

*Applies to driveways only*

## City clarifies interim toleration of night-time snow removal

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

In the wake of opposition to the city's overnight prohibition on snow removal by private contractors, the city has instituted a moratorium on enforcement of the time restriction on the clearing of driveways by contractors or residents, Public Security officials said. The toleration is to remain in effect until further notice.

The clearing of parking lots, however, will still not be tolerated between 11 pm and 5 am since they typically require heavy

equipment that use beepers when backing up.

The issue of relaxing the times of overnight snow clearing was raised January 12 at the second consecutive council meeting.

Residents said it was safer and more efficient to have the work done before the morning rush-hour. Others, however, have complained about noise overnight, especially beepers on heavy equipment used in large parking lots.

"It's totally ridiculous," .....  
said Carole Gilman of ..... continued on p. 18

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Social Notes by V. REDGRAVE p. 16

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## Activities brochure to go out in 2 weeks

## Registration going online, and earlier for Sports & Rec.

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Registration for Sports and Recreation activities is going online for the first time and also getting a much earlier jump on spring than usual. The changes were announced at the council meeting January 12 by Councillor Rosalind Davis.

The program brochure for spring and summer sign-up is to arrive at homes the first week of February for registration

opening February 16, she said.

"We're very excited about the online innovation," she said the next day. "It's something that's been requested for quite a while."

While residents will no longer need to line up, they will have to go to the Sports and Recreation office at the Westmount recreation centre to show proof of residency and obtain a user-name password. "This is .....  
continued on p. 17

## Fire on a freezing night



Photo: Ralph Thompson

A fire broke out in a kitchen at 4633 Sherbrooke the evening of January 13. "The fire was in a kitchen above my apartment," said Sharon Brien, a tenant in the basement unit. "I was very impressed – the firemen arrived very quickly." She said water from the fire hoses was "pouring through my ceiling, but the firemen put covers over a lot of my stuff. They did a great job." See story, p. 3.

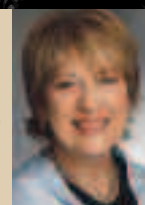
Unrest at the WMA, see story  
p. 18.

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# \$300,000 kitchen fire sends woman to hospital from house on Sherbrooke

*Victoria Hall acts as temporary shelter*

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Two families were temporarily sheltered at Victoria Hall the evening of January 13 when a kitchen fire at 4633 Sherbrooke drove them from their homes, Public Security officials said.

A 49-year-old woman was treated for smoke inhalation and taken to hospital as a preventive measure but her two sons and a friend were not injured. Neither were a tenant and guest in a basement apartment at 4633A Sherbrooke St.

The fire was caused by cooking left unattended on the stove, said Julie Gascon of Montreal fire department communications. Because the kitchen is located on the second storey of the single-family home, the fire was contained to that floor.

Initial estimates, including water damage to lower floors, was estimated at \$300,000, she said.

No signs of a smoke detector could be found because the ceiling was too badly damaged, she said.

The fire broke out in the two-storey home just west of Arlington around 8 pm, said Public Security director Greg McBain. He was notified by the fire department of the call to that location at 8:02 pm.

Meanwhile, Public Security sergeant Yook Wong came across the fire while patrolling at 8:09 pm just after fire trucks

had arrived and invited the displaced residents into Victoria Hall, where they were given coffee until relocated to friends.

## On roof quickly

"The fire department was on the roof very quickly," said Gary Brodtkin, who was visiting the basement apartment at the time. "There was good Westmount coverage from police, Public Security and the fire department. They all did a good job. It was well orchestrated."

The fire was already out when McBain said he arrived at the scene about 9:30 pm. "There was a considerable amount of water on the main floor of the house and in the basement apartment," he said.

"The place was ruined," Brodtkin said. "The walls were all torn down."

Nigel Goddard of Irvine Ave., who was in the area at 8:49 pm, said there was no sign of flames at that time but he noticed "a very strong acrid odour" of burning plastic that had also permeated into the Westmount Y located nearby on the north-east corner of Sherbrooke and Arlington.

Sherbrooke was closed to traffic between Lansdowne and Strathcona by public safety officers until the arrival of police, who took over. It was reopened around 11 pm.

*See photo, p. 1.*

# Martin continues to oppose Council votes to retain PAC councillors on Demo committee

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Over the continued opposition of Councillor Patrick Martin, city council voted January 12 to extend the terms of three councillors on the Demolition committee.

For the second time in a little over a year, Martin voted against choosing two council members who also sit on the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). This design review committee, which also comprises professional architects, makes recommendations to the Demolition committee.

"I think it's an inherent conflict of interest," he said. His was the only "No" vote.

Two of the three councillors re-appointed to the Demolition committee were its chair, Cynthia Lulham (an alternative representative on the PAC and its former chairperson) and current PAC chair Theodora Samiotis. The third member, Victor Drury, has no PAC involvement.

Mayor Peter Trent, who did not vote, countered Martin's concerns saying he believed it was important to have someone on the Demolition committee from the PAC who would be "familiar" with the file being considered. He also said people who don't like a decision by the Demolition committee can appeal it to the city council.

Samiotis also said, "Let's not forget the PAC recommendations can be changed after the demolition hearing" when various views or concerns have been expressed.

## Questioning poor governance not personal integrity

Martin later told the *Independent* he was

questioning the structure of the Demolition committee as being "poor governance" but "not the integrity of the individuals."

He thought it was "a slippery slope" for the future to have such a "concentration of power" in the hands of the PAC and its architects.

Sometimes, he said, the same architects who seek approval for their projects from the PAC also sit on the PAC themselves as its professional advisors even though they recuse themselves when their projects are considered. In turn, the PAC recommends projects requiring some demolition to the council's Demolition committee whose majority now comprises councillors also sitting on the PAC.

"It's putting the power in the same hands," he said. "You can't sit on both sides of the table."

He said he has had neighbours "tell me they're hiring an architect who sits on the PAC because they know how to get the plan approved. That may be one thing when it comes to a house or a relatively small project. But it's another when it could involve a \$250-million development."

In this regard, he said, he was thinking ahead to the opportunity for development on St. Catherine St. following the recent rezoning of its south side east of Gladstone "as recommended by PAC."

## Naming outside architects

According to Trent, the reason the city has been wanting to be allowed to extend member-

*continued on p. 15*

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## Council announces WRC stats after one year

## Energy savings reach \$14.6K, final \$1.2M payment to Pomerleau approved

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After its first year of operation, the Westmount recreation centre (WRC) has spent \$14,611 less in energy costs than the old arena and pool in 2011, their last year of existence.

In fact, announced Councillor Patrick Martin at the council meeting January 12, the new, much larger facility has cost \$217,800 to heat, cool and operate in 2014. This compares to \$232,411 spent on the old arena and pool.

In his monthly updates on the WRC, Martin said that all energy costs related to the new building, its two rinks and pool were electrical in nature except for \$178 in natural gas to operate the old back-up Zamboni. This led to a wave of laughter in the council chamber.

The savings provided “proof” of the recent \$500,000 energy-savings award from Hydro Quebec, he explained.

At the meeting, council subsequently approved the payment of close to \$1 mil-

lion in remaining construction “hold-backs” to Pomerleau along with a settlement amount of \$272,717, excluding taxes (see story January 13, p. 1). Including applicable taxes, this came to \$1,264,725 “as a complete and final payment.”

As earlier reported, some \$3 million in decontamination costs disputed by the city will be “a separate claim by the city,” he said. The city had originally budgetted \$1 million for this purpose, a cost to be borne by the city, not Pomerleau. Once work got under way, it was disclosed these might reach \$2 million more in the “worst case scenario” (see June 4, 2013, p. 4).

### Energy costs explained

Breaking down the comparative energy costs just received from Hydro Westmount, Martin said the old arena and its building consumed \$83,006 in electricity and \$103,211 in natural gas. The pool added another \$46,193 for natural gas.

The new WRC pool uses heat extracted from the cooling of the rinks. It holds 45

percent more water than the former pool, he said.

Martin later said the energy savings exceeded his expectations. He attributed some of them to a “last-minute” decision to install LED lighting over the rinks. This type of light beaming down on the rinks all day generates little of the ice melting effect typically experienced from traditional rink lighting.

At the time of their installation, it was stated that the savings generated by the LED lights would “far out-weigh their cost” (see story September 10, 2013, p. 10).

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***Santa Comes To Greene Avenue!***



For the third year, the RE/MAX elves provided close to 40 Santa bags full of new toys for the Sun Youth Toy Drive. The combined efforts of the three offices of RE/MAX Action (Westmount, NDG and LaSalle) and the owner's encouragement are responsible for this amazing result, said Tania Kalecheff, the organizer of the event. It took two overflowing sleds to deliver the loot to Sun Youth, just in time for Christmas.

**Thank you to everyone who participated!**



# Target pull-out leaves empty spot in Alexis Nihon

BY MICHAEL MOORE

After two floundering years in Canada, US-based retailer Target announced on January 15 it will be closing all 133 of its stores in the country this spring, including its Place Alexis Nihon location.

The retail giant stormed into Canada in 2011, snapping up the leases of 220 Zellers stores across the country in a \$1.8-billion deal with the intention of converting most to Targets. After a \$10-million renovation, the Metro-level Target Alexis Nihon was among an initial wave of 18 stores opened in 2013.

However, the response from Canadian shoppers was icy, at best.

The expansion reportedly cost the chain \$1 billion in its first year, and management was “unable to find a realistic scenario that would get Target Canada to profitability until at least 2021,” said Target Corporation chair and CEO Brian Cornell in a press release.

Target will begin a court-supervised liquidation process in coming months before it closes its doors, leaving Alexis Nihon likely searching for a third tenant for the 110,000 square-foot location in the last four years.

A message left with Guy Charron, vice president and head of retail operations for Alexis Nihon management company Cominar, was not returned.

## Westmount Square now locking plaza after 9:30 pm

BY MICHAEL MOORE

The wardens of Westmount Square have begun locking the mall’s plaza every night at 9:30 pm in an attempt to improve security after stores have closed.

The nightly lock-downs, which last until 5:30 am the following morning, were introduced in mid-December after two years of planning. A focus group had discussed the best time, eventually moving from the originally proposed 8:30 pm closing to 9 pm and finally 9:30 pm.

The Greene Ave. entrance will remain open 24 hours a day.

Under the new closing hours, the mall management is attempting to accomplish three goals, according to general manager Patrick English: Reduce foot traffic, exert more control over the premises after stores close and ensure the safety of tenants living in the residential tower.

Westmount Square only employs three night-time security guards, which made it difficult to keep an eye on the whole premises, according to English.

“We don’t always have the cameras to catch everything that is going on,” he said.

Pedestrians who have a “legitimate” reason for being on site, such as passing through to the Metro, will still be able to access the plaza. The mall’s doors are equipped with intercoms, allowing individuals to speak to a security guard in the control booth who can remotely unlock the door.

“It is always going to be open if you have a valid reason for being in the mall. If it’s raining out or very cold and you want to access the Metro from the Wood or St. Catherine entrances, we aren’t going to make you walk around [to the Greene entrance],” said English.

“It’s important that we have good relations between the mall and people living in the area. We want to be good neighbours.”

Those who have don’t have a legitimate explanation for being inside won’t be buzzed in by the guard.

“If you don’t [have a valid reason] – for example, if you want to just sit in the mall with your friend at 10 pm – then you won’t be let in,” he said.

English admitted he had received calls from neighbours and the city complaining about the new measures. However, a month in, the evening lock-down has “reached [its] goals so far,” he said.

## Pair asked to leave Roslyn schoolyard

A man and woman were found consuming alcohol January 11 in the Roslyn schoolyard at 8:55 pm, Public Security officials said. A strong odour of marijuana was also noticed. Patrollers instructed them to throw the substance in a garbage container and leave. They were described as aged 20, living in Montreal and St. Foy.

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## YES, DO REMOVE SNOW CLEARING RESTRICTIONS

Well said, Councillor [Patrick] Martin, in your piece in the *Independent* (“Snow clearing rules need to be changed,” January 13, p. 7). I must say that it wasn’t until this whole matter came up recently that I was aware of the absurd by-law that snow clearing can only take place between 7 am and 11 pm. I don’t know when this by-law was enacted but I’m sure I can remember being disturbed at 2 or 3 am by snow clearing and thinking, satisfyingly, that at least I’d be able to get my car out in the morning.

As you say, people want peace and quiet during the night and yet they want the snow cleared so they can move around in the morning. Well, we can’t have it both ways.

Surely the obvious time to clear the snow is during the night when there’s relatively little traffic and the job can be done in a third or half the time it would otherwise take during the day.

By all means, let’s have a by-law that’s practical, not one that hampers contractors, both private and city, when doing their jobs. And yes, rescind and/or refund

the fines that have been levied, and let’s get rid of the snow-clearing time restrictions.

WILFRID DE FREITAS, KITCHENER AVE.

## SNOW PLOW SOUND ‘MUSIC TO EARS’

Our thanks to city councillor Patrick Martin for his position on the anachronistic rules for snow clearing.

I would like to add one further point: My wife and I are in our mid-eighties and wish to remain in our home of the past 52 years. If the snow is not taken care of, we are prisoners in our home.

The sound of snow plows, at any hour, is, indeed, music to our ears.

SAMUEL FREEDMAN, MURRAY HILL

## LOOK TO ‘RYAN STANDARD’ FOR MUHC NOISE ISSUE

Residents of Burton and York should familiarize themselves with the “Law of Nuisances” and take note that the Quebec system for class action litigation can provide financial aid for people who have reason to initiate a class action lawsuit.

An application is submitted to the

“Fonds d’aide aux recours collectifs” for funding, which can cover most of the lawyers’ fees and court costs. The plaintiffs must reimburse the fund out of the award for damages if their lawsuit is successful.

Legal precedent would indicate that continuous, very objectionable noise such as that projected from the new MUHC super-hospital complex into their area of Westmount might well qualify as a nuisance when evaluated by a set of recognized objective criteria known as the “Ryan Standard” (Ryan v. City of Victoria).

Under both Canadian and Quebec jurisprudence, the Ryan Standard for nuisances may take precedence over all other less stringent limiting criteria. Therefore, perpetrators of a legally recognized nuisance are faced with potential liability to pay court-ordered damages and also be required to eliminate the nuisance, even if that nuisance does not contravene any legislated environmental regulations or municipal by-laws.

JOHN DOREY, VICTORIA AVE.

## OPEN LETTER FROM RESIGNING WMA BOARD MEMBER

*This letter was sent to Peter Starr, as president of the Westmount Municipal Association (WMA), and the secretary Patricia Dumais after Jean-Pierre Picard resigned and before Starr himself resigned. See story p. 18.*

In view of perceived lack of credibility and relevance, the WMA spent most of 2014 reviewing its governance and role.

Unfortunately it could not reach consensus on the importance of solidarity amongst board members.

In order to be effective, the WMA must rely on its credibility and support of its members. In recent years, the membership continuously declined, a clear sign that Westmounters do not see its usefulness and relevance.

The time and needs have changed, the advent of website and social media communication tools, the many one-agenda or purpose-parallel municipal organizations is another indication that WMA must question its pertinence. Unless it reinvents itself with proper values it is doomed to disappear in spite or because of its glorious past.

If board members only used the WMA to foster their individual ideas, as is the case for some, it only can fail. It is too bad this is how the WMA is currently perceived by the city administration.

To some, personal views and individual

agenda matter more than the overall good of the organization. They believe the WMA should be an activist group, assuming the city administration is in bad faith and see themselves as the opposition to city council. In spite of my efforts I do not see how I can influence the current WMA Board to change course, tonight’s meeting confirmed my conclusion. This is totally contrary to my values and beliefs and I cannot continue to be part of this organization. This is why I submit my resignation, effective immediately.

JEAN-PIERRE PICARD, FORMER BOARD MEMBER OF THE WMA AND PAST PRESIDENT

## OPEN LETTER TO ALEXIS NIHON

Hundreds if not thousands of people access daily the Alexis Nihon mall by the Atwater entrance. Of those coming and going, many are elderly, infirm or with their hands full. Nonetheless they are compelled, if crossing Atwater, to navigate a solid sheet of jagged and two-inch thick ice.

Directly across Atwater, the AMC clears to the pavement at least 10 feet of their frontage right after a snowfall.

Does the mall not consider it a sufficient basis for taking responsibility for the safety and well being of its own customers/shoppers, especially those who are at greater risk because of age or health?

If cost is an impediment to taking on this task, (despite the money these people spend with your merchants), then you might consider it under the heading of simple courtesy, plus being “bon père de famille” towards the community.

DAVID ENGELS, OLIVIER AVE.

## THANKS FOR RETURNING PURSE TO Y

I would like to thank the thoughtful lady who found my little leather black purse containing my Westmount Y membership card, gym gloves and a lock, and made the effort to bring it to the Y.

I immensely appreciate your kindness, and wish I knew who you are so that I could thank you personally.

SORYL ROSENBERG, COTE ST. ANTOINE RD.

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# City details \$12 million of capital works projects this year

## Prince Albert 'north' tops list of road work

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After reconstruction of Prince Albert Ave. south of Sherbrooke over the last two years, residents to the north are to have their portion redone this year.

And the project, including new water and electrical lines, will eat up well over \$1 million of the city's \$12.2-million capital works budget, whose details were released after its adoption December 15.

Among other highlights are the construction of the Westmount Park dog run, relocation of a portion of the bike path through the park and resurfacing of the tennis courts at the Westmount Athletic Grounds. A splash pad is also to be installed in Prince Albert Park and work is to start on the restoration of Summit Woods (see story June 24, 2014, p. 8).

In all, \$2.6 million is proposed for work on roads and sidewalks, \$1 million for municipal buildings, and \$1.8 million on water main replacement and sewer rehab.

A total of \$700,000 is to be spent on parks, \$500,000 on new vehicles, \$350,000 on IT, close to \$600,000 on miscellaneous projects and \$2.5 million on various Hydro Westmount projects.

The work is up over last year by about \$1 million and counts on the city receiving some \$1.5 million in government subsidies to offset the cost. The remainder would be funded by allocations from the operating budget along with appropriations from surplus and borrowing through loan by-laws.

"While I've been saying the city hasn't been spending enough on our aging infrastructure, it's not just a matter of money," said Councillor Patrick Martin commissioner of Public Works. "I think

it's scandalous that it's taken so long to get around to repairing the ceiling in the concert hall.

"The question is, if we do more, can the size of the current staff handle the additional planning, preparation of tenders and project supervision?"

### Upgrading buildings

The concert hall ceiling is among some of the work proposed for municipal buildings this year along with the final phase of work to restore the exterior of Victoria Hall. Interior columns of the library are also to undergo repair along with work at Centre Greene (also owned by the city and rented to the community centre), interior repairs to the comfort station in King George (Murray) Park and restoration of the greenhouses.

Included in some of the special capital works projects are drainage improvements and landscaping at the conservatory court yard, repairs to the Roslyn steps and the start of the installation of GPS systems in vehicles.

### Street repaving

In addition to the complete reconstruction of Prince Albert from Sherbrooke to Côte St. Antoine, the following streets are listed for asphalt repaving:

- Montrose (Mountain to Ramezay),
- Shorncliffe,
- Metcalfe (Sherbrooke to Côte St. Antoine),
- Bellevue,
- St. Catherine (Park Place to Metcalfe).

### Sidewalk reconstruction

Reconstruction of sidewalks is planned for:

- Hillside (south side deferred from 2014),
- Shorncliffe (Roxborough to Oakland),
- Argyle (Côte St. Antoine to Montrose),
- St. Catherine (Park Place to Kensington),
- Metcalfe (Sherbrooke to Côte St. Antoine),
- Bellevue (first turn to Sunnyside),
- Upper Belmont (Devon to Edgemoor),
- Academy Rd.,
- Various concrete crosswalks.

The rehabilitation of water mains is to take place on:

- Westmount Ave. (Claremont to Lansdowne),
- Bethune,
- Prince Albert (Sherbrooke to Côte St. Antoine),
- Glen and St. Catherine sewer deviation deferred from 2014.

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# Gazette's 'reimagining' explained 'Flavia de Luce' series author pays visit to library



Lucinda Chodan, editor-in-chief of the Montreal Gazette held up a 1943 copy of the Montreal Daily Star and compared its thickness to a present day, much thinner copy of the Gazette. It prints an average of 85,000 copies of its newspaper Monday through Saturday, and now also has customized content on its website, and for smartphones and tablets.

By JOANNE PENHALE

The *Montreal Gazette's* editor-in-chief Lucinda Chodan addressed an audience of more than 40 at the Atwater Library on January 15. Her presentation included a short description of the 237-year-old paper's founding, and some of the major technological changes that have impacted both readership and how the company delivers its news and information.

She said the internet has been the greatest disruption to the newspaper. "It has led us to re-examine every single thing we do," she said. "In order for us to ensure our long-term sustainability, we need to be

where readers are."

Chodan outlined how the *Gazette* now customizes its content for different demographics on a variety of platforms, including smartphones, tablets, its website, and its print edition. The newspaper also has a presence on social media, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. "We continue to explore where readers are going so that we can be there for them," she said.

Chodan was deputy editor at the *Gazette* between 1984 and 2004, and after working at the *Victoria Times Colonist* and *Edmonton Journal*, she returned to the *Gazette* in September 2013.

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Although there's no question about the success of Canadian mystery writer Alan Bradley's seven novels, his readers sometimes wonder how the former broadcast systems engineer acquired such an intricate knowledge of chemistry.

After addressing a room full of fans at the Westmount Public Library on January 12, Bradley – whose first book, *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*, introduced 11-year-old amateur sleuth Flavia de Luce – was coy about his relationship with the fictional heroine.

Responding to a question about what sort of background he had in chemistry, Bradley silently replied by holding up his thumb and forefinger in the shape of a zero, much to the amusement of the largely female audience.

While also maintaining that he never receives editorial help with science, he said credit in that department belongs to the main protagonist of his novels. "Actually, I got chopped out of chemistry," Bradley said, recalling his days in high school.

He spoke convincingly of Flavia de Luce, almost as though he actually believes she's a real person. If that's actually not the case, then Bradley was very good at creating the impression.

"Flavia arrives complete with this burning enthusiasm for chemistry, and she

seems to know everything," he said. "She picks out things that are locally available and creates an antidote for cyanide poisoning."

Recounting how he ended up deciding on a name for his lead character, Bradley (who has lived in various parts of Canada, most recently in Kelowna, BC) said it happened over a period of months as he was out for an early-morning walk.

While silently conversing with his fictional creation about what name she might prefer, followed each time by a negative response, he finally made the right suggestion. He said he knew by her silence that she approved of Flavia de Luce. With that out of the way, Bradley was finally able to get down to writing *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*, which was published when he was 69.

As a youth, Bradley's taste in reading material tended to be eccentric. "I found one book called *The History of Funeral Direction*," he said at one point, recalling his delight after discovering the volume in his home town's public library.

While his six previous books were set in England, the seventh, *As Chimney Sweepers Come to Dust* (which has just been published by Random House) takes place in Canada. His appearance at Westmount Public Library was held in collaboration with the Paragraphe book store.



Mystery writer Alan Bradley (with Westmount Public Library assistant director Donna Lach and book publicist Hank Schaffer in the background) addresses an audience at the library on January 12.

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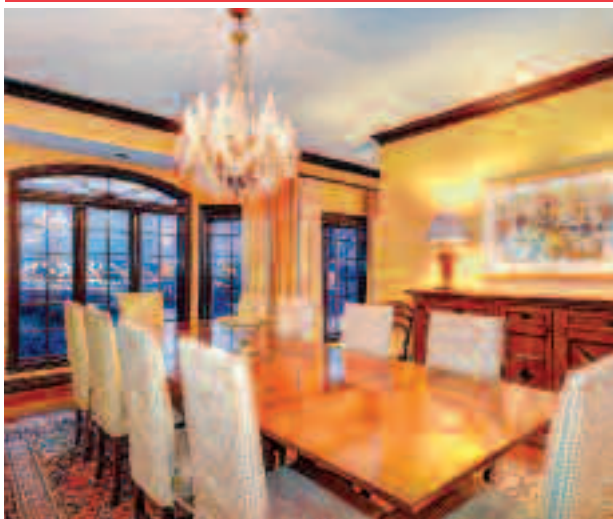
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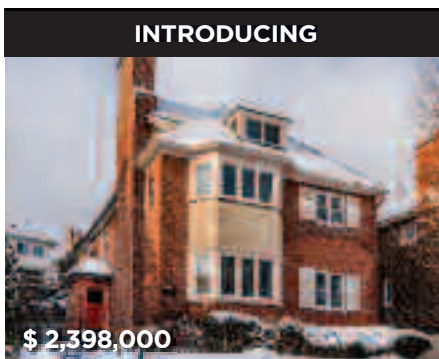
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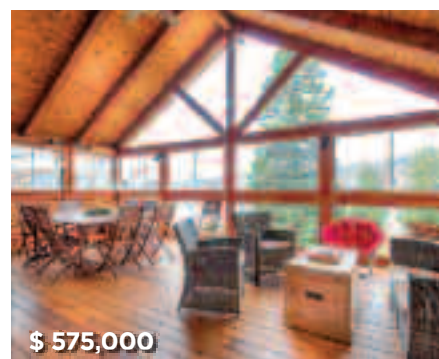
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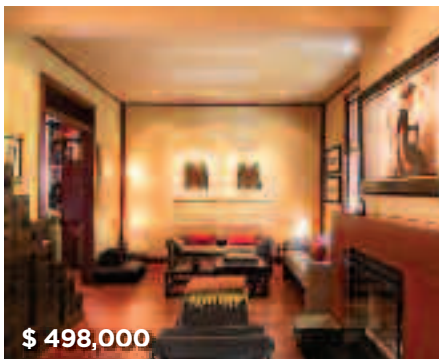
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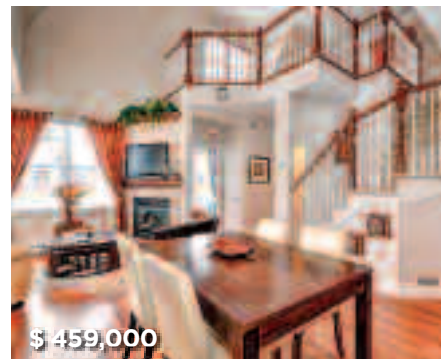
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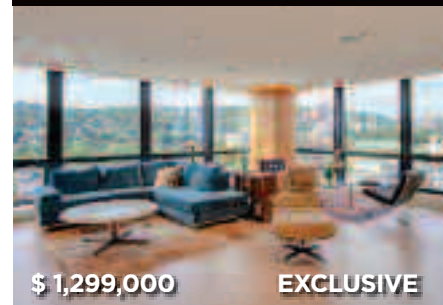
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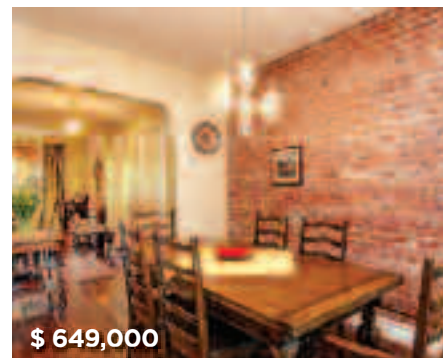
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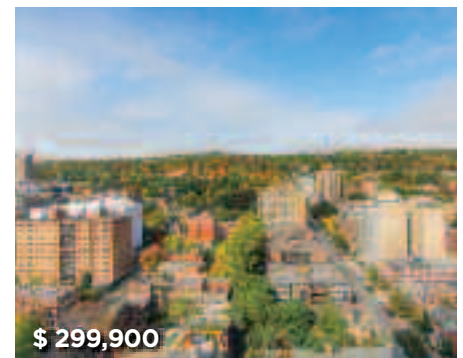
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Douglas Robertson (1937-2014)

Councillor helped spare SE neighbourhood from ‘renewal’

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

A private funeral service took place recently for Douglas Robertson, who served on Westmount city council from 1969 to 1975. He has been credited with efforts of a grassroots group to help preserve the southeast residential sector south of Dorchester and creating Stayner Park. Robertson, who died December 26 at age 77, is survived by his wife, Honor MacDougall, two daughters, a son and eight

grandchildren. Plans are under way for a memorial service whose date is not yet known, said former city councillor Peter Duffield, one of his longest and best friends from school days. Robertson, a lawyer by profession and a resident of Columbia Ave., spearheaded a citizens’ group that successfully fought against the city’s urban renewal plan in the mid-1960s to replace the residential area with highrises. He also prevented con-

struction of a hydro substation on Prospect and the growth of rooming houses. “Apart from being a good lawyer, he was always there to help other people and was free and helpful with his advice,” Duffield said. Robertson came to the city council table winning a seat for the area by acclamation. He became commissioner of Power and Communications and alternate commissioner of Public Safety. He was already well-known at city hall, the incoming mayor, Peter McEntyre said at the time.

Mayor Peter Trent, who said he had known Robertson “on a social basis over the years.” He pointed out that Robertson, first elected at age 31, had been one of the youngest members of council until the arrival of the current councillor Philip Cutler at age 25. Trent, in his book *The Merger Delusion*, referred to the work of the grassroots Lower Westmount Citizens’ Committee, which Robertson spearheaded. It led to the creation of Stayner Park, “helped restore that area and made it into the residential mini-community it is today. In 1971, the committee won a governor general’s award for its efforts.” Born in Toronto and raised in Mexico, the Bahamas and Montreal, Robertson studied law at McGill and worked overseas and in Montreal for the office of Phillips & Vineberg of which he was co-managing partner for some 19 years. Along with many other roles, he served as chair of the board of Selwyn House School.

Opposed access ramp

According to information from city archivist Morgannis Graham, Robertson worked to oppose construction of an access ramp to the Ville Marie Expressway at Greene, worked on the closing of de Maisonneuve through Westmount Park and championed the preservation of houses on the east side of Greene across from Selby St.

“He was articulate, funny, brilliant,” said



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**AVIS D'ADOPTION  
RÈGLEMENT 1478**

AVIS PUBLIC est par les présentes donné que le règlement n° 1478 intitulé « *RÈGLEMENT VISANT À MODIFIER DE NOUVEAU LE RÈGLEMENT 1300 SUR LES PERMIS ET CERTIFICATS* » a été adopté par le conseil municipal de la Ville de Westmount, lors d’une séance ordinaire tenue à l’hôtel de ville le 12 janvier 2015.

L’objet de ce règlement vise à abroger l’article 140 relatif aux tarifs prélevés lors de la délivrance de divers permis et certificats par le Service de l’aménagement urbain, puisqu’ils ont été intégrés au règlement n° 1476 intitulé *Règlement visant à modifier de nouveau le règlement 1318 concernant les tarifs*.

Ce règlement entre en vigueur conformément à la loi.

Toute personne peut consulter ce règlement sur le site Web de la Ville, [www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org), et en obtenir copie au bureau du greffe situé au 4333, rue Sherbrooke Ouest à Westmount, du lundi au vendredi de 8 h 30 à 16 h 30.

DONNÉ à Westmount, ce 20 janvier 2015.

**NOTICE OF ADOPTION  
BY-LAW 1478**

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that By-law No. 1478 entitled “*BY-LAW TO FURTHER AMEND PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES BY-LAW 1300*” was adopted by the Municipal Council of the City of Westmount at its regular sitting held at City Hall on January 12, 2015.

The object of this by-law is to repeal section 140 regarding the tariffs of fees levied for the issuance of various permits and certificates by the Urban Planning Department, as they are being integrated into By-law No.1476 entitled *By-law to further amend By-law 1318 concerning Tariffs*.

This by-law comes into force according to law.

Any person may consult said by-law on the City’s Website, [www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org), and obtain copies thereof at the Office of the City Clerk located at 4333 Sherbrooke Street West in Westmount, from Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

GIVEN at Westmount, this 20<sup>th</sup> day of January 2015.

**Nicole Dobbie**  
Greffière adjointe/ Assistant City Clerk

[www.westmount.org](http://www.westmount.org)



Alderman-elect Douglas Robertson takes the oath of office at the inaugural session of council January 27, 1969. Photo courtesy of Westmount Archives and Wilkinson Studios Ltd.

Firefighters respond for smoking car

A parking inspector spotted a car heading south on Wood near de Maisonneuve January 6 with smoke coming from the engine, Public Security officials said. When patrollers arrived just after 10:50 am, they found it pulled over to the side and emitting a lot of smoke and a strong odour of antifreeze. Firefighters were called and found the engine had overheated. A tow truck was called.



**Ted Roman (1932-1914)****Well-known physician treated many Westmount women**

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A memorial service took place January 16 for physician Ted Roman, who died December 25 at Château Westmount. He was 82.

The service was held at Mountainside Church next to the house on Lansdowne where he had lived for close to 50 years

with his wife, Patricia, and raised their daughter Jennifer and son Paul. Even the date of the service had special meaning, his wife explained. "It would have been our 55th wedding anniversary." He is also survived by four grandchildren.

Roman, an acclaimed specialist in gynecology/obstetrics and radiation oncology at the Royal Victoria Hospital, com-

bined both fields to help women with cancer through both diagnosis and treatment and had many patients in Westmount.

He had spent much of his career trailblazing and training others in less advantaged countries in cutting-edge brachytherapy for cancer radiation treatment.

In retirement, he became a familiar figure in the neighbourhood, working around the house and shovelling the snow himself, she said. "He was the maintenance man. He was stopped outside one day in his work clothes and boots by someone who asked to hire him to work on her house!"

Roman was a photographer, art lover and accomplished pianist and violinist. He also played many other stringed instruments and organized weekly jazz sessions at Château Westmount.

**Loved Westmount**

"He loved living in Westmount," she said, and he was very supportive of her own community contributions on governing boards at Roslyn, Marianopolis, Trafalgar and the Montreal Children's Library among others.

Diagnosed with naso-pharyngeal cancer in 2006, "he knew what he was in for, but he defied all the odds by surviving so long and managed to do many things." In 2009, Roman was honoured with a lifetime achievement award in Quebec City from radiation oncology peers.

Born in Kirkland Lake, Ontario of Ukrainian descent, he graduated from Western University and played professional football for the BC Lions for two seasons while interning in Vancouver. Moving to Montreal in 1967 and Westmount the next year, Roman was an associate professor at McGill and a former chief of oncology at the Royal Vic.

But to his wife, "I think his greatest achievement was transitioning from doctor to patient. Because he was such a positive person – a really strong guy – our time with him was a very happy one," right to the end, she said.

**Suspect cyclist followed into Oratory lot**

A person suspected by public safety officers and police of breaking into cars was spotted January 12 riding his bicycle at Devon and Upper Belmont at 11:05 am, Public Security officials said. Seeing patrollers, he headed "fairly quickly" behind Villa St. Marcelline. Bicycle tracks led to the parking lot of St. Joseph's Oratory and out of Westmount. Ticketed once before for riding in the Westmount Athletic Grounds, he was identified as a 43-year-old NDG resident. Officials said the man is kept under surveillance whenever he is spotted, given a number of cars that have been broken into while people walk their dogs in Summit Woods.



Ted Roman shown about five years ago at the home in Hamilton, Ontario, of his sister, Olga, who worked in many countries teaching and consulting in healthcare including long-term care.

Photo courtesy of Patricia Roman

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Police Report

# 50-year-old suspect arrested for Greene Ave. bank robbery

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

By MICHAEL MOORE

Montreal police have arrested a 50-year-old man accused of a year-and-a-half-long armed robbery spree at over a dozen banks throughout Montreal, including on Greene



Image courtesy of the Montreal police website

Ave. on January 6.

A forensics team reportedly found the man's fingerprint at the scene of that latest heist, leading to his arrest on January 15.

The 6-foot-tall man of stocky build entered the Greene Ave. bank on January 6 and approached the counter at 3:50 pm to ask for change on a \$20 bill. When the teller began to comply, the suspect placed a bag on the counter, demanded it be filled with money and reached inside his jacket to simulate he was armed.

"It's unclear whether he had a weapon or not, but just the threat of having one makes this an armed robbery," said Station 12 constable Adalbert Pimentel.

The teller reportedly handed the suspect one of the bank's prepared robbery stacks, which included a dye pack, a radio-controlled incendiary countermeasure triggered by sensors around the exterior door. When set off, the dye pack releases a chemical that stains and destroys the stack of money.

The suspect abandoned some destroyed bills in a lane off of Greene later that afternoon, where they were found by a passing pedestrian. She wrapped them in a newspaper and later turned them into po-

lice at Station 39 in Montreal North.

Pimentel applauded her efforts, but conceded that in retrospect it would have been better if she had called 911

"Police would protect the scene, since it would be considered a crime scene, and forensics would take a look at it as well, looking for DNA or anything. The person did well to bring it to police, but every little bit helps," he said.

Police policy prevents revealing the amount stolen in bank robberies, but Pimentel said the bills found by the pedestrian "probably doesn't" account for all of the money.

The incident inside the bank was caught on video and police used it to create flyer with a picture and description of the sus-

pect to distribute to officers in Westmount, according to Pimentel.

The suspect, who can't be named until he appears in court, is expected to face a total of 13 counts of armed robbery stemming from his spree, which began in July 2013.

## Cars towed

Two cars were towed and ticketed \$191 each January 7 for blocking private driveways, Public Security officials said. One on Columbia impeded a resident from getting her car out at 8:30 am. The other blocked passage to a driveway on Kitchener at 10:28 am. The cost of the tickets is \$90 for the fine, \$26 in court administration fees and \$75 for towing.

# 23 families receive holiday food baskets, share \$3,000

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

The Public Security holiday food drive collected \$3,297 and food for 23 local families, Public Security officials said last week. A total of 49 people received the food along with \$60 food cards per person.

The food baskets were delivered by patrollers on December 17, 18 and 19 to the families whose names had been provided by the CLSC Guy Métro.

The money was used to purchase the food cards, some additional groceries as well as 19 turkeys, three hams and one leg of lamb. Small gifts were also included for families with children under age 10.

The lion's share was collected as the price of admission to the Westmount Artisans' Festival in November totalling \$2,260, along with non-perishable items that filled close to six large recycling bins.

A spaghetti dinner cooked by public safety officer Sabrina Tremblay and parking inspector Jordan Ciampini brought in another \$444 from local police, firefighters and public safety officers along with a raffle.

The city's annual Christmas party for employees' children added more non-perishable food plus \$168 in donations and \$60 from a raffle. A breakfast for city hall workers held by communications coordinator Maureen Lafrenière raised \$100.

The Church of the Ascension of Our Lord donated \$300 and a local resident sent in \$25. A donation of non-perishable food items was also received from a holiday lunch held by the Westmount Lawn Bowling Club.

"We want to thank everyone who contributed and helped feed 23 families," said Public Security director Greg McBain.

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# December sales: Big houses moving



## Mood of the Market

ANDY DODGE, CRA

The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in December 2014. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph on offers a picture of these trends over time.

People driving around Westmount these days may notice “sold” stickers on many of the more stately mansions, and indeed fully half of the city’s houses with more than 350 square metres floor area that sold this year were negotiated in the last three months. A dozen big house sales were reported by local agents between September 23 and December 13, three of those in December. Of the dozen, only two brought prices over \$3 million and two were under \$2 million; the average time on the market was almost exactly one year (364 days) and the fastest sale was 78 days from listing to agreement.

The three big-house sales in December only went as high as \$2,400,000 and joined three other sales between \$1,210,000 and \$1,547,500. So for the first time since August of 2013, there were no sales posted under \$1 million, and in fact in August 2013 there were only two sales reported.

Because one of the big houses sold for only 70 percent of its valuation, the average price/valuation ratio in December was 99

## Demolition cont'd. from p. 3

ship on the PAC to architects living outside Westmount was to reduce a potential for conflict of interest that might result from architects working mostly within the city. This right was granted to the city by the Quebec legislative assembly in a private member’s bill last month (see story December 9, p. 10).

Trent also recalls how he had introduced the Demolition committee some 30 years ago when he was commissioner of Planning “in desperation” as a way of preserving the city’s heritage in the face of demolitions and requests.

Now that Quebec law requires a Demolition committee, he says, he believes it could actually be rolled into the PAC, a move he would welcome.

percent, transmuting to a 6.6 percent mark-up once the extreme sales are removed, which is why our graph shows a very slight uptick for the month. From the agents’ point of view, we have to recognize that things are looking up as we move into the new year. The market is strong, though not as strong as we would have anticipated following last April’s election.

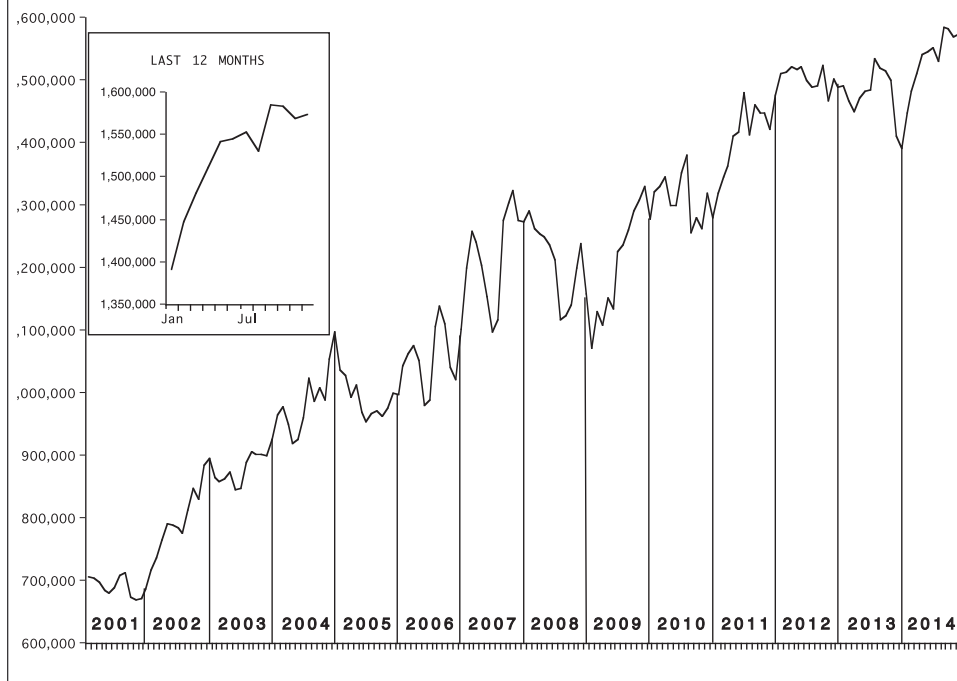
For the year, volume was slightly higher than in 2013 and the average price of 148 sales was more than \$1.525 million, the highest average price in Westmount’s history. Again, many of these were the very large Westmount homes, which were selling in the \$2- to \$3-million range, so the “typical” Westmount house price actually fell from \$1,511,000 in 2013 to \$1,484,000 in 2014.

No condominium sales were posted in December and only one in November. For the year, volume dropped to 26 from 33 the year before, but the average adjusted price climbed to almost \$843,000, up 3.7 percent from 2013.

Three adjacent-Westmount home sales in December brought the total for the year to 68, up from 62 in 2013. High prices and high mark-ups were recorded especially in the area just east of Westmount, thanks mainly to the big newer homes on Jean-Girard Ave. and St. Sulpice Rd.

It appears to us that the spread between the prices of the large homes and the “average” Westmount residences is narrowing quite a bit, and of course condition is becoming more and more important as time goes by. It should be remembered that the 2015 sales provide the basis for the next valuation roll in 2017, so the narrowing market may mean (eventually) lower taxes for the more expensive homes, higher ones for the less expensive.

## Average adjusted price of ‘typical’ Westmount home, by month, January 2001 to December 2014, based on accepted offer dates.



## Man falls, stroke suspected

An “injured” man was reported to have been transported to the Montreal General Hospital January 7 from outside 423 Claremont. According to Public Security reports, the man had been seen falling. He displayed stroke symptoms but was conscious. A call from a parking inspector at 1:50 pm brought firefighter first responders to the scene as well as Urgences Santé. The man was not carrying identification.

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# Cocktail raises funds for Atwater Library



*Social Notes  
from Westmount  
and Beyond*

VERONICA REDGRAVE

The annual benefit for the Atwater Library attracted a chic crowd of local residents on November 5. Guest of honour **Bob Gainey** addressed the gathering, paying tribute to the library's important role in the community. Westmounter **Richard Pound**, co-chair of the library's capital cam-



Mary Rivard-David.

aign, attending with his wife author **Julie Keith**, spoke about the value of the 95-year-old heritage building and the need to raise more funds to complete essential upgrading.

Guests raved over the scrumptious-even-if-slurpy-and-sloppy-to-eat Dunn's famous smoked meat sandwiches. People listened to the **Dave Turner Jazz Trio** while admiring an amazing assortment of silent auction items.

Emcee **Dennis Trudeau** thanked sponsors and donors on behalf of the library.

Westmounters noted chatting included Westmount Mayor **Peter Trent**, Councillor **Theodora Samiotis**, **Judy and Allan Aitken**, **John Archer**, **James and Barbara Brodeur**, **Nancy Brown**, **Robert Calder**, **Eric Caron**, writer **Roch Carrier** and **Nina Safdie**, **Nicole Xenopoulos** and **Nic Côté**, **Dorothy Fieldman Fraiberg**, library president **Mary Rivard-David** and her husband **Claude David**, **Anne Fitzpatrick**, **Diana and George Hendy**, **Micheline Jarry**, **Robert Johnson**, **Shanly Dixon** and **Scott Jones**,

**James Coulton** and **Judith Kashul**, **Dora Koop**, **Susan McGuire**, **Joan and Alex Pater-son**, **Sue Elliott**, **Scott Pritchard**, **Christine St. John**, **Patricia Quill**, **Jill Quinton**, **Marc Delplace** and **Nikola Reford**, **Bonnie Shemie**, writer **Cora Siré**, **Christine St. John**, **Helen and Fred Wiegand** and **Christine Pickrell** of Westmont Florist, who donated the floral arrangements.

Library board members in attendance were **Lionel Blanshay** with his wife **Patricia** and daughter **Marnie Blanshay**, **Andrew Clark**, **Kevin Johnston** and **Marshall Wansbrough**, who assembled the much-admired toy train he donated for the auction.

Others spotted in the crowd were past library president **Mary Leslie-Aitken**, capital campaign co-chair **David Angus**, poet **Ann Lloyd**, event sponsors **Paul Marchand** and **Jocelyne** continued on p. 17



From left: Richard Pound, Terry Mosher (Aislin), Bob Gainey, and Lionel Blanshay.



Roch Carrier, left, and Nina Safdie.



Peter Trent

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**Social Notes** *cont'd. from p. 16*

Blais, supporter **Philip Webster** and writer **Kathleen Winter**.

The evening generated record-high net proceeds of over \$89,000, which will support the library's educational programs and services.



Anne Fitzpatrick, left, and Christine St. John.

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**Sports & Rec** *cont'd. from p. 1*

why we're announcing it early," Davis explained.

The registration is being advanced by some five weeks to enable residents to make their plans before spring break at the end of March. That's when sign-up typically took place, according to department director Dave Lapointe. It also gives the department more time to set up programs and sports teams.

Also new this year, he explains, is a proof of residency requirement for children aged 4 to 17, such as a school record, to help simplify differences in family names. This also must be done at the office. At least one parent must live in Westmount and have proof of parenthood.

While registration may still be done in person, "We're encouraging people to do it online," Lapointe said. The online capability is used by some other local municipalities and comes after a couple of years of day-to-day internal use of the software.

Online payment is by credit card only, Visa or MasterCard. The same credit cards apply for registration in person along with the additional options of Interac, cash or cheque.

A few program changes in this spring's line-up include the addition of a beginners' French course for adults and a course

in meditation. While the children's Saturday morning science program continues, "we won't be having the [summer] science camp," Lapointe said. "Organizers couldn't secure the location at Westmount High."

AquaFit in the pool, which proved to be one of the most popular programs, will be continued along with most others.

## PSOs find break-in suspect

Following a tip from a resident, public safety officers tracked down a man who had been seen jumping the fence at the construction site at 175 Metcalfe January 12, Public Security officials said. The man was subsequently arrested by police for break and enter.

The initial call at 7:07 pm stated the caller had seen him unhooking lights at the site and appearing to hide whenever a car passed. He had left the site when patrollers arrived, but they found a man matching the description nearby, alerted police and engaged him in conversation until they arrived. He was found with cutters and other tools in his backpack. He was also identified as having a dossier for theft.

## Ivory, Desjardins named to Order of Canada, Pound promoted to Companion

Three residents of Westmount have been named in a recent round of appointments to the Order of Canada. Joan Ivory and Jean-Guy Desjardins were named members, while Richard Pound was promoted within the order to companion.

Desjardins was recognized "for his contributions to the financial sector as a portfolio management entrepreneur;" and Ivory "for her unwavering commitment to the cultural and educational sectors of Montreal."

Richard Pound was promoted to a companion of the Order of Canada "for his contributions as a champion of fairness in sport and of the Olympic spirit, as well as for his engagement in civic, legal and educational causes."

The governor general announced 95 appointments on December 26 and the quoted citations for the Westmount recipients, and all other recipients can be found through [www.gg.ca](http://www.gg.ca). Recipients are to be recognized at a ceremony whose date had not yet been announced.

— J.P.



The Québec Triennial 2011, works by Stéphane La Rue. Photo: Laurent Rabatel

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President, 3 other board members resign

# Divided over issue of ‘solidarity,’ where does WMA go from here?

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Peter Starr, president of the Westmount Municipal Association (WMA) for some three years, resigned suddenly at a board meeting January 15, the *Independent* learned the next day.

Three other board members also called it quits. They are past president Jean-Pierre Picard, membership chair François Prenevost and Marilyn Vanderstaay, a director at large. The resignations took place during a planning session of the board for the coming year, Starr said.

“There’s been a division in our board caused by a difference of approach over solidarity, and last night we were trying to find middle ground,” he explained.

The issue involves WMA board members “speaking out with one voice to send a strong message to the community on various issues,” Starr said. “I and the others who resigned felt we should be united, aligned and focused when solutions come up. The other side felt they were being gagged and should be able to speak out individually.”

Vice presidents Maureen Kiely and Paul Marriott will be acting as co-presidents un-

til the WMA’s annual general meeting in May and new elections.

The issue of whether or not board members should express personal opinions in the public arena, and how they should do so, is known to have been simmering for some time.

“When members of the board speak out on issues the WMA has already taken a position on, even if you are offering your own opinion, you are perceived as being of the WMA,” Picard told the *Independent*.

Quoting from his letter of resignation he said, “To some, personal views and individual agenda matter more than the overall good of the organization. They believe the WMA should be an activist group, assuming the city administration is in bad faith and see themselves as the opposition to city council.” (See Picard’s letter, p. 6.)

Picard said he “quit,” walked out of the meeting and immediately sent in his resignation. “I can help the city in better ways than spending my time there.”

Paid membership has been declining and is now close to 100, he said. This is one reason he questioned the relevance of the organization in today’s world. The WMA was founded more than a century ago to

inform residents about Westmount municipal affairs.

**Fretz a candidate?**

While Starr said he believed board member John Fretz was taking over as president, Fretz denied it when asked. Kiely confirmed that neither she nor Marriott intended to seek the presidency but that Fretz was expected to be a candidate.

Both Fretz and Kiely said Starr’s reason for stepping down was (in Fretz’s words), because he was “preparing to be the Rotary president in 2016, and wants to pursue his charities. He is also very busy with a new business venture.”

But Starr said, “That has nothing to do with me going. It is simply a solidarity issue.” He pointed out that his upcoming presidency of the Rotary Club of Westmount was more than a year away.

On the issue of “solidarity,” Fretz said he had never felt muzzled regarding what he could or could not say at council meetings as a member of the board. “I think only the people who might have felt that way were those on the executive. There is always new business arising at a council meeting and I always feel free to ask about it or give

my personal opinion.”

At least one remaining member of the board, Brigitte Stock, said January 17 she was reassessing her position in the wake of the resignations. She has been out of the country and said she would be preparing an email statement. None had been received by press time Monday.

Along with Kiely, Marriott and Fretz, other board members listed on the WMA website include Patricia Dumais, Medhi Ghafouri, Stanley Grossman, Marilyn Gillies, Nigel Goddard, Jerry Miller and Mavis Young. Several are familiar figures and questioners at city council meetings.

Fretz said he “appreciated Peter Starr’s absolutely brilliant leadership during the past three years. He significantly raised the WMA’s profile and relevance within the community. He steered us through key studies and portfolios, and brought in exciting speakers. It was a great ride and I am very grateful to him.”

## 5 years at MAC Bronfmans ring in 8 years of contemporary arts lectures series

Westmounters Claudine and Stephen Bronfman, who run the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation, are celebrating eight years of Séminarts, a lecture series on contemporary art.

The talks ran for three years at the SBC gallery, and then moved to the Musée d’art contemporain (MAC), where they were held to a sold-out crowd for five years.

Séminarts, given in French and English, are led by the MAC’s Véronique Lefebvre, who has training in education and a masters degree art history.

“Claudine and I wanted to support the local Quebec art scene,” said Stephen Bronfman. Statistics show that although Quebec boasts a vibrant art scene, sales of art are down. “We learned from focus groups that people were ‘nervous about contemporary art,’ so we wanted to demystify art and the gallery experience,” he said.

Attendees include both artists and art lovers, and visits are planned to corporate and private collections. The 2015 series starts in February. – Veronica Redgrave

**Snow clearing cont’d. from p. 1**

Lansdowne Ave. of the by-law’s overnight ban. The hours that contractors are given to work are “unreasonable,” she explained. “People have to go to work and school.” She said her contractor had been fined for cleaning driveways at 11:15 pm.

Mayor Peter Trent told her the city was reviewing the by-law and “we are essentially putting it aside for the moment.” He said the city was, however, “distinguishing between driveways and parking lots,” but provided no details on how enforcement was being applied.

The city had also received letters from people who don’t want the by-law changed, he said.

He later told the *Independent* he did not know how the administration would be applying the toleration.

To a suggestion from Councillor Patrick Martin, commissioner of Public Works, that the city reimburse contractors ticketed for overnight work in December, Trent told the *Independent*: “that’s like saying we should give back the fines to people who parked over a two-hour limit in zones we



Carole Gilman addresses council January 12 on snow removal.

later changed to four hours.”

Martin made the suggestion both at the meeting and in a column published the

next day in the *Independent*.





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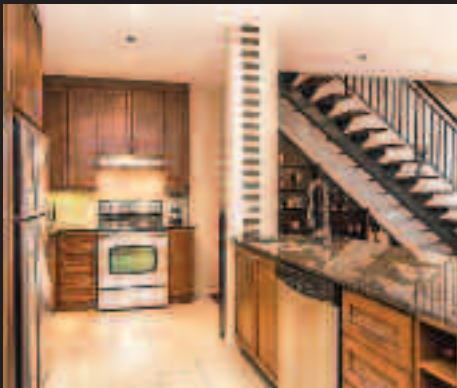
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