would like to present two more cats for you to consider for adoption.

Hesse and Phoenix are a study in contrasts of stunning black and white. Hesse is a dramatic black long-haired portrait of elegance. His golden eyes are pensive and kind. He is reserved and sweet, needing affection to be brought out of his shell.

In contrast, we have Phoenix: an adorable short-haired white-as-snow beauty with sky light-blue eyes and an adorable pink nose, ears and toes. He's a wonderful big fellow, who moves slowly and quietly.

They are both about two years old, in-noculated and neutered. They are healthy and ready to be re-homed in families in our neighbourhood.

For more information on Hesse and Phoenix, please contact Summer at cyposia@gmail.com or Marilyn at adoptions.spc@gmail.com – both with the Annexe. If you would like to drop by, it is located at 7314 Mountain Sights (south of Jean Talon) and is open from 11 am to 5 pm everyday.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

Local classifieds

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Westmounters party with Trump in Boca Raton



Social Notes from Westmount and Beyond

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Westmounters happily left Montreal's chilly spring weather to attend the Unicorn Children's Foundation (UCF) Buddha Ball at Mar-a-Lago Club in sunny (and warm) Boca Raton, Florida.

The sold-out society event on March 16 had ticket prices of \$500, \$1,000 and \$1,500. Gala chairs **Donald Trump**, **Cindi Krost** (heir to Oscar Tucci's Delmonico Restaurant) and Oscar's grandson **Max Tucci** welcomed guests along with *CSI: Miami's* **Eva La Rue**. (This is the TV show where the lady detectives wear stilettos and stylish white pants as they rush about investigating crime scenes.)

UCF executive board member Westmounter **Valeria Rosenbloom** attended with her husband **Mike**. Also in attendance was her son, UCF founder **Mark Rosenbloom**, along with his wife **MaryLynne**.

Other Westmounters noted were **Emmanuelle** and **Alvin Segal**, **Lou Goldberg**, **Linda** and **Terry Smith** and former Westmounters **Elisabeth** and **Robert Dalfen**.



From left: Michael and Valeria Rosenbloom, and Terry Smith.



MaryLynne Rosenbloom and Lou Goldberg.

Photos courtesy of Unicorn Children's Foundation

The award-winning chefs of the Mar-a-Lago Club created a sushi/seafood array with enormous shrimp. After a surf-and-turf din- *continued on p. 26*



Elisabeth Dalfen looks over the shoulders of Emmanuelle and Alvin Segal.

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Social Notes, cont'd. from p. 25

ner, dessert was a gold leaf Buddha made of chocolate. Almost everyone worked off dinner, moving enthusiastically to the get-up-and-dance music of Xavier Lewis and ELEW.

Later in the evening DJ Lena spun sexy sounds around the pool. Outdoors. (Sigh.) The Good Humour Truck parked nearby added a fun touch.

The ball raised over \$500,000, which will support UCF's continued efforts, including the opening of Unicorn Village Academy in Boca Raton this fall. The specialized high school will meet the needs of adolescents 14 and 22 years of age who have been diagnosed with some form of

neurodevelopmental disorder. UCF is an international non-profit organization whose mission is to transform the quality of life of individuals with neurodiverse challenges through the support of education, awareness, and research initiatives.

Back in Montreal, to raise funds for UCF and the Miriam Foundation, on April 21 Westmounter **Rhoda Vineberg** will co-chair an *Alice in Wonderland* high tea with **Stephanie Hoolahan**, along with Westmount committee members **Rona Davis**, **Nan Lassner** and **Naomi Bissell** at the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Valeria Rosenbloom will be honorary chair.



Linda Smith and Donald Trump.

Montreal lawyer and businessman, Michael Kastner, has donated One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) to support Save the Children Canada through the auspices of the Jewish Community Foundation in honour of the late Bernard Roy, Q.C., Ad.E. The monies shall be used to fund the distribution of lifesaving vaccines and/or other treatments to combat illnesses such as, but not limited to, tuberculosis and diarrhea, for vulnerable children living in developing countries, often where there is conflict as well as poverty.

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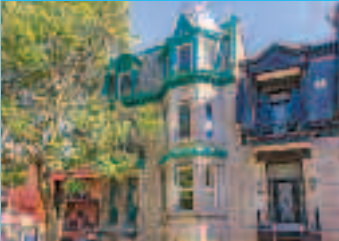
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