

THE INFORMER

JUNE 18 — SPORTS AND RECREATION CENTRE — REFERENDUM POLL

Montreal West Viewpaper

June 2023, Vol. 51, No 5

Jack Kowalski:

Turning whitewater to gold

by Maurice Krystal

I got an email from someone called Jack who wrote to say he got my email address from Ryan Silkey, the proprietor of *Randy's Bistro*. After reading my article he is now a frequent diner. He said that he was a long time MoWest resident who ran a world class tourist attraction and the company was celebrating its 40th anniversary. Was I interested?



I went to visit **Jack Kowalski**, no relation to the 50s wrestler, Killer Kowalski, at his Courtney Dr. home and listened to the story for an hour and a half. I wouldn't quite call Jack gregarious but he could sure weave a tale. Born in St Marys, Pennsylvania, (half way between Pittsburgh and Buffalo) he and his older brother, **Joe**, had lives that intertwined more than most siblings. As teens they were both Eagle Scouts and learned canoeing and an appreciation for nature that would be their world. Part way through the interview Jack handed me a small book called *Tell Me the Story* a self-

published work outlining the story of the two Kowalski brothers and their trials and tribulations in forming the world's largest whitewater touring company. He wrote it to show youth that there is nothing you can't accomplish if you put your heart and soul into it.

I read the book after the interview and noted that what Jack told me was pretty much all in print. Like Jack Kowalski, it is fast paced, with lots of name dropping of the famous and the infamous and at times funny account of a rags to riches life.

It all started with a canoe trip to Canada in 1971. The following year, Jack was in Frankfurt and Joe was in the US army and was recently stationed in the same city. There Jack recounts a near death experience on the army base when a bomb was set off by the anti-capitalist Baader-Meinhof Gang. Maybe such an experience makes you a greater risk taker since you feel you're living on borrowed time.

The book then goes into the financial tribulations of Joe's purchasing a rafting company that gave Ottawa River whitewater tours near Pembroke, Ontario. Joe asked his younger brother to come to Canada to help out. When Jack gave his brother his life savings, he entered Canada penniless. But

continued on page 11



Delivering The Informer

Simone Bazinet and dad **Martin** were out in terrible weather delivering *The Informer* on Brock North. **Joan Foster** couldn't resist taking a photo of how dedicated *The Informer* carriers are! And, mom, **Emanuelle Khoury** commented. "She is indeed very happy with her job passing out *The Informer* – rain or shine!"

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Hurray for clay!

If you are a fan of pottery, you probably know about *1001 POTS*, the annual summer exhibition in Val-David that features a full range of pottery and ceramic art. What you may not know is that for the past 24 years, MoWest resident **Sheila Caplan** has been among the exhibitors.

Thirty-four years ago, potter **Kinya Ishikawa** invited some colleagues to show their wares on his property for two weeks in the summer. Today nearly 100 potters and ceramic artists have the opportunity to do the same for six weeks. The site has expanded over the years, and now includes the Silica Garden, a magical space created with pots that were destined for landfill, as well as a tea room.

During the course of the show (July 7-August 20) there will be additional events taking place, including weekend workshops

for children, artists in residence, and demonstrations. Several exhibitors are on the site daily, ready to meet and share their passion with you. Details at 1001pots.com.

Kinya continues to make pots, but has stepped back from the show. Thankfully, it continues to thrive under the new ownership of **Sacha Ghadiri** and **Nouchine Dardachti**. While the public enjoys seeing the wide variety of work outdoors in a lovely country setting, for exhibitors this annual gathering has created a community of like-minded artists who have a chance to connect and share ideas – a real treat for those who work solo in their studios all year.

1001 POTS is just 90 km. from MoWest and makes for a great outing. The P'tit train du nord bike path is close by, as well as picnic sites by the river, restaurants in town and other artisans in the vicinity. Go for a visit!

Fundraiser in support of Crohn's and Colitis Foundation

June 1, a couple of friends (**Nily Haion** and **Janet Masella**) and I are hosting a pop-up/fundraiser in support of *Crohn's and Colitis Foundation* at the curling club between 10 am and 4 pm. Come support us, there is no entrance fee. We will be selling tickets for a half and half draw. Half of the proceeds will go to the *Crohn's and Colitis Foundation* and the other half will go to the individual with the winning ticket. A portion of the vendors fee will also be donated to the foundation.

The event is designed to support and empower 18 female entrepreneurs with their small businesses while giving back to the *Crohn's and Colitis Foundation*. Some examples of products sold are knitted items, jewellery, baked goods, glass night lights, eco-friendly and vegan bags, children's clothing (mainly girls), resin art, dog treats, candles, handmade wreaths and so much more.

In 2018 approximately 270,000 Canadians were living with Crohn's or ulcerative colitis. It is estimated that by 2030 the prevalence will increase to an alarming 50%. Approximately 1 in 150 Canadians has Crohn's or colitis. Some even have both. The *Crohn's and Colitis Foundation* is eager to support and advertise our event.

In 2009 I was diagnosed with severe Crohn's disease. For several years, I suffered with extreme pain, weight loss, brain fog, exhaustion, etc. After an intestinal resection in 2016, I slowly regained my strength and today my quality of life is much better thanks to a lifesaving medication called Remicade.

from Rosa Molinaro

THE INFORMER

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Montreal West, Quebec
H4X 1Y9

The *Informer's* role is to provide MoWesters with information about their Town and its citizens in order to foster the small-town, close-knit atmosphere that makes Montreal West a special place in which to live.

Le rôle de *l'Informer* est de fournir aux gens de Montréal-Ouest de l'information sur leur ville et ses citoyens afin de favoriser l'atmosphère de petite ville et de proximité qui fait de Montréal-Ouest un endroit spécial où vivre.

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René Boucher, Cynthia Koomas, Lise McVey, Jeanne Ragbir

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NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE

August 8

Carnival fundraiser

Curzon Creative Preschool will be hosting a carnival fundraiser June 3 (rain date June 4) from 9:30 am-1:30 pm, corner Westminster and Curzon.



We will have a bake sale and lemonade stand, garage sale, bouncy castle, face painting and more! Our school doors will also be open to our youngest visitors to play while parents shop. We welcome everyone in the community to join us for a morning of fun!

Street fair

September 16

If merchants are interested, please contact the merchant association for more information at mowestbiz@gmail.com.

Montreal West's gardening club

The Hort is back! We had a terrific meeting on April 17 at which Strathearn resident, **Juliette Lord**, gave a presentation on the trials and tribulations – and successes – of putting in a sizeable garden (mostly vegetables) with no prior gardening experience. As with many people's recent endeavours it started as a Covid project. Juliette had wonderful pictures and, with great enthusiasm, she showed how anything with a seed is worth a try, from avocados to tomatillos, and everything in between. Garden club meetings will start again the third Monday in September.

Plant sale

The Hort's annual (first time in three years) plant sale will take place Saturday, May 27, 9 am in the parking lot on Westminster near Curzon. If it's anything like previous years, plants will be gone by 10 am so come early. There will be a good selection of perennials at reasonable prices. We take cash only.



from MW Horticultural Society

Duplicate bridge

A small, fun, very casual group will continue at the curling club through the summer starting May 8 at 1 pm. Please bring a partner. Non-members: \$5.

from Sandra Jones

You Can't Take It with You

Rotary Club of Montreal West NDG proudly sponsors *The Younkers Little Theatre Troupe's* presentation of the comedy *You Can't Take It with You* Thursday, June 15, Friday, June 16 and Saturday, June 17 at 7:30 pm; matinée performance Sunday, June 18 at 2 pm, at the Town Hall.

Tickets: \$25 adults, \$20 seniors and students; available through Rotary members or by calling **Ron D'Souza** at 486-6002 or at the door (cash or cheque).

All profits go to *Resilience Montreal* for the homeless to purchase an industrial dryer.

Action Sport Physio news!

Participate in our raffle fundraiser for *Cystic Fibrosis* at *Action Sport Physio* and have a chance to win a nice tea basket while supporting a great cause! We will also be collecting non-perishable food with Santa himself Monday, July 24 from 10 am-1 pm. Bring the kids with a non-perishable and get a summer photo with Santa in your flip flops and sunglasses.

We also invite you to join one of our two summer camps hosted by **Sara-Beth**, certified athletic therapist! They will run from July 4 to August 25. The first one is intro to weight lifting and fitness, for teenagers and adults (Tuesday and Thursday, 10-11am). The second one is Waddle and Walk, a walking group for expectant mothers, parents with strollers and seniors (Wednesday and Friday, 9-10am).

Ask our receptionist for more details: montrealwest@actionsportphysio.com or 485-9292. Join us!



West End Quilters

We have one more in-person meeting before the summer. Our penultimate meeting included everyone showing off this year's challenges. In the fall, we exchanged a piece of fabric with another member and had to make something, anything, using this fabric. Some used it in a quilt, a zipper bag or a wall hanging. **Marijke** made a little purple animal wrapped in a blanket and **Priscilla** turned her book-printed fabric into an imaginative zippered book box.

Our final meeting is another reveal. This time all the IFFIs (I finally finished it) that we pledged to finish must be brought in to show. So, people are busily sewing so they don't have to pay money to the guild.

The guild will participate in Art in the Park on June 6, so stop by and chat and see some of our work. **Janice** has been posting pictures on our Facebook page: facebook.com/westendquilters/ so you can see more of what we have been doing.

Happy summer.

from Mary Sutherland



Sandra's challenge. She received the bright pink fabric bordering the blocks

Do you use Royal West's facilities

Have you or your child misplaced something? You would be surprised at what is left behind and placed in the lost and found bins at the school. If you took the time to label your child's items, you might be able to find them in the lost and found bin located in the hallway outside of the Foundation Gym. A pair of winter boots, a water bottle, deck of cards or mittens which are now "missing" may have found their way into the bin.

At the end of the school year, the bins are all emptied and any unidentified item is cleaned and brought to our local friperie. Feel free to send a message to rwa.lostand-found@gmail.com if you are no longer able to gain access to the building and you know your child left something behind.

Environmentalism in Action / L'environnementalisme en action



Events that you won't wanna miss

This may be the *Environmental Action Committee's* (EAC) busiest spring so far! If you're partaking in No Mow May or you enjoyed our Town clothing swap or Rewilding Your Lawn event, be sure to check out our coming events.

First, the Community Centre is hosting president and CEO of *Electric Mobility Canada*, **Daniel Breton**, on May 24 at 7 pm. He will discuss the benefits of owning an electric vehicle, address some of the related challenges, provide potential solutions and take questions.

Second, because the EAC's first Rewilding Your Yard workshop was so popular, there will be a second more "hands on" session May 29 at 7 pm in the Community Centre. It will be led by *Jardin Buzz*, a business that provides Montreal-grown seeds, pollinator-friendly plants and design expertise for people looking to support their ecosystems and encourage biodiversity in their own yards.

Third, the EAC has organized an exciting new event: come join MoWest's very first Town-wide Garage Sale and Garage Band Fest June 3! The benefits are three-fold: the garage sale encourages spring-cleaning in a way that fosters reuse, it's a fun reason to get out for a walk and the Garage Band Fest encourages local musical artists to showcase their talent (in the same spirit as NDG's Porchfest). You can follow the online interactive map to see which households will be partaking. Sign up online to host a sale at montrealouest-garagesale-garageband.ca/ or email montrealouest-garagesale@gmail.com to register your musical performance.

Finally, June 5, **Gabriela Lopes** from *enuf* will give a talk in the Town Hall at 7 pm, entitled Advice for the Reluctant Composter and/or Confused Recycler. Unfortunately, Canadians produce the most waste per capita in the world. Despite this, instructions regarding what we can and cannot compost or recycle remain complex and often inconvenient. Gabriela will discuss how we can overcome this, both as individuals and as institutions like Concordia University.

from Haley Clarke-Cousineau
for the Environmental Action Committee

Événements à ne pas manquer



Le Comité d'action pour l'environnement (CAE) pourrait bien connaître son printemps le plus chargé jusqu'à présent ! Si vous participez au « Mai sans tonte » ou si vous avez aimé notre échange de vêtements ou notre événement « Rewilding Your Lawn », ne manquez pas de jeter un coup d'œil à nos prochains événements.

Tout d'abord, le Centre communautaire accueille le président et chef de la direction de *Mobilité électrique Canada*, **Daniel Breton**, le 24 mai à 19 h. Il discutera des avantages à posséder un véhicule électrique, abordera certains des défis qui y sont liés et fournira des solutions possibles et répondra aux questions.

Deuxièmement, le premier atelier « Rewilding Your Yard » de l'EAC ayant été très populaire, une deuxième session plus « pratique » sera organisée le 29 mai à 19 heures au Centre communautaire. Elle sera animée par *Jardin Buzz*, une entreprise qui fournit des semences cultivées à Montréal, des plantes favorables

aux pollinisateurs et une expertise en design pour les personnes qui cherchent à soutenir leurs écosystèmes et à encourager la biodiversité dans leur propre cour.

Troisièmement, le CAE organise un nouvel événement passionnant : venez participer à la vente de garage et au premier festival de groupes de musique de garage le 3 juin ! Les avantages sont triples : la vente de garage encourage le nettoyage de printemps d'une manière qui favorise la réutilisation, c'est une raison amusante de sortir pour et la composante « Garage Band Fest » encourage les artistes musicaux locaux à présenter leur talent (dans le même esprit que le « Porchfest » de NDG). Vous pouvez suivre la carte interactive en ligne pour voir quels foyers participeront. Inscrivez-vous en ligne pour organiser une vente à montrealouest-garage-sale-garageband.ca/ ou envoyez un courriel à montrealouestgaragesale@gmail.com pour inscrire votre performance musicale.

Enfin, le 5 juin, **Gabriela Lopes** de *enuf* donnera une conférence dans l'hôtel de ville à 19 heures intitulée « Conseils pour le composteur réticent et/ou le recycleur confus ». La conférencière abordera le fait malheureux que les Canadiens produisent le plus de déchets par habitant dans le monde. Malgré cela, les instructions concernant ce que nous pouvons et ne pouvons pas composter ou recycler restent complexes et souvent peu pratiques. Gabriela expliquera comment nous pouvons surmonter cette difficulté, à la fois en tant qu'individus et en tant qu'institutions telles que l'Université Concordia.

de Haley Clarke-Cousineau
pour le Comité d'action environnementale

Kosher corner

200 celebrate!

Lag Ba'Omer was celebrated with great weather, spirits and Jewish pride in Montreal West with 200 in attendance at the community BBQ, bonfire and petting zoo!

We hope to take advantage of summer weather. Stay tuned for outdoor community events including:

- End of the year Hebrew School ceremony (registration is now open for 2023-2024 for kindergarten through grade four)
 - Pre Shabbat dinner and l'chaim (first one June 30 – pending good weather)
 - Sunday morning Mommy and me
- Subscribe to our email list for updates at chabadwestminster.com/subscribe.

from Rabbi Marlow





The Little Red Playhouse
Inspiring Young Minds to Soar

**514
486
4032**

info@thelittleredplayhouse.com

Notre mission est d'enseigner à tous les enfants en tant qu'individus, d'être le meilleur qu'ils peuvent être. Nous enseignons à tous les enfants l'empathie, la compassion, la compréhension et l'acceptation de toute diversité. En savoir plus:

Our mission is to teach all children as the individuals that they are, to be the best that they can be. We teach all children empathy, compassion, understanding and acceptance of all diversity. Find out more at:

thelittleredplayhouse.com **petitemaisonnetterouge.com**

Scrutin référendaire



À la suite des résultats du registre du 5 mai, un scrutin référendaire sera tenu pour approuver ou rejeter le *Règlement 2023-003 amendant le règlement n° 2023-001 décrétant des travaux de construction d'un nouveau centre sportif et récréatif afin d'augmenter la dépense et d'autoriser l'emprunt d'un montant additionnel de 6 686 024\$.*

Scrutin par anticipation

le dimanche 11 juin de 12 h à 20 h

Scrutin

le dimanche 18 juin de 10 h à 20 h

Lieu du scrutin

Aréna de la Légion (220 Bedbrook, Montréal-Ouest, H4X 1S1)

Pouvez-vous voter ?

Pour voter, vous devez être une personne habile à voter soit, être âgé de 18 ans ou plus le jour du scrutin et remplir les conditions suivantes au 27 avril 2023:

- avoir la citoyenneté canadienne
- être domicilié dans la municipalité et habiter au Québec depuis au moins six mois
- ne pas avoir perdu le droit de vote à cause d'une tutelle
 - être inscrit sur la liste référendaire

Les propriétaires non-domiciliés qui respectent les conditions indiquées dans l'avis public publié sur le site web le 9 mai 2023 peuvent aussi être inscrits à la liste référendaire pourvu qu'ils en fassent la demande avant le 30 mai.

Dépôt de la liste référendaire

La liste référendaire sera déposée par le Greffier le 22 mai 2023 et pourra être consultée de 8 h 30 à 16 h 30, à l'hôtel de ville, 50, Westminster Sud.

Révision de la liste référendaire

Chaque résidence recevra un avis précisant le nom des personnes habiles à voter déjà inscrits sur la liste référendaire et indiquant comment procéder pour faire une demande de modification à la liste référendaire, au besoin.

Si votre nom n'est pas inscrit sur la liste référendaire, vous ne pourrez pas voter.

Pour faire une demande d'inscription, de radiation ou de correction, vous devez vous présenter devant la Commission de révision. Toute demande doit être présentée devant les réviseurs à l'hôtel de ville, 50, Westminster Sud, dans la Salle de musique, aux jours et aux heures suivantes:

- Le mardi 30 mai de 14 h 30 à 17 h 00 et de 19 h 00 à 22 h 00
- Le mercredi 31 mai de 10 h 00 à 13 h 00

Pour voter, vous devez vous identifier en présentant l'un des documents suivants:

- Carte d'assurance maladie
- Permis de conduire
- Passeport canadien
- Certificat de statut d'Indien
- Carte d'identité des Forces canadiennes.



Referendum poll



Following the results of the register on May 5, a referendum poll will be held to approve or reject the *By-law 2023-003 amending By-law no. 2023-001 ordering the construction of a new sports and recreation centre to increase the expenditure and authorized loan by an additional amount of \$6,686,024.*

Advance poll

Sunday, June 11 from 12 to 8 p.m.

Polling Day

Sunday, June 18 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Location

Legion Memorial Rink (220 Bedbrook, Montreal West, H4X 1S1)

Can you vote?

To be able to vote, you must be a qualified voter, namely be 18 years of age or older on polling day and meet the following conditions on April 27, 2023:

- be a Canadian citizen
- be domiciled in the municipality and have resided in Québec for at least six months
- not have lost the right to vote because of a tutorship
- be registered on the referendum list

Non-resident property owners who meet the conditions set out in the public notice published on the website on May 9, 2023 may also be added to the referendum list provided they apply before May 30.

Deposit of the referendum list

The referendum list will be deposited by the Town Clerk and may be consulted as of May 22, 2023 at the Town Hall, 50 Westminister South, between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

Revising the referendum list

Every resident will receive a notice specifying the names of qualified voters who are already registered on the referendum list and indicating how to have the referendum list modified if necessary.

If your name is not on the list, you will not be allowed to vote.

To make an application for entry, striking off or correction, you must appear before the Board of Revisors. The application must be made before the revisors at Town Hall, 50 Westminister South, Montreal West, Québec, on the following dates:

- Tuesday, May 30 from 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm and from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm
- Wednesday, May 31, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

To vote you will have to identify yourself by presenting one of the following documents:

- Health insurance card
- Driver's license
- Canadian passport
- Certificate of Indian status
- Canadian Forces Identification Card





Youth-focused perspective

I have been a resident of Montreal West for most of my life, first as a baby/child/youth and then as a tax-paying homeowner. I fully support the realization of the new recreation centre as per the current plans and I would like to present a youth-focused perspective on the urgency to see this project through.

I am concerned that the perspective of our kids has not been adequately articulated or considered, particularly by those questioning the pertinence and necessity of this project. The financial, logistical, and community-based arguments in favour of a new recreation centre have been well articulated by many voting age citizens already. But what about the kids? According to the 2016 Canadian census, there are 2 230 individuals under the age of 19 living in Montreal West. That is 44% of our Town! Young people have a stake in the future of their Town, even though they don't have the power to make any decisions.

A second concern is that the well-being of our community members, specifically our kids, is directly tied to the availability of athletic and recreational resources. Our day camp kids are spending their summers in trailers and hiding from the sun under tents on the field! Our current pool has a crack (repaired for use this summer) and an old, unreliable filtration system. The arena is full of mould and is breaking down. Both of these facilities will have to close and be demolished, leaving us without accessible, local sports amenities. Practical wisdom tells us that sports and community activities are "good for kids."

Research tells a similar story. A recent 3-year Canadian study in four provinces (including Québec) demonstrated that greater density of sports and recreational facilities in a neighbourhood that contains a secondary school is **linked to positive health behaviours in youth** (Dogget et al., 2021). An older study (Thomson et al., 2003) in lower income neighbourhoods reported positive health impacts in communities with neighbourhood pools, **specifically because of the social contacts, friendships, relationships that are created** and fostered with a local, community-based facility. Also, increasing access and participation in sports or physical activities is named as a key preventative strategy to ensuring youth well-being by the Québec Health and Social Services Ministry (MSSS, 2022). The fact

is: we risk losing the incredible resource of a sports community hub if this project is not seen to fruition.

Finally, well-being also comes from having a voice, having a say, especially for youth for whom it can play a transformative role in their development. In that spirit, I'd like to **centre the voices and perspectives of a few of our young people regarding the benefits of the new recreation centre.**

I am certain that all Mo Westers value the health and well-being of our young people. I look forward to all of us working together to secure more private funding and to support our MNA in securing additional government funding.

from Emmanuelle Khoury

Here is what some of our youth have to say in response to the question, "What does the new rec centre represent or mean to you?" (Thank you friends and neighbours who submitted these quotes.)

"I would love a rink where I can play in the summer and then go jump in a new nice pool." (Olivia)

"I am happy there will be a lot of different rooms for me to play in, like for basketball & hockey and I really want to have a place to play girls' hockey in MoWest!" (Tabitha, 7)

"The new rec centre will be great because there be a variety of things for me to do there with no holes in the roof, so I will not have to be so cold at the rink anymore!" (William, 10)

"For me, it's like a new beginning for the community of Montreal West. Because there are so many new things and activities that we will have when the arena and pool are redone. It will be fun for people of all ages because there will be something for everyone" (Simone, 10)

"I made a lot of great friends at Legion arena. I hope other kids with get to play for the Knights and make good memories like I did" (Michael, 10)

"I learned to skate in this arena and swim in this pool. I hope my children will learn to skate and swim in the new facilities. I would love to coach future generations of hockey players in the new arena. I imagine that our teams will be so much more successful with multipurpose rooms to work out in and a rink without puddles. I want to see our winning banners hanging in the arena." (Benjamin, 12)

The new rec centre will be such a fun place to go to with my friends and do the ac-

tivities and sports that I love. And I can invite my friend who is in a wheelchair to come too." (Sara, 13)

"It will be a place of new opportunities, i.e. jobs where a new generation of MoWest kids will grow up and go through swim team, camp, and such. It will be a place the entire town can benefit from and I'm excited to see the finished project" (Charlotte, 14)

"I wish that the children of our coming generation can have the experience of joy in this community that I did. I got to play with my friends on hockey teams, get coached by my mother and uncle with my grandparents watching in the stands. I want other kids to experience that." (Sebastien, 14)

"It will create more opportunities for everyone to come together because the day camp and CRA will be better organized. More kids will be able to find each other through sports and other activities. In general, it's obvious that all the facilities need to be renovated or completely redone to really be enjoyed to their full potential" (Olivier, 16)

"I think that the new rec center represents a safe space for children of our community. It allows for families to come together and kids to make friends. My siblings and I all learned to skate and swim there. It would be great if we had nicer facilities for future generations. Namely, without mould over their rink. It would be nice to do what you love in a clean environment. Having a rec center near us in our neighbourhood allows kids to start hockey and skating and swimming around the corner, instead of having to drive somewhere that they may chose not to go to. This makes it so easy to be active." (Juliette, 17)

"It is very easy to get lost in this entire new recreation project debate, it will without a doubt raise taxes, however, it is important to consider the community aspect, a community needs recreational facilities to thrive, and, unfortunately, our current facilities are substandard. As someone who works in the future stars program at the Legion Memorial Arena, I see the children who I work with complain of the cold, due to the poor insulation, and I see them struggle to skate over the bumps in the ice that are a result of the refrigeration system. This current debate makes me incredibly sad that we are so divided over this. This raises the question, are we willing to create such a divide in the community, and continue using these no longer adequate facilities over a small tax rise? I think the answer is clear, and if you still are unsure, you just need to think of the children, and their future children." (Kenzie Kolesnikow, 18)

Mailbox



A debt we cannot afford?

The Town is proposing to build a new indoor hockey arena and rebuild its outdoor swimming pool at Hodgson Field. On Friday, May 5, the Town held a registration to determine if a critical number of 391 citizens were opposed to the Council's amendment to the Loan by-law (for \$34 million), adopted on April 27. Preliminary reports have it that 599 citizens signed the register, triggering a referendum to be held according to the legislated timeline.

All agree it would be wonderful to have a beautiful new arena and swimming pool.

However, when the plan was proposed in 2017, the estimated cost for the new sports and recreation centre was \$20 million – with governments covering 66% of the bill; as of April 20, 2023, the estimated cost has grown to \$39.2 million – with the governments' portion of the burden now reduced to 32%. And no guarantee that the final figure will not continue to grow.

To pay for the estimated \$39.2 million, the Town has arranged for federal and provincial grants totalling \$12.6 million, pledged surplus MW past taxes totalling \$5.2 million (making these taxes unavailable for current street repair, etc.) and raised a promised \$4 million in pledges and sales tax refunds – leaving \$17.4 million (or 44% of the projected cost) to be paid for by MW tax payers.

The Town has said that taking on this debt will represent an added average annual

tax burden of \$436 per household for a 40-year mortgage at a 3% rate). In 2017, this added tax was estimated to be an average \$230 annually per household over 25 years.

For the record, the existing Legion Memorial Rink and swimming pool had an estimated cost of \$450,000 in 1964 (making them both 59 years old). In today's dollars, that \$450k becomes \$4.2 million. What the Town is asking of its citizens in 2023 is a far cry from what it was asking of them in 1964 (i.e., \$39.2m vs \$4.2m – almost ten times as much).

Montreal West is reputed to have the highest tax rate on the Island of Montreal. This negatively affects the saleability of our homes. If the project costs exceed the estimation, then MW homeowners will face a greater added tax burden than promised (above). It is in the public record how public projects in Montreal have a tendency to increase in cost after ground is broken (recall that the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics' cost grew from \$200 million to \$1.6 billion).

To reach the estimated \$39.2 million figure, the Town's published "Détails Coûts du Projet," published on April 20, 2023, shows the details of recent changes in cost from January to April of this year. In January, the published costs were \$32.5 million; in three months the estimated costs jumped up 21% (since 2017 the estimated costs have jumped up 96%).

One should note that to maintain the \$39.2 million (an-under-\$40-million) figure, the "imprévus" or "contingency" funds have been reduced from 8% to 5% (both percentages already low) or by \$353,000; the professional fees were kept the same (approx. 75% of these fees have reportedly been spent); and the financing costs have

been reduced from 5.5% to 0% – or by \$1.4 million. All of this, despite the project having increased in overall cost.

The Town tells us that the new recreation centre will increase the value and saleability of our homes. But what if the project cost goes higher than where it now stands? The Town assures us that because they have hired a project manager, there will be no cost overruns.

Having worked for many years as a construction project manager on large projects, I can assure you that such a person cannot guarantee that there will be no cost overruns. If she/he has written the scope of work her/himself and read the quotes carefully, this project manager can pretty well ensure that what was quoted on will come in close to, or at, what was budgeted. But if there are surprises, or any change in scope, then all bets are off. Going forward becomes a cost-plus situation – meaning all additional work is not based on fixed quotes.

In addition, no operating costs for the facilities are included in the suggested effect on taxes. Where are the studies that investigate the effect on traffic caused by the construction and the increased use anticipated? Have all by-laws been respected? Has the impact on the environment, and costs associated, that this construction and its long-term use will cause, been fully investigated?

I am not convinced that the Town has given us the proper assurances that going ahead will not lead us into debt that we cannot afford, and that this project will not place on homeowners an outsized tax burden that will ward off prospective buyers in the future.

*from Bob Soden
Easton Avenue*





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A decision to impact generations to come

On June 18 (Father's Day), Montreal West citizens will make a decision that will impact generations to come. Like all big decisions, it is important to gather all the facts and form your own opinions. We should all consider ourselves fortunate to live in a democratic society where we get the opportunity to debate important issues and vote in fair and free elections – and we should not take this for granted.

Our family has lived on Campbell Avenue for 25 years and hopefully we will still be around for decades to come. The vote on the sports and recreation centre project will, in my opinion, be the most significant municipal decision most of us will make during our time in this beautiful town.

The fact that we even have a pool and an arena today is in large part the result of a generous offer made almost 60 years ago by the local branch of the *Royal Canadian Legion* to donate the proceeds (\$100,000) from the sale of a lot of land to *Dominion Stores*. The land in question had originally been donated to the *Legion* by *Imperial Oil* in 1946 for a Memorial Park. Without the vision of these community-minded leaders (including the *Civic Recreation Association* and other local organizations), Hodgson Field would likely still be just that – a field.

In 1964, a letter about the *Civic Recreation Centre* project went out from the *Legion* to the citizens of Montreal West. It was signed by **Lee Donahue**, the President of the Montreal West (Quebec 95) Branch. The letter speaks for itself and should be read in full (so I will ask the town to add it to the FAQ section of their website). I would, however, like to draw your attention to the last two paragraphs:

"Permit the *Legion Branch* to participate in a capital outlay required for this project. Permit the Branch to exchange a passive memorial for another of lasting benefit. Because some young sons of Montreal West sold their tomorrows, we can plan and pledge ours to their memory."

"Please go out and talk this over, favourably, with your neighbour. Tell them this sum of \$100,000.00 dollars must be accepted now or be lost both to the *Legion* and the Town forever."

The *Legion* also made it clear at the time that the \$100,000 contribution would only be made if a skating rink formed part of the new recreation centre. For whatever reason(s),

this was very important to the members of the *Legion* and their vision of the future.

You might be asking yourself at this point whether any of this even matters and my answer to you would be, "it depends". I can only speak for myself, and I believe it is important to invest in the present and the future while remembering I live in a society that was paid for by the past.

The words which remain with me the most are "lasting benefit". These are the words I will have in mind when I head to the Legion Memorial Rink to vote on Father's Day. Who knows – maybe I will go with Mr. Donahue's son, **Steve**, who still lives on Campbell Avenue with his family.

Geoffrey Adams
21 Campbell Avenue



Who is the Montreal West Citizens Group?

We are a loose group of MoWest residents who came together around a nucleus of questions and concerns regarding the sports and recreation centre.

We are not a political party, registered charity or organization, nor do we have these aspirations.

We are residents and taxpayers like you, with jobs, families and busy lives. We have spent hours at council meetings, poring over legislation, grant guidelines and by-laws and crunching numbers to understand this project.

We have nothing to gain from the "no" side winning, other than a hope that it will prompt the Town to produce a more economically feasible and well-rounded fitness and recreation centre that we believe will better meet the needs of our community. A centre that will allow our Town to continue funding work on roads and other infrastructure, as well as all the current services provided by our Town.

We understand and value the benefits of physical fitness and team sports to those young and old. Many of our kids have skated and played hockey at the arena. We support an intergenerational facility that welcomes people of all ages and abilities – from kids to teens to middle aged and senior populations.

We appreciate the work the Town has done in securing government funding and **we do not want that to be lost**. We have read the grant documentation and believe that an alternative plan without a rink is not

only viable but will increase recreational offerings better than the current plan, and the Ministry will approve it.

We are disappointed that the Town has not provided residents with any other options that could satisfy more recreational needs of the Town at a lower cost.

We are residents with questions and concerns about the long-term financial sustainability of this project – not only building it, but operating it for the next 40 years. We are looking for transparency and evidence-based planning.

If you have similar concerns, we encourage you to vote No in June.

Joanna Duy,
on behalf of the Montreal West Citizens Group

To join our email list, contact:
montrealwestcitizensgroup@gmail.com

Qui est le regroupement de citoyens de Mo-Ouest ?

Nous sommes un groupe informel de résidents de MO qui se sont rassemblés autour d'un noyau de questions et de préoccupations concernant le centre des sports et des loisirs.

Nous ne sommes pas un parti politique, un organisme de bienfaisance enregistré ou une organisation, et nous n'avons pas ces aspirations.

Nous sommes des résidents et des contribuables comme vous, avec des emplois, des familles et des vies bien remplies. Nous avons passé des heures à assister à des réunions du conseil, à étudier la législation, les lignes directrices relatives aux subventions et les règlements, et à faire des calculs pour comprendre ce projet.

Nous n'avons rien à gagner à ce que le camp du "non" l'emporte, si ce n'est l'espoir que cela incitera la ville à produire un centre de conditionnement physique et de loisirs plus économiquement réalisable et plus complet qui, selon nous, répondra mieux aux besoins de notre communauté. Un centre qui permettra à notre ville de continuer à financer les travaux sur les routes et autres infrastructures, ainsi que tous les services actuellement fournis par notre ville.

Nous comprenons et apprécions les avantages de la forme physique et des sports d'équipe pour les jeunes et les moins jeunes. Beaucoup de nos enfants ont patiné et joué au hockey à l'aréna. Nous sommes favorables à une installation intergénérationnelle qui accueille des personnes de tous âges et de toutes capacités - des enfants aux adolescents en passant par les personnes d'âge moyen et les personnes âgées.

Nous apprécions le travail accompli par la ville pour obtenir des fonds publics et

Mailbox

nous ne voulons pas que ces fonds soient perdus. Nous avons lu la documentation relative à la subvention et nous pensons qu'un plan alternatif sans patinoire est non seulement viable, mais qu'il augmentera l'offre de loisirs mieux que le plan actuel, et que le ministère l'approuvera.

Nous sommes déçus que la ville n'ait pas proposé aux résidents d'autres options susceptibles de répondre à leurs besoins en matière de loisirs à moindre coût.

Nous sommes des résidents qui s'interrogent et s'inquiètent de la viabilité financière à long terme de ce projet - non seulement de sa construction, mais aussi de son exploitation pendant les 40 prochaines années. Nous sommes à la recherche de transparence et d'une planification basée sur des faits.

Si vous avez les mêmes préoccupations, nous vous encourageons à voter non en juin.

*Joanna Dwy,
au nom de regroupement de citoyens
de Montréal-Ouest*

Rejoignez notre liste de diffusion :
montrealwestcitizensgroup@gmail.com



The cost of NOT building a new recreation centre

It is with great interest that I've been following the debates about the new recreational facility. I've read the financial arguments against it, and I would like to offer another perspective: the costs of not following through with a new recreation centre for the Montreal West community. **Focus on physical and mental health related issues is critical.**

A welcoming and multifunctional recreation centre on our own turf will offer a responsible and pro-active antidote to the rising physical and mental health challenges of modern society brought on by increased levels of isolation and indolence.

It is very risky to assume suitable alternatives will continue to be available in communities outside of our Town.

We can't predict what will happen to neighbouring facilities, but we have an opportunity here to ensure a recreational space for MoWesters.

Convenience is king, especially for those of us who are only borderline motivated to make the effort.

Physical activity and a sense of belonging are essential elements of wellness. The easier it is to access (time, effort, cost) recreational spaces, the more likely we are to engage.

In this moment, we can't predict all the activities that will be trending over the next 50 years, but we do know that providing a space is key. The layout of the centre as proposed offers endless opportunities for creative minds to maximize its use and involve more citizens than ever before. Even those who haven't seen themselves involved in the past, may find a place here.

Much time has already been invested into this centre's research, and it is clear the monetary cost is as low as it will ever be.

This does not, of course, dismiss the reality of the impact of raised taxes on each household. But I do hope each of us will think deeply about the potential of this investment, and then compare it to a future without it.

A centre built for us, by us, will have more pull and prospect of engaging the maximum number of citizens and reinforcing the small-town community vibe. We have an opportunity here to invest in our social, physical, and mental wellbeing today and for many generations to come.

P. S. Having access to a local arena and learning to skate in an informal, non-intimidating environment is a beloved part of the

Canadian experience. It connects us. Whether we are doing the skating or freezing in the bleachers, being in an arena is something most of us can identify with. Local arenas are also the birthplace of the skating greats that inspire us and distinguish this nation on the international stage. One doesn't need to be a skater to recognize the great significance ice rinks hold for so many Canadians. Local arenas are an investment in identity and dreams.

from Anne Roop



Coming together in the pursuit of a shared goal:

**to build a healthier,
stronger community**

"To leave the world a bit better; whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived—that is to have succeeded."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

More than a decade ago, while researching neighbourhoods to live in, my wife Jessica and I drove through Montreal West and happened upon three separate street hockey games. Kids were outside being active, having fun and their parents and neighbours were also outdoors – gardening, reading on the porch, or sipping a coffee... we looked at each other and knew that this was the type of neighbourhood that we wanted to be part of.

Dynamic, close-knit, active – a real community. Montreal West has not disappointed. It has been all of those things for us and for our friends and neighbours. We are raising our three kids here and grateful for it.

We have enjoyed watching them learn to swim, skate, play hockey and soccer within walking distance of our home. Most recently, the circle has extended with our eldest daughter teaching children to skate at the Legion Memorial Rink. Visiting grandparents, aunts and uncles who walk from our home to the field, pool and arena remark on how fortunate we all are. Recreational facilities are the centre of our community fabric and they create value for families wanting to move to Montreal West. Our sports and recreational activities nurture the next generation and offer resources to all generations to live healthy and active lives.

As president of the Board of the *Civic Recreation Association (CRA)*, I know the new sports and recreation centre project is a massive opportunity for our community. It is our chance to leave a legacy for future

Le Jardin d'Enfants
Curzon
Creative Preschool

A Parent Cooperative
in Montreal West

Providing a strong, educational
foundation for children aged 3-5 since
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Fournir une base éducative solide pour
les enfants de 3 à 5 ans depuis 1959

www.curzonpreschool.com

generations to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Montreal West. Sport and the right to play benefits all of us. It keeps our kids motivated and healthy, and it brings us together – as neighbours, as friends.

On behalf of the *CRA*, we acknowledge and appreciate the discussion and open debate around the cost and impact of this facility. This is necessary to ensure a positive outcome for all. However, the time has come for us to work together towards a shared goal – to improve the quality of life in our Town through an updated sports and recreation centre.

As someone who commits more than ten hours a week volunteering in this community, coaching soccer and hockey and serving in a leadership position, I can attest firsthand to the critical need to update our facilities.

The *CRA* is excited about the potential of running year-round, accessible programming for a diverse age group centred around a modern facility. Last year, there were 1,800 registrations in our programs. Of those, 1200 registrations Montreal West residents. For a Town with a population of approximately 5,000 that is an impressive level of engagement.

A recreation centre, open year-round, allows us the opportunity to offer programming during the day and on weekends instead of weeknights only. The arena will be open a full twelve months rather than the current seven, which will enhance hockey and skating programs as well as summer camp experiences for both our kids and those from nearby communities who wish to benefit from the high-quality, well run summer activities we offer. The year long accessibility will generate incremental rental revenues for the Town, absorbing excess demand for ice time on the Island of Montreal. Something we have seen neighbourhood communities leverage to their advantage.

We can bemoan the missed opportunity to advance the project when the last referendum was held in Town, and when construction costs were much lower. But that won't change anything. The time to act is now, before we miss another opportunity.

We are ready to start working on new and enhanced programming, we just need the proper facilities. We are committed to keeping our programming fees as low as possible, ensuring we provide accessible and quality activities for our community.

The opportunity to obtain a government grant that will cover a significant portion of the cost is something that can't be overlooked either. Not moving forward with the proposed plan poses its own set of risks. There is certainly a credibility issue for any further projects the Town wishes to pursue should they not make use of the grant.

When considering the recreation centre, one should look beyond a short-term cost

hike and more towards the opportunity to leave a legacy for future generations, to pay forward Montreal West's spirit and sense of community exemplified in the physical community centre.

Yes, moving ahead with the new sports and recreation centre will have a positive ROI for homeowners, but there is another, better reason for us to come together on this issue. It is the right thing to do.

Nurturing our young people, ensuring they have great access to quality sports facilities and programs will keep them healthy and build resilience. After living through three years of pandemic restrictions where many of our kids and teenagers were stuck behind a screen, isolated from each other and their communities, we need to equip them with the resources and support their need to succeed.

And for those of us who are already established, who have homes and careers – or are already retired. It is good for us too. We also need the resources to be able to move our bodies, clear our heads and strengthen our social connections – whether it is through aquafit in the new pool, stretch and strength in the new gymnasium or free skate all year round in the new arena.

Let's move ahead together – for ourselves, for each other and for future generations. Not for ourselves alone, but for our community. My fellow board members and I will be voting in favour of the new recreation centre on June 18, and we encourage our members to the same. Any Montreal West resident 18 years old and older can vote, so both parents or any young adults you have in your home are eligible.

Emlyn McCutcheon
MWCRA President



More money might be available

Wednesday, May 3, as part of the annual post-budget accountability exercise during which opposition critics directly question Cabinet ministers on government spending, I had the opportunity to ask **Isabelle Charest**, the Minister responsible for Sports, Recreation and the Outdoors if the Town of Montreal West could receive an increase in its provincial subsidy for the proposed sports and recreation centre whose costs have increased by 32% due to rising inflation and overheating in the construction industry.

I was happy to learn from the Minister

that a budget has been put in place for infrastructure projects directly impacted by rising costs. Montreal West residents deserve modern, accessible, safe and environmentally sustainable facilities for our recreation, civic and community activities. I hope that a fair share will be dedicated to Montreal West. I also invited the Minister responsible to visit the current facilities and bear witness to the state of disrepair.

Thank you to my colleague the MNA **Marquette Enrico Ciccone** for his support in this very important file for me and to the minister for her response and for agreeing to visit the current facilities!

I invite you to listen to our full exchange here fb.watch/kzJfWYuKUn/.

from Désirée McGraw,
Member of Quebec's National Assembly
for Montreal West and NDG

Il y a possiblement de l'argent de disponible...

Le mercredi 3 mai dernier, dans le cadre de l'exercice annuel de reddition de comptes post-budgétaire au cours duquel les porte-parole de l'opposition interrogent directement les ministres sur les dépenses gouvernementales j'ai eu l'occasion de demander à **Isabelle Charest**, ministre responsable du Sport, du Loisir et du Plein air si la Ville de Mo-Ouest peut recevoir une bonification de sa subvention provinciale pour le projet d'un nouveau centre sportif et récréatif dont les coûts ont augmenté de 32% à cause de la montée inflationniste et de la surchauffe dans l'industrie de la construction.

J'ai été heureuse d'apprendre de la ministre qu'un budget a justement été mis en place pour les projets d'infrastructures qui sont affectés par une hausse des coûts comme ici. Les résidents de Mo-Ouest méritent des installations sportives, récréatives et communautaires modernes et sécuritaires. Le gouvernement doit tout faire en sa capacité pour s'assurer que des projets importants comme celui-ci se réalisent. J'espère qu'une juste part sera dédiée à Montréal-Ouest. J'ai également invité la ministre responsable à visiter les installations actuelles et à témoigner de leur état de délabrement.

Merci à mon collègue le député **Marquette Enrico Ciccone** pour son appui dans ce dossier très important pour moi et à la ministre responsable pour sa réponse et pour avoir accepté de visiter les installations actuelles!

Je vous invite à écouter l'intégralité de notre échange ici fb.watch/kzJfWYuKUn/.

de Désirée McGraw,
députée de Mo-Ouest et de NDG
à l'Assemblée nationale du Québec



Support from Rotary Club of MoWest and NDG

The *Rotary Club of Montreal West and NDG* fully supports the Town of Montreal West's initiative in building a new sports and recreation centre with an arena, swimming pool, a gymnasium and a couple of much needed multi purpose rooms.

The *Rotary Club* has enjoyed an 80-year relationship with the various administrations and has made use of the Town Hall and its facilities as well as the present very difficult arena. The Town has been very good to us in allowing us to meet and carry out our charitable work.

In return we have also contributed to this Town to the tune of \$150,000 for various project's such as:

- 1997 For Community Centre \$90,000
(of total \$230,000 budget)
- 1998 Railroad Block Tower renovation \$4,000
- 1999 Refurbishment of War Memorial \$9,000
- 2000 Music Room amplifier \$425
- 2001 Music Room air conditioning \$4,600
- 2007 Playground equipment, Strathearn Park \$10,000
- 2008 Music Room dishwasher \$3,154
- 2010 Royal West Academy field \$23,000
- 2016 Music room and Assembly Hall refurbished pianos \$1,700
- 2018 Assembly Hall industrial refrigerator \$2,500

Also in Music Room, we supplied the stove and round tables.

The Town Hall has served as a multipurpose facility for too long, and the Town has been very generous with the use of the premises, but they are getting congested. The same room used for ballet classes is then used for a charitable function, or an exercise class or for play rehearsals.

While many Rotary members are not MoWesters, but from NDG, they have worked tirelessly to improve the quality and services that benefit all the residents of this Town, and we will continue to do so.

A Town like Montreal West needs to upgrade facilities and to accommodate services and, in so doing, is also gifting forward for generations to come.

A new sports and recreation centre will improve the quality of its citizens, and it will be something that we can all take pride in.

*The Rotary Club
of Montreal West and NDG*

Jack Kowalski

continued from page 1

meeting the right people and being in the right place at the right time, Wilderness Tours prospered and the brothers looked to Quebec and the Lachine Rapids.

Much of the book deals with the legal, technical and financial ups and downs in dealing with both the federal and provincial governments. Jack was the one to come to Montreal because he studied some French in university in the States. His Yankee French helped him deal with: protecting the rapids (plans were underway to use it as a source of hydro power), fighting for a permit to operate in "unnavigable waters," safety and insurance battles, ship designs and new motors and finding skilled people who can shoot the rapids. In June, 1983, the first Saute-Moutons were launched from the Clock Tower pier in Old Montreal. Safety always being a primary issue, hundreds of thousands of riders have shot the rapids with no major issues over the past four decades.

In the early 90s, Jack and his brother decided to expand their enterprise to Niagara Falls, more specifically the area just below the falls. There had been earlier attempts but the narrow gorge below the falls had overturned many a vessel. New boat designs and engines were needed to fight the powerful eddies in the area, and once again their willingness to find the right people, make the right contacts and take the financial gambles, led to success. *Whirlpool Jet* was born in the fall of 1991.

The last chapter in the book describes how Jack and one of his employees chased someone up river who stole one of his boats from the pier. It had the feel of a James Bond movie. It was tense and exciting and the good guys won fighting the thief in the middle of the St. Lawrence.

There is something about Jack Kowalski's life that reminds one of the old Mississippi Riverboat gamblers. They find a way to bounce back on their feet no matter how grim the situation looks. They epitomize the American capitalist spirit. It takes guts to ride the whitewater rapids and even more guts to earn your living doing it for the past 40 years.

For a man who could live anywhere, why settle in Montreal West? There were a number of factors. It was reasonable in price. Anglos were leaving the province because of the language laws in the early 90s. It was a safe dead-end street to raise his two young sons, Jérémie and Jonathan. It was almost equal distance to go to his gym in Côte Saint-Luc (he's a handball fanatic), the Old Port for work and the airport for his frequent trips to international trade fairs. As soon as he saw the cliff top view of LaSalle and highway 20, he made an offer. Another gamble that seems to have worked out. If you ever meet him at Randy's Bistro, I'm sure he will bend your ear with many a tale.

Web sites and phone numbers:

Jetboatingmontreal.com

514-284-9607

Wildernesstours.com

1-888-723-8669

Whirlpooljet.com

1-877-979-0596



Edinburgh Elementary



Inbar Shahmoon

— A sixth grader's perspective —

Grade 6 is special thanks to two reasons: my teacher and my class. I am in a split class with Ms. **Chelsea Suan** who is brave enough to teach two grades and two languages! I had the chance to interview her.

Inbar (IS): Is it hard to be a teacher for technically four jobs which is six subjects (two grades and both subjects for each grade)?

Chelsea (CS): It is very hard at first, but you get used to it. I have ways to stay organized and without them I wouldn't be able to function without being overwhelmed.

(IS): How do you stay organized?

(CS): To stay organized I have a few ways. I have a visual calendar which helps me with my personal and teaching life, I have ways of color coding the important things, and I also do weekly planning on the weekend.

(IS): Why did you choose to be with grade 5/6?

(CS): I wasn't sure if I should go with grade 5/6 as I worked with grade 2 last year but I decided I should try it out.

(IS): What subject do you like teaching the most? Why?

(CS): I like teaching math because it was surprising. I wasn't amazing at math but surprisingly I like teaching it. I also like teaching art, but it requires a lot of time.

(IS): What is your favorite thing about Edinburgh?

(CS): I like the community because the teachers and students are connected. The school also has a positive atmosphere, and it is in a good location (more local).

Ms. Chelsea has made the experience in a split class super fun. She is a great example of our wonderful community at Edinburgh!

from Inbar Shahmoon

Elizabeth Ballantyne

Earth Day clean up

April 21, just before Earth Day, the grade 5 and 6 students took a walk around Montreal West. They were pleased to see that there was very little trash lying around, but they cleaned up any litter that they did find. The students were greeted warmly by community members and thanked for their efforts. It was a wonderful way to spend a gorgeous sunny Friday afternoon!

EBS Earth Day clean up



Composting at EBS!

Elizabeth Ballantyne students and staff members are taking action for the environment by demonstrating to other schools and community members how to compost. They have successfully rolled out a school-wide introductory level composting program. Students are diverting paper towel from the school's waste stream by adding collection bins into every classroom.

A group of dedicated composting champions is taking responsibility for sorting through and emptying the bins each day. The paper towel is then collected by the Town's existing composting program.

The project began after cycle 3 students conducted a Waste Audit as part of the Eco Schools Program – they were disheartened to see the amount of waste that was being produced. Paper towel was identified as a major contributor to the school's waste and so a plan was hatched to divert it into a composting system. This initiative has been embraced by everyone, because we know that every little action matters!

IODE



IODE Silence to Sound Award

This spring, *IODE* national councillor, **Janet King**, met with the 2023 Silence to Sound Award winner, **Emily Jackson**.

Emily, a student at McGill University is currently completing her Master of Science (Applied) degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders with specialization in Speech-Language Pathology. Emily shared her background and how happy she was to receive the Silence to Sound Award. She shared that moving from British Columbia to Montreal to attend the program had been a large expense and the award indeed helped her mitigate this financial burden and assisted with her ability to attend summer school.

Her plans include returning to British Columbia to set up her practice where she wishes to focus on young children. Due to excess fluid in her ears, Emily navigated three operations and much therapy to allow her to pursue her goals. Her career choice was made in order to help other young children in similar situations.

Extra Miles

Extra Miles senior visiting program celebrates 25 years!

MoWest United Church's outreach project, **Extra Miles senior visiting program** is celebrating 25 years! Image that! 25 years of one-to-one friendly visiting with isolated older people and musical concerts and 15 years of award-winning intergenerational programming.

Remember January, 1998?

All of us are transitioning from a time of extreme isolation when people were deeply affected in mind, body and spirit from the pandemic. Now think further back – did you live in Montreal or surrounding areas in January, 1998 – 25 years ago? Were you one of the 600,000 people displaced by the Ice Storm that paralysed our Island and surrounding community for 30 plus days? **Joan Foster** and her colleagues were on the front line in the Ice Storm of 1998 and very involved in moving the older and frailer members of our community from cold dark homes to shelters. One impactful story for Joan was “The family that braved the roads and drove from Ottawa to pick up their elderly parent at the Loyola shelter and their parent refused to go back to Ottawa with them! Why? Because this was the happiest this person had been in years watching the children play and always having someone to talk to.” Following the ice storm, the CLSC stated they had to do something to address the isolation of older adults. That was when MWUC stepped up and began *Extra Miles* senior visiting program.

Research shows: social isolation is a public health risk. In our community, there

is a high percentage of older adults who live on their own without support. Based on research by **Julianne Holt-Lundstad**, there are some surprising predictors for a long healthy life. Among other predictors, did you know having a flu shot is a stronger predictor than exercise and that the top predictors are your close connections and social integration, interactions with people?

One-to-one friendly visits

One-to-one friendly visits maintain the well-being of and provides companionship for older adults ensuring they feel valued and connected to their community.

The impact of one-to-one visits: There was an older person who called 911 because they were feeling unwell and went to the emergency room almost weekly. This person was referred to *Extra Miles* and started receiving weekly friendly volunteer visits. After regular friendly visits were established, the weekly visits to the emergency room became less frequent. This example demonstrates how connection can reduce anxiety and loneliness and increase feelings of security and motivation.

Partners, volunteers and funders

Extra Miles does not stand alone. During our 25-year history, deep and essential roots have developed in the community. *Extra Miles* works with CLSC, MW, our partners, volunteers and funders to ensure people are connected and safe. The collaborations, resource sharing and intergenerational initiatives contribute to a stronger program and



Extra Miles: Marie and Linda, friendly visits

healthier and happier older adults in our community.

On behalf of the older adults who are the foundation of the *Extra Miles* senior visiting program, we are celebrating 25 years of connection made possible because of the amazing volunteers, MWUC, collaboration, partners and funders.

Join us!

Do you want to join the team, have a story to share, want more information? Please contact **Tracie** at **919-5262** or by email at extramiles.senior@gmail.com.

from Tracie Swim
Extra Miles at MWUC and
WIN Intergenerational Network
Member, MW Seniors Advisory Committee





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Scouts



The Montreal West Scout Group is finishing our first "normal" year since 2019. We have had a few struggles, but over all it has been a great year. We have returned to camp weekends and will offer one per season next year. After all, what is "Scouting" without going camping and experiencing the outdoors? Our meetings are all located at Edinburgh School, but our Beaver Colony will move to Thursday nights in September. Registration is on going online but our regular weekly meetings are now finished until September. Registration information will be in the August issue of *The Informer*.

We are always looking for adults to become Scouters to keep our Scout Group alive and well. If you are over 18 and would be interested in becoming a Scouter, please contact **Karen Johnstone** at 717-5696 for the details.

Beavers

Sometimes we have the older sections take part in an activity with the younger sections. Six of our Scouts came to a meeting to show our Beavers how to set up a camp site. The Scouts very patiently instructed the Beavers how to set up a tent and we pretended to have a campfire with make believe marshmallows (Rice Krispie squares on skewers)!

One of our Beavers was lucky enough to spend an extended holiday in Japan with his mother and sisters. The family came for a visit and did a wonderful presentation on their exciting adventure. At our last meeting, four white tail Beavers swam up to the Cub Pack where they were greeted by **Akela Darzee**.

Cubs

The Cub Pack were busy preparing their cars for their annual KUB KAR RALLY. It was a very noisy evening as the Cubs, their friends and families

cheered on the participants. Many thanks to former Akela, **David Roy**, for once again helping with the preparations, setting up the track and running the race. Three of our Cubs and Akela Darzee are spending a week at Lac Lovering near Magog this summer – pictures in the September issue.

Scouts

The excitement in May for our Scout Troop was attending a "Tri-District Camporee" at Lac Lovering. Fourteen youth and four Scouters attended from Mo

West. There were 20 troops from Quebec, Ontario, the US and even from Africa. They were so closely packed in that they were unable to have a campfire on their site – all cooking was done on propane stoves. The weekend was full of games, travois races and exchanging badges. What a treat to meet Scouts from other parts of the world.

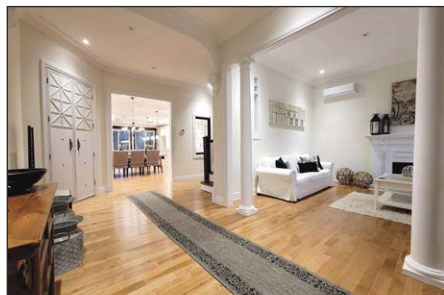
Venturers

We are planning to open a Venturer Company in September for youth 15-17. The Company does not have weekly meetings as youth at this age are busy with school and part time jobs. They plan their own meetings that may take place in the gym at Edinburgh school or other activities such as wall climbing, camping, hiking, biking, community service or even going to a movie. Whatever they decide and is approved by their advisor. For more information call **Karen Johnstone** at 717-5696.

Rovers

A few years ago, one of our Rovers, Jonathan Halliday, attended a special program in BC, sponsored by the Canadian Wildlife Federation for older youth and young adults. This year another Rover, **Mathias Cantu**, is doing a similar adventure on the east coast. Look for Mathias's article in *The Informer* in the fall.

Pretend Campfire - Beavers and Scouts



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Guides



The MoWest Guiding units were so successful at selling all their cases of cookies, we are now helping out a local unit in NDG who are having trouble selling theirs. Crisis averted! We have found more cookies!! There will be cookies available for purchase at the Community Night on June 6. Come on out and find out what the local units have been up to.

Here is a sneak peek into our activities since the last *Informer* was published.

Guides

The Guides held a sleepover in late April. The girls planned and cooked their dinner and breakfast. They all wanted to get up extra early to hike over to the hump to watch the sunrise. Saturday morning, they went on an adventure exploring Montreal using all forms of public transit. The girls planned their route, ensuring they could ride on a train, a bus and a metro. They made their way over to NDG Park where they enjoyed playing games and a picnic lunch prior to returning to the meeting hall where their parents picked them up.

As the Guiding year starts to wind down, the girls who are in their last year of Guides are often given the opportunity to lead the meetings. The older girls have taken this on with great enthusiasm. For the last month of meetings, the younger members, in teams, planned and ran the meetings in teams of two or on their own. It is fantastic to see them displaying their leadership skills at such a young age.



Photo: Christine Downey

Sparks and Embers

The Sparks and Embers had great fun working on a special Women in Engineering challenge. The families were asked to send their daughters to the meeting with materials they gathered from their recycle bins, for the purpose of protecting something which was going to be dropped from different heights. Brown Owl was so intrigued, she asked if she could come out of retirement for this meeting. Many people, upon reading the email,

thought the girls were going to be dropping eggs from different heights, until they broke. Well, concerned with not wanting to waste food, it was decided the girls would drop cylindrical ice cubes outside of the meeting space. The girls gathered on the grass while each team took turns tossing their creation off from the first landing of the MW United Church steps. Two teams were successful at protecting their ice cube. So, they had an opportunity to then toss their ice cube from the upper landing. By this time, none of the structures could keep the ice cubes intact.

While completing the World Stage badge under the Connect and Question theme, the girls explored problem solving strategies. One of the ways they put their skills to work was through playing a game of musical chairs. They played the traditional way, where a child would be "out" if they could not find a chair when the music stopped. Then, with the modified way, using their problem-solving skills, even after a round when chairs would be removed, the girls figured out a way to include everyone in the game. They came up with the idea of sitting on one another's laps. They found this version of the game to be a great deal more fun. Especially when there were only two chairs left for 18 girls!

Registration

Registration is now open for all girls who would like to join the 2023-2024 Guiding year. Girls are permitted to try two meetings for free before registering. Please contact pearl.barnowl@gmail.com if you would like more information. We are looking forward to seeing your daughter this fall!





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Children's Library



Canadian Children's Book Week

A big celebration of children's literature, Canadian Children's Book Week (CCBW) is a much-anticipated annual event allowing Canadian authors and illustrators to connect with their readers. This year, the CCBW ran from April 30 to May 6. We were privileged to welcome Montreal illustrator **Sophie Casson** who is the recipient of many picture book honours and awards for her work. She regularly gives workshops in schools and libraries and has been the president of *Illustration Québec*. She has illustrated many picture books – we have

most of them in our collection. During the workshop at the library, Sophie presented her new album (with CD) *Sing Out!* that features some all-time favorite folk and children's songs. She then assisted the participants with the creation of their own weasel puppet, and we all sang together *Pop Goes the Weasel*. Such a lovely activity with books, craft and songs!

The other author we hosted for CCBW – **Carey Sookocheff** – talked about her creative process as an illustrator from her home in Toronto. Students from kindergarten, grades 1 and 2 from Elizabeth Ballantyne School had a virtual visit with her, listened to Carey reading

her story *A Person Can Be* which explores how people can experience different emotions at the same time and then tried their hands at drawing different emotions, as instructed by the illustrator. If you wish to get familiar with her gentle style, pass by to borrow her books.

Summer TD Reading Program

The TD Summer Reading Club at our library will run from June 15 to August 31. Many activities will be offered in Strathearn Park, and children will be able to read all summer and track their reading. This year, due to the renovation work in the Elizabeth Ballantyne building, unfortunately, we will not be able to operate as usual and the library will only be available for borrowing via our service *Books in a Bag*.

Nevertheless, save the date for the party which will mark the beginning of the summer period. Thursday, June 15, we will have a special concert in Strathearn Park with **Shawny** (shawnykidsmusic.com). You will then be able to pick up your reading passports and other materials as well. Details will be available on our website, so please check it out for latest information.

Bill Foster Writing Contest Awards Ceremony

We received a record number of entries for the *Bill Foster Writing Contest*. The jury members are currently reading and evaluating and will soon be ready to announce the six best texts – three for the age group of 6 to 8 and three for 9 and up years old. The names of the winners of this year's Contest will be announced at an event in Strathearn Park on Saturday, June 17. Even if you have not participated in the contest, you are welcome to encourage the budding writers. We hope to hear some of the stories during the event. Members of the jury will be present, as well as **Joan Foster**, who will have the pleasure to meet the participants in the *Bill Foster Writing Contest 2023*.



Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri / lun, mer, jeu, ven :
10 am-6 pm
Tue / mar : 10 am-8 pm
Sat-Sun / sam-dim : 10 am-3 pm

484-7194

info@mwcl.ca mwcl.ca

Montreal West Public Library

MWPL's 50th anniversary

Celebrating all year and celebrating our volunteers

June 19, 1973 was the day the Montreal West Public Library was granted the letters patent constituting them a corporation under the name: La Bibliothèque publique de Montréal-Ouest / The Montreal West Public Library. In honour of these 50 years, we will be celebrating with the entire community on June 6 at the Community Night at Davis Park. Please join us for some cake!

Also, in June, stop by the library to visit our exhibition of the history and timeline of the library. It is not all institutions that make it to the ripe age of 50, so please come and see all the highlights that enabled us to reach this milestone.

June 14, please join us for our first ever tea tasting. We have been serving tea in this

library for many years and it is the time to come and pick your favourite. The tea tasting will be held from 2 to 5 pm; come join us and vote for your favourite tea supplied by our local tea merchant, *Totem Tea & Spice* on Notre-Dame in St Henri. Space will be limited as well our teacups, so please register.

This June, the library will also be highlighting specific collections as we celebrate both Pride Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Library cards are here!

You too can now be a card-carrying member of the public library! Not registered? Why not come in and do so? It is free for all MoWesters. Bring proof of residency and

you will get access all our services including our eBook collection and streaming service.

On-going activities

- **Knit and Natter with Ann:** every Thursday from 3 to 5 pm – no sign up required.
- **Seed Bank:** seeds are still available.
- **Tea and books:** the 3rd Wednesday of every month

481-7522

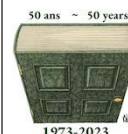
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mwlib.requests@gmail.com

Visit us online: mwpl.ca

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Saturday:
noon-6 pm



MW United

...the brick one

Books, books, and more books – thanks to all those who helped with our Book Browse Plus. We had many good helpers, doubled our income, and are feeling some encouraged. Whoopee!

June is abuzz...

June 4 is a big day at “the brick one.” First there is Worship at 10 am, then everyone rushes home to gather their pets as we will hold a blessing of the pets at noon. Weather permitting, it will be on the Westminster/Curzon lawn. Bring your pets of any persuasion and **Rev. Mark** is happy to give them a blessing. If your pet doesn't travel, bring a picture and receive a blessing that way. The same is true if you have lost a pet recently. A picture or a collar, leash, whatever will do nicely to remember them and acknowledge what they meant to you. And the rest of us are welcome to attend also to admire, pat or sing along with those who do come.

Following that, an Indoor Labyrinth Walk will be held in Wadsworth Hall between 2 and 4 pm. This is our last of this season. Plans for the fall have not yet been made, but we are hopeful. Let us know if these matter to you. No one can come all the time, but it helps to know there are folk out there looking for the opportunity. The outdoor Labyrinth on the Ballantyne lawn remains in place for your use 24-7.

Hot dog – it's lunch!

Sunday school winds up its season on June 11 with a hot dog lunch after the service. Our group has been growing some lately, so that bodes well for the future. Sunday school will resume likely mid-September with **Merrie** at the helm again.

We're here through July

Every Sunday in July at 10 am, the church is in session in a relaxed way. We begin services with you requesting your favourite hymns. Choir may be seated amongst the congregation, and lemonade takes over for the fellowship time.

August is our Sabbath rest

Our staff (and volunteers) take a break beginning in August, returning after Labour Day. Worship resumes on September 10. Phone messages are picked up during this time, FYI.

Whatever your summer holds for you, may it bring blessings to you are yours.

Best regards from Rev. Mark and all of us at MWUC

from Susan Upham

St. Philip's

Summer is upon us, and that means our community garden is in full bloom. In conjunction with Incredible Edibles, this is a free community garden, and everyone is welcome to share in the produce (reasonable quantities – leave some for others, please). Lots of herbs are available: thyme, oregano, summer and winter savory, chives, basil, sage, lavender, rosemary, tarragon and more in the herb spiral; mint in the old stump; lovage near the strawberries and also in the guild behind the spruce tree; lemon balm in the bed with the peas; garden sorrel in the pocket forest on Connaught. Strawberries, lettuce, spinach, radishes and snow peas will be available by the middle part of June. By July, there will be beans, blackberries, raspberries and more. Thank you to our team of volunteers – both church members and neighbours.

Bishop **Mary Irwin-Gibson** will be visiting on June 4 for Confirmation; this will also be the last Sunday for the choir until September. Sunday, June 11, at 5 pm, the *West End Jazz Project* will provide music for Jazz Vespers. This will be a very informal time of music interspersed with readings and reflections. The free-will offering will go to our Tri-Parish+ Friends Refugee Sponsorship program, as we prepare to submit another application to the government.

from Fr. Pratt

St. Ignatius of Loyola

Missionary Partnership update

Early in 2022, St Ignatius partnered with St. Willibrord in Verdun to form our first Missionary Partnership. At the time, St. Willibrord's was only seeing about 30 parishioners every Sunday, so their community felt a strong calling to transform their parish “from maintenance to mission.”

Following the creation of this partnership, members of our congregation were invited to discern whether to “go” out on mission to support the renewal of St. Willibrord or remain at St. Ignatius and “grow” in their involvement in ministry. At Pentecost, nearly 30 of our parishioners decided to leave St. Ignatius and go out on mission to Verdun, which was a perfect way to celebrate the beginning of the church's mission. This group included members from our music, hospitality and Alpha ministries and more.

The team worked hard last summer to improve the Sunday experience by cleaning up, decluttering, improving the audiovisual and launching ministries in the areas of hospitality, liturgy, music and children's pro-

gramming. Since the launch Mass last September, we're excited to share that the partnership has begun to bear fruit. The nearly 60 combined St. Willibrord parishioners and St. Ignatius missionaries at the launch Mass has grown to over 120 parishioners consistently gathering each Sunday for Mass. Every week, new faces and families are welcomed to St. Willibrord's, and we even hit a record with 220 in attendance on Easter Sunday!

We know that there's so much more to come at St. Willibrord's! To our knowledge, no other Catholic church in North America has undertaken anything quite like this, and we feel blessed to be paving the way. Feel free to drop in anytime or learn more at stwill.ca.

from Shawna Rose

50+ Club 50+

June

- 8 Annual BBQ
- 14 Trip to Upper Canada Playhouse: *Movin' In* (world premiere by **Norm Foster**)

July

- 5 Trip to Hudson Village Theatre: *Beyond the Sea* (by **Kristen Da Silva**)
- 12 Intergenerational tea party

Aug

- 31 Trip to Upper Canada Playhouse: *Drinking Alone* (by **Norm Foster**)

Shaw Festival: October 2-5

Group bus trip. Call for details.

More activities are in the works! Bridge stops for the summer and will resume on August 29 New players are always welcome.

New in the fall:

Beginner American Mah Jongg workshop

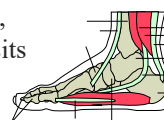
Give us a call for more info: 484-6186.

Foot clinic

June 7 & July 5

484-6186

\$40 for the initial visit,
\$35 for subsequent visits
by appointment only



2023 SUMMER SPECIAL EVENTS

Come out and join your neighbors for an evening of music and other performances and activities in your local parks (Davies, Hodgson, Strathearn). Food available for purchase or bring your own picnic. Bring a chair or blanket and your water bottle. Events are subject to change due to weather.

Like our facebook.com/montrealwest page for updates or sign-up for the Town Bulletin on our website: montreal-ouest.ca/en/subscribe-to-bulletin/ or call the Community Centre: 484-6186 for more information.

Community Night

Tuesday, June 6
Davies Park, 6 pm

Come and meet local community groups and artists. Featuring the live music by *Mikha.elles*.



Geek Night & meet the camp councillors

Tuesday, June 13
Davies Park, 6 pm

BBQ by *Burger de ville*
Special guests:
Curiosités Mystiques
and *Becky Hoops*

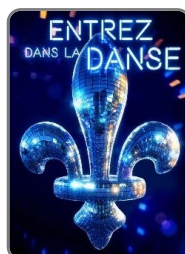


Photo: Olivier Dubois

La Fête nationale du Québec

Friday, June 23
Davies Park, 6 pm

Dance by *Veils of Bollywood*
and music by *Georgette*
Lulu the clown, face painting, quizzes,
crafts, BBQ, beer tent.



Canada Day celebrations!

Saturday, July 1



3:30 pm
Parade begins
corner Ainslie and Westminster South

4:30 pm
Festivities begin at Strathearn Park.
Music by the *Fundamentals*, dancing,
BBQ, fun for the whole family!

10 pm
Fireworks at Hodgson Field
Look for special appearance in the park
by *Imagicario LES KAKOUS*



Photo: Caroline Perron

Youth Duathlon

Tuesday, July 11
MW Pool / Hodgson Field

Ages 4-13

Run swim run 5:30-8 pm

Register on Amilia.
More info available online.



Les meilleures mélodies en Ville Best Beats in Town

Tuesday, July 18
Davies Park, 6 pm

Featuring music by: YOU, residents!
Talented residents of all ages
are invited to apply. Visit the Town's
website or the Community Centre
to find out more and sign up.

Music in the Park

Tuesday, August 8
Davies Park, 6 pm

Ensemble Daniel Bellegarde



Corn Roast & Camp Variety Show

Tuesday, August 15
Davies Park, 6 pm

CTV Movie in the park

Wednesday, August 16
(August 17 in case of rain)
Hodgson Field

Details to be announced;
bring your chairs or blankets

Town Council meeting: April



by Carol Foster

Mayor Masella announced that since the bids for the construction of the sports and recreation centre came in above the Town's estimates, a modified loan bylaw will have to be adopted and the same process used in the passage of the original bylaw in February will be followed.

A register will be available to force a referendum on this modified loan bylaw, if there are 391 signatures on the register, it will force a referendum which will actually become a vote on the project as well.

However, because of the many opinions concerning this project and because it is so important to the Town, regardless of the outcome of this required process, a vote will be held on June 18 allowing the whole Town to have a say. The majority of the votes cast will be respected.

The mayor explained that if the project is not approved, there is no other plan ready to go. A written confirmation has been received that removing the rink from the project is a major modification that will need re-approval requiring getting in line again to look for funding. Since the province has budgeted approximately \$30M per year for recreational facilities for the entire province for the next ten years, this approval is not guaranteed.

In an article in the last *Informer*, the mayor drew a parallel between the vote facing the Town now and the situation in 1964 when the Town decided to build the Legion Rink. He pointed out that "the same pros and cons were discussed and the concerns were eerily similar." The project went forward, the Town did not implode or go bankrupt and the facility has survived 59 years serving several generations of MoWesters.

Councillors' reports

Councillor Torres congratulated the Public Works staff on the fantastic work they did dealing with the effects of the recent ice storm. She added that their continuing maintenance of the trees helped the Town suffer less damage than some of the neighbouring areas.

The busy season for construction and permits is starting to pick up and 25 permits were issued during the past month. Torres repeated the information that an inspection of the work done following the issuance of a permit is mandatory. Residents were reminded that a permit is always required in order to cut down a tree.

Public security staff was also praised, by **Councillor Small-Pennefather**, for the role they played in ensuring safety during the ice storm. A meeting with the commandant of Station 9 and PSOs will take place in May and allow residents to ask questions and discuss some of the security issues in the Town.

Councillor Ulin described the work in progress to deal with a major sinkhole that opened up at the corner of Sherbrooke and Westminster due to the collapse of a sewer pipe located approximately 18 feet underground. Because of a gas line and other underground structures located in this area, repairs were extremely difficult and the work was contracted out to a company that specializes in urban sewer and water repairs. The work required the complete closure of Sherbrooke between Ballantyne and Westminster for several days.

Public Works crews have continued to pick up branches following the ice storm and will be setting up the outdoor terraces in the business section of Westminster. As soon as weather permits, the picnic tables

will be returned to the parks and speed bumps will be installed. The public tree planting will begin in May. If residents wish to have a tree planted on the public domain portion of their front yard, they can call Public Works to get on the list. More trees will be made available to residents during the annual tree subsidy program which will also begin in May.

Among the many initiatives being promoted by the Environmental Committee, a guest speaker will hold a session June 5 to discuss ways to most effectively deal with compost and recycling in preparation for the proposed garbage bylaw amendment coming later this spring.

The Town's financial statement for 2022 is being prepared and **Councillor Feeney** reminded residents the second installment of the property taxes is due May 25. Payment online is recommended.

Summer events will start off with Community Night and Art in The Park on June 5. The Canada Day celebrations are in need of volunteers to assist with the parade. Staff is being organized and trained for the many summer activities which can be registered for online.

Following some needed repairs, the pool will be open for summer.

April is Volunteer Month and Councillor Feeney stated that the Town is blessed with the number of volunteers who help with so many of the activities which make this Town such a great place to live.

Question period

Once again, questions about the proposed sports and recreation centre dominated question period. The cost, both stated and imagined, was a primary focus. More financial records were requested. More alternatives were reviewed. More opinions were debated. Several residents expressed dismay at how divided the Town had become over this issue as well as the cloud of misinformation that seems to have accompanied it.

A resident asked who on Council was in favour of building a new arena and why.

The question was welcomed by Council members and each of them expressed their very positive support. Although they were all disappointed that the bids came in higher than expected, they felt strongly that the project should still proceed. Each member explained their personal reasons for this support. Appreciation for the enjoyment they and their families have had from the Town's recreational facilities over the years was mentioned accompanied by the desire to ensure it would be available for future generations. A lot

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🌐 www.montrealwestdentistry.com



Town Council

of emphasis was put on the strong sense of community these facilities provide because this is where people of all ages meet and gather. Another reason given was that it would eliminate the prospect of families having to travel to be able to use facilities in other towns. An expectation that property values will increase was mentioned. Using as an example the Town's ability to tackle the long-neglected infrastructure costing millions of dollars while still decreasing the debt, confidence was expressed in the Town's administration's ability to find ways to manage the costs of this project.

Every council member talked about their very strong desire and what they felt was their responsibility, to leave this project for future generations of people who choose to live in this Town just as past residents had left the present facility for them.

In response to other questions, the process of determining the future of the project was reviewed and the mayor made it clear that the final vote of June 18 will be open to all residents of the Town, aged 18 and over, and the results will be respected.

The Sheraton Park survey will soon be made public. The new trees already planted in the park were appreciated and benches will soon be installed for the summer.

The Town's garage sale will be advertised both inside and outside the Town. Two lots on Ballantyne South are once again accumulating garbage, and the issue will be called to the owner's attention.

In view of the frequent loss of electricity, Council was asked if consideration has been given to having the hydro lines buried underground. It was explained that, although eminently desirable, this procedure would be prohibitively expensive for both the Town and the homeowners. The subsidies, once provided by *Hydro-Québec*, are no longer available so the process would have to start at the provincial level.

Although the very serious sinkhole at the corner of Sherbrooke and Westminster caused a great deal of work and inconvenience, sinkholes, usually caused by long-standing water leakage, are not a common occurrence in the Town.

In other business, the Town's audited 2022 financial report showed a surplus of \$253,000 led by revenues from the Recreation Department.

A notice of motion to adopt a modified loan bylaw at a special meeting on April 27 was announced.

During the second question period, discussions concerning the financial implication of the sports and recreation project continued.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Mayor's Report on the Financial Position of the Town of Montreal West

This report is a summary of the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022 presented at the Council Meeting of April 24, 2023. The external auditor gave an unqualified opinion, meaning that the statements accurately reflect the financial situation of the Town with no exceptions or concerns.

The results showed an operating surplus of \$275,649 which is 1.6% of total budget. The following are some of the highlights:

Revenues were \$638K over budget, mainly due to:

- recreation revenues \$253K over budget as activities normalized after Covid restrictions were lifted
- interest income \$120K over budget due mainly to rising rates
- duties on transfer from the sales of homes was \$119K over budget, though less than 2021
- an additional \$59K in "payments in lieu of taxes" due to increased rates for educational buildings
- \$61K over budget for other revenues

On the Expense side, total operating expenses were \$362K over budget. Almost \$90K savings were realized in various departments and \$36K was saved by decreases in bank and capital reimbursement charges. This was offset by:

- \$122K more in Public Works expenditures due to additional costs for snow removal (\$56K), railway crossing shared repairs (\$49K), and Westminster traffic lights (\$22K)
- \$101K in additional salary expense due mainly to reimbursements for accumulated bank of days and overtime
- \$62K additional for Environmental Health due to increases in the recycling contract, water purchase and meter installation costs from Montreal

In addition, \$204K was spent in Capital Expenses as part of our Pay-as-you-go financing which allows us to fund certain projects through our operations budget rather than incurring additional debt. This included the following expenditures:

- \$99K for the new recreation centre including consultations and other studies required for the construction tender
- \$87K for Town Hall and Public Works roofs and building improvements
- \$17K for equipment

Capital investments for infrastructure totaled \$1.6M, which included architectural fees for the new recreation centre (\$1.3M) and additional amounts for work on Fenwick, Courtney and Avon.

At year-end, The Town's net debt stood at \$12.6M, down from \$13.3M in 2021. This is the lowest net debt we have had in the past 10 years (from \$16.4M) despite capital investments of over \$24.2M in the same period. As the auditor pointed out, this is an indicator of the good financial management of the Town. Our unappropriated operating surplus is \$1.6M, while our appropriated surplus is \$2.8M and our Working Fund stands at \$1.5M.

We are pleased with the excellent results of the 2022 Financial statements and express our appreciation to our Treasurer and interim Director General, **Valentina Todoran** and all the directors for their careful management of the Town's finances. Full details of the financial results can be found on the website.

*Beny Masella,
Mayor, Town of Montreal West
Colleen Feeney,
Councillor, Finance, MADA,
Recreation and Culture*



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par Carol Foster
traduction par René Boucher

Le **maire Masella** a annoncé que puisque les soumissions pour la construction du centre sportif et récréatif étaient supérieures aux estimations, on devra adopter un règlement d'emprunt modifié et le même processus que celui utilisé pour l'adoption du règlement original en février sera suivi.

Un registre sera disponible pour forcer la tenue d'un référendum sur ce règlement d'emprunt modifié et s'il y a 391 signatures ou plus au registre, un référendum devra être tenu, lequel deviendra en fait un vote sur le projet même.

Cependant, en raison des nombreuses opinions concernant ce projet et parce qu'il est si important pour la Ville, peu importe l'issue du processus requis, un vote aura lieu le 18 juin pour permettre à toute la Ville d'avoir son mot à dire. La majorité des suffrages exprimés sera respectée.

Le maire a expliqué que si le projet n'est pas approuvé, il n'y a pas d'autre plan prêt à être mis en œuvre. Une confirmation écrite a été reçue selon laquelle le retrait de la patinoire du projet est une modification majeure qui nécessitera une nouvelle approbation, imposant de faire la queue à nouveau pour obtenir du financement. Étant donné que le gouvernement a prévu environ 30 millions de dollars par année pour les installations récréatives de l'ensemble de la province pour les dix prochaines années, cette approbation n'est pas garantie.

Dans un article paru dans le dernier Informer, Masella a établi un parallèle entre le vote auquel la Ville est confrontée aujourd'hui et la situation en 1964, lorsqu'on a dé-

cidé de construire la patinoire de la Légion. Il a souligné que «les mêmes avantages et inconvénients ont été discutés et les préoccupations étaient étrangement similaires». Le projet s'est poursuivi, la Ville n'a ni imploré ni fait faillite, et l'installation a survécu 59 ans, servant plusieurs générations de gens de Mo-Ouest.

Rapports des conseillères

La **conseillère Torres** a félicité le personnel des Travaux publics pour son remarquable travail pour faire face aux effets de la récente tempête de verglas. Elle a ajouté que l'entretien continu des arbres a aidé la ville à subir moins de dommages que certains secteurs voisins.

La saison de construction et de délivrance des permis commence à s'accélérer et on a délivré 25 permis au cours du dernier mois. Mme Torres a répété qu'une inspection des travaux effectués après la délivrance d'un permis était obligatoire. On a rappelé aux résidents qu'un permis est toujours requis pour l'abattage d'un arbre.

La **conseillère Small-Pennfather** a également félicité le personnel de la Sécurité publique pour le rôle qu'il a joué pour assurer la sécurité pendant la tempête de verglas. Une rencontre avec le commandant du poste 9 et les ASP aura lieu en mai et permettra aux citoyens de poser des questions et de discuter de certains des problèmes de sécurité dans la ville.

La **conseillère Ulin** a décrit les travaux en cours pour remédier à un important affaissement à l'angle Sherbrooke et Westminster par suite de l'effondrement d'une conduite d'égout située à environ 5,5 m sous terre. En raison de la proximité d'une conduite de gaz et d'autres structures souterraines, les réparations ont été extrêmement difficiles et les travaux ont été confiés à une entreprise spécialisée en réparation d'égouts et d'aqueduc en milieu urbain. Les travaux ont nécessité la fermeture complète de Sherbrooke de Ballantyne à Westminster pendant plusieurs jours.

Des équipes des Travaux publics ont continué à ramasser les branches d'arbres après la tempête de verglas et installeront les terrasses extérieures dans le secteur commercial de Westminster. Dès que le temps le permettra, les tables de pique-nique seront retournées dans les parcs et des ralentisseurs seront installés. La plantation d'arbres publics commencera en mai. Si des résidents souhaitent qu'un arbre soit planté dans l'emprise publique de leur cour avant, ils peuvent appeler les Travaux publics pour s'inscrire sur la liste. D'autres arbres seront mis à la disposition des résidents pendant le programme annuel d'arbres subventionnés qui s'amorcera également en mai.

Parmi les nombreuses initiatives dont le Comité sur l'environnement fait la promotion, le 5 juin prochain un conférencier invité viendra discuter des façons les plus efficaces de traiter le compost et le recyclage, en prévision de l'amendement proposé au règlement sur les ordures à venir plus tard ce printemps.

Les états financiers de la Ville pour 2022 sont en préparation et la **conseillère Feeney** a rappelé aux résidents que le deuxième versement des impôts fonciers est dû le 25 mai. Le paiement en ligne est recommandé.

La Soirée communautaire et Art dans le parc lanceront les activités de l'été le 5 juin. Les célébrations de la fête du Canada ont besoin de bénévoles pour participer au défilé. On est à organiser et former le personnel pour les nombreuses activités estivales auxquelles on peut s'inscrire en ligne.

Après quelques réparations nécessaires, la piscine ouvrira pour l'été.

Avril est le Mois du bénévolat et la **conseillère Feeney** a déclaré que la ville a la chance d'avoir de nombreux bénévoles qui contribuent à autant d'activités qui font de cette ville un endroit où il fait bon vivre.

Période de questions

Encore une fois, les questions sur le projet de centre sportif et récréatif ont dominé la période des questions. Les coûts, déclarés et imaginés, étaient un objectif principal. D'autres documents financiers ont été demandés. D'autres solutions de rechange ont été examinées. D'autres opinions ont été débattues. Plusieurs résidents ont exprimé leur consternation devant la division dans la ville sur cette question ainsi que le nuage de désinformation qui semble l'accompagner.

Un résident a demandé qui, au sein du Conseil, est favorable à la construction d'un nouvel aréna et pourquoi.

La question a été bien accueillie par les membres du Conseil qui ont exprimé leur soutien très affirmé. Bien que déçus que les soumissions aient été plus élevées que prévu, tous demeurent convaincus que le projet devrait tout de même aller de l'avant. Chaque membre a expliqué les raisons personnelles de son soutien. La reconnaissance pour le plaisir qu'eux et leurs familles ont retiré des installations récréatives de la Ville au fil des ans a été mentionnée, de même que le désir de s'assurer qu'elles seraient disponibles pour les générations futures. On a beaucoup insisté sur le fort sentiment d'appartenance à la communauté que procurent ces installations, car c'est là que les gens de tous âges se réunissent et s'assemblent. Une autre raison invoquée était que cela éliminerait la possibilité que des familles doivent se déplacer pour pouvoir utiliser des installations dans d'autres villes.

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Réunion

On s'attend à ce que la valeur des propriétés augmente. Citant en exemple la capacité de la Ville de s'attaquer aux travaux d'infrastructure longtemps négligés, et qui coûtent des millions de dollars, tout en réduisant la dette, on s'est dits confiants en la capacité de l'Administration de trouver des moyens de gérer les coûts de ce projet.

Tous les membres du conseil ont parlé de leur désir très profond, et de ce qu'ils estiment être leur responsabilité, de laisser ce projet aux générations futures de gens qui choisissent de vivre dans cette ville, tout comme les anciens résidents leur avaient laissé l'installation actuelle.

En réponse à d'autres questions, le processus de détermination de l'avenir du projet a été revu et le maire a clairement indiqué que le vote final du 18 juin sera ouvert à tous les résidents de la ville âgés de 18 ans et plus et que les résultats seront respectés.

Le sondage sur le parc Sheraton sera rendu public sous peu. Les nouveaux arbres déjà plantés dans le parc ont été appréciés et des bancs seront bientôt installés pour l'été.

La vente de débarras de la ville sera annoncée à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de la ville. Des déchets s'accumulent à nouveau sur deux terrains de Ballantyne Sud et le problème sera porté à l'attention du propriétaire.

Étant donné les pannes d'électricité fréquentes, on a demandé au Conseil s'il avait été envisagé d'enfouir les fils électriques sous terre. On a expliqué que, bien qu'elle soit éminemment souhaitable, cette procédure présenterait des coûts prohibitifs tant pour la Ville que pour les propriétaires. Les subventions, autrefois fournies par *Hydro-Québec*, ne sont plus disponibles, de sorte que le processus devrait s'amorcer au niveau provincial.

Bien que l'important affaissement à l'angle Sherbrooke et Westminster ait occasionné beaucoup de travail et d'inconvénients, ces incidents, habituellement causés par des fuites d'eau qui perdurent, ne sont pas un phénomène courant dans la ville.

Sous autres points, le rapport financier vérifié de 2022 de la Ville a révélé un excédent de 253 000 \$ attribuable en bonne partie aux revenus du Service des loisirs.

Un avis de motion visant à adopter un règlement d'emprunt modifié lors d'une réunion spéciale le 27 avril a été annoncé.

Au cours de la deuxième période des questions, les discussions concernant les répercussions financières du projet de centre sportif et récréatif se sont poursuivies.

La réunion a été ajournée avec un nombre record de 231 visionnements au cours des débats.

Rapport du maire sur la situation financière de la ville de Montréal-Ouest

Ce rapport est un résumé de l'exercice financier se terminant le 31 décembre 2022 tel que présenté lors de la séance du conseil du 24 avril 2023. Le vérificateur externe a émis une opinion sans réserve, ce qui signifie que les états reflètent fidèlement la situation financière de la Ville, sans exception ni préoccupation.

Les résultats montrent un excédent de fonctionnement de 275 649 \$, représentant 1,6 % du budget total. Voici quelques-uns des faits saillants :

Les revenus ont dépassé le budget de 638 k\$, principalement en raison de :

- Revenus de loisirs supérieurs de 253 k\$ au budget en raison du retour aux activités normales après la levée des restrictions imposées par la Covid
- 120 k\$ en revenus d'intérêts en raison de l'augmentation des taux
- les droits de mutation provenant de la vente de maisons ont dépassé le budget de 119 k\$, bien qu'ils soient inférieurs à ceux de 2021
- 59 k\$ supplémentaires en "paiements tenant lieu de taxes" en raison de l'augmentation des taux des établissements scolaires
- 61 k\$ en autres revenus

Les dépenses de fonctionnement totales étaient de 362 k\$ au-delà du budget. Des économies de près de 90 k\$ ont été réalisées dans différents services et 36 k\$ ont été économisés grâce à une baisse des frais bancaires et des frais de remboursement du capital. Ces économies ont été compensées par :

- 122 k\$ de plus en dépenses des travaux publics en raison des coûts supplémentaires pour le déneigement (56 k\$), les réparations partagées des passages à niveau (49 k\$) et les feux de circulation de Westminster (22 k\$)
- 101 k\$ de dépenses salariales supplémentaires, principalement en raison des remboursements pour les banques de temps accumulés et les heures supplémentaires
- 62 k\$ supplémentaires pour l'hygiène du milieu en raison de l'augmentation du contrat de recyclage, de l'achat d'eau et des coûts d'installation de compteurs par Montréal

De plus, 204 k\$ en dépenses en capital dans le cadre du financement par répartition (PAYG) qui nous permet de financer certains projets à partir de notre budget de fonctionnement plutôt que de contracter une dette supplémentaire, ont été dépensés cette année. Ceci comprend les dépenses suivantes :

- 99 k\$ pour le nouveau centre sportif et récréatif, comprenant des consultations et autres études requises pour l'appel d'offres de la construction

- 87 k\$ pour les travaux de toitures et améliorations aux bâtiments de l'hôtel de ville et des travaux publics
- 17 k\$ en équipement

Des investissements en immobilisations dans les infrastructures ont totalisé 1,6 M\$ ce qui comprenait des honoraires d'architectes pour le nouveau centre sportif et récréatif (1,3 M\$) et des montants supplémentaires pour des travaux sur Fenwick, Courtney et Avon.

À la fin de l'année, la dette nette de la Ville s'élevait à 12,6 M\$, en baisse par rapport à 13,3 M\$ en 2021. Ceci représente la plus basse dette nette que nous avons vue depuis les 10 dernières années (de 16,4 M\$), et ce malgré des investissements en immobilisations de plus de 24,2 M\$ dans la même période. Comme l'a souligné l'auditeur, c'est un indicateur d'une bonne gestion financière de la Ville. Nos surplus libres sont de 1,6 M\$ alors que nos surplus affectés sont de 2,8 M\$ et notre fonds de roulement s'élève à 1,5 M\$.

Nous nous réjouissons des excellents résultats des états financiers 2022 et nous souhaitons exprimer notre reconnaissance à notre Trésorière et Directrice générale par intérim, Valentina Todoran, et à tous nos directeurs pour leur gestion minutieuse des finances de la Ville. Vous trouverez tous les détails des résultats financiers sur le site Web.

*Beny Masella,
Maire de Ville de Montréal-Ouest
Colleen Feeney,
Conseillère Finance, MADA,
Loisirs et Culture*

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COMING EVENTS / À VENIR

Please call the editor: Heather at 489-7022
or e-mail: montrealwestinformer@gmail.com

Next deadline: August 9

May

- Sat 27 Garden club plant sale.** Lots of interesting plants. Prices very reasonable. Cash only. Westminster and Curzon. 9 am.
- Mon 29 Rewilding Your Yard workshop** led by *Jardin Buzz*. Community Centre. 7 pm.
- Town Council meeting.** In person and virtually on the Town's YouTube channel. Town Hall. 8 pm.
- Tue 30 Scrutin référendaire – Commission de révision / Referendum poll – Board of Revisors.** Town Hall. 2:30-5:30 pm and 7-10 pm.
- Wed 31 Scrutin référendaire – Commission de révision / Referendum poll – Board of Revisors.** Town Hall. 10 am to 1 pm.

June

- Thu 1 Fundraiser in support of Crohn's and Colitis Foundation.** Curling Club. 10 am-4 pm. Please see page 2.
- Sat 3 EAC Garage Sale/Garage Band Fest** (rain date June 4)
IODEM/W Public Library joint Treasures in the Attic Sale.
In front of the library. 9 am-2 pm.
- Curzon carnival.** Bouncy castle, science lab (Captain Catalyst!), bake sale, popcorn and lemonade stand.
Westminster and Curzon. 9:30 am-1:30 pm.
- Sun 4 Blessing of the pets.** All welcome. Curzon lawn. MW United. noon.
- Afternoon Indoor Labyrinth Walk.** MW United. All welcome. 2-4 pm.
- Mon 5 EAC Guest speaker Enuf.** Advice for the Reluctant Composter and/or Confused Recycler. Community Centre. 7 pm.
- Tue 6 Community Night.** Davies Park. 6 pm. Please see page 14.
- Sat 10 Free for All Day / Journée bon débarras**
- Sun 11 Sunday school closing.** Hot dog lunch to follow. MW United.
- Sun 11 Scrutin par anticipation / Advance poll.**
Legion Memorial Rink. Noon-8 pm.
- Jazz Vespers** with the *West End Jazz Project*. St. Philip's. 5 pm.
- Tue 13 Geek Night and meet the camp councillors.**
Davies Park, 6 pm. Please see page 14.
- Wed 14 Tea tasting.** Library. 2 pm
- Thu 15 Rotary Club of Montreal West NDG sponsors**
The Younkers Little Theatre Troupe's presentation of the comedy *You Can't Take It with You*. Town Hall. 7:30 pm. Please see page 3.
- Sun 18 Scrutin référendaire / Referendum poll.**
Legion Memorial Rink. 10 am-8 pm.
- Fri 23 La Fête nationale du Québec.** Davies Park. 6 pm. See page 14.
- Tue 27 Town Council meeting.** In person and virtually on the Town's YouTube channel. Town Hall. 8 pm.

July

- Sat 1 Canada Day.** Parade starts at 3:30 pm. Please see page 14.
- Tue 11 Youth Duathlon.** MW Pool / Hodgson Field. Please see page 14.
- Tue 18 Les Meilleurs Rythmes en Ville – Best Beats in Town.** Davies Park. 6 pm. Please see page 14.
- Sun 30 Final worship service** until September 10. MW United.

August

- Tue 8 Music in the Park.** Davies Park. 6 pm. Please see page 14.
- Tue 15 Corn Roast and Camp Variety Show.** Davies Park. 6 pm.
- Wed 16 CTV Movie in the park.** Hodgson Field. Please see page 14.
- Mon 28 Town Council meeting.** In person and virtually on the Town's YouTube channel. Town Hall. 8 pm.

Community Centre

Canada Day parade

We are excited to announce the parade will take place. Join your family and friends to watch the the Colour Party made up of our local Guiding and Scouting units as well as everything a parade needs: pipes and drums, local dignitaries, community groups and more!

Starting at 3 pm at Davies Park, there will be prizes for Primped Pets. Whimsical Wheel-chairs and Blinged-up Bikes contestants. Following the judging, the participants will have an opportunity to be part of the parade!

The parade will proceed up Westminster and end at Strathearn Park where the traditional festivities will take place.

The *Fundamentals* will be starting with great music led by **Denis Ducharme** followed by a variety of activities for kids including inflatable rides, circus acts, petting zoo, BBQ and refreshments.

Special thanks to *Heritage Canada* and the Town of Montreal West for their support.

Would you like to be a volunteer

... and offer a helping hand to make sure this event takes place without a glitch? We would be thrilled to have you on board! Please contact mowestcanadaday@gmail.com. Keep an eye on the Town's ebulletin not to miss out on any last minute details.

from Julian Huang
and Christine Downey

Free outdoor fitness classes

The Recreation Department will be offering free outdoor fitness classes starting the end of June. The type of class will vary from yoga style to bootcamp and everything in between.

Classes will be held at 6:30 pm or week-ends at 10 am. The day and type of class will be announced 1 week in advance through the ebulletin and on Town website. Dates will be random, not necessarily the same day of each week nor weekly. No registration required, but you must bring your own mat and weights if needed. For additional info please contact the Community Centre at 484-6186.

Keep fit!

Summer registration for fitness activities is available online through Amilia. There will be many to choose from Essentrics, stretch, yoga, outdoor warrior, TRX, barre, to name some. Any questions on classes please contact the Community Centre.



At our last regular Council meeting we were asked where each Council member stood with regards to the Recreation Centre project. We all took a few moments to explain our individual viewpoints and rationale for supporting this endeavour. So, again, here's **WHY**:



BECAUSE FUTURE GENERATIONS ARE COUNTING ON US

As already announced via e-bulletin and on our website, there were more than the 391 signatures needed on the register to trigger a referendum on the loan bylaw for the Rec Centre. As we have maintained throughout the process, there would always be a vote on the Sports and Recreation Centre. The fact that it's a loan bylaw referendum simply adds a few more rules that we must comply with. The vote will take place on **Sunday, June 18** with advance polling on **Sunday, June 11**. Those dates are determined by provincial regulation.

We have mentioned numerous times that there will be only one vote. So, though you'll officially be voting for or against the loan bylaw, please understand that a Yes vote is a vote in favour of the Sports and Recreation Centre and a No vote is a vote against it. Be-

cause without the ability to take out this loan, there is no project.

The Town will be distributing information door-to-door outlining the formalities regarding this important process.

Like some people who are opposed to the project, my wife and I are empty-nesters. The reality is that we will not use the facility as much as the younger families in Town. But that doesn't mean that we don't owe it to the next generation to provide quality facilities like those our own family used when our kids were young. While our kids were growing up, we paid for operating the arena and pool, but contributed nothing towards the cost of building them. Now, it is our turn to help build for the future and we take that responsibility to heart.

To be clear, there is no Plan B. There cannot be. A Plan B would mean having

had another set of detailed plans ready to go to refile the grant application. That just is not the case. It would make no sense to have spent resources developing two sets of plans for two vastly different scenarios. And starting from scratch will be a very long and expensive process. After all, getting this far took us nearly 10 years.

We defined the problem; we proposed a solution; we consulted with our population on many occasions; we refined our plans to keep the costs down; we repeatedly applied for grants to bring the project to fruition; we lobbied hard to be accorded the \$12.5M grant and we continue to see what else we can do to ensure this project stays viable. Now it's in your hands.

Beny Masella, *Mayor*
Town of Montreal West
bmabella@montreal-west.ca



BECAUSE WE NEED A PLACE WHERE WE ALL BELONG

Having a new recreation centre in the Town will create a hub of activity and provide the cornerstone of our community.

We moved to Montreal West when my daughter was born. She has done every possible activity offered by the Town, including using the rink to learn how to skate and build up her hockey skills. She spent hours on the ice during

COVID whenever she could, practising and training with her dad. Now a teenager, I want her to feel that she is still an integral part of our community. Having a local recreation centre that is well equipped with substantial service offerings, will keep her and her friends here, both on and off the ice. And for a lot of MoWest kids our arena and rec programs provide their first real jobs.

The time to invest is now, after almost 60 years, we can make an impactful and

meaningful decision. I am proud that our facility will also be inclusive and remove barriers, so that everyone can participate and feel like they belong, that is what the Town of Montreal West is all about.

Lauren Small-Pennefather, *Councillor Public Security*
lsmall-pennefather@montreal-west.ca



BECAUSE IT'S A GOOD INVESTMENT

Like many of you, when we got back the bids for the new Rec Centre I swallowed hard. The annual cost of \$436 per average household valuation (very close to mine) was steep, and caused a lot more reflection on my part. How could such a cost be justified for a recreational facility when other Town infrastructure needs are pressing? And how could someone on a fixed income (as I am) get my head around paying for it?

The first question was a bit easier to answer. Yes, many Town needs are pressing. I now oversee the Public Works portfolio and am more aware than ever about the serious need to continue our road infrastructure renewal. But the grant funds we get for road infrastructure come from very different government sources, ones we have tapped successfully nearly every year since 2009 – and will continue to do so.

The second question, however, took some more thought. As an empty-nester I know I'll be looking to downsize in about 5 years. At that point, when I sell my home, I'll need to get as much as I can for it. That payday will be essential for a comfortable retirement. That \$435 per year is a big chunk of change and over the next 5 years it will cost me about \$2200 and I had to consider what value I will have gotten for that investment. How would it stack up to other home investments I've made?

For instance, this year I changed all the windows in my home with an eye to enhancing its resale value (and because I couldn't even open some of them anymore!). That set me back over \$25,000. A few years earlier – again with resale and comfort in mind – I had a French drain installed for about \$10K, and a new roof at approx. \$5K. And the paint job I've scheduled for next year is sure to be another \$5K minimum. There's always something.

Looking, then, at the \$2.2K for the new Rec Centre, it started making good sense. The buyers of my home will certainly be a young family who prioritize community and recreational services. So, even if I stayed in MoWest for another 10 years the cumulative \$4,400 it will have cost me would actually be a very sensible investment. And a lot more fun than a French drain. Because that's what this Centre is – an investment: in our community, in our health, and in our own homes. I'm convinced of this.

Yes, taxes are high; they've always been high, but I moved here anyway with no regrets. What I would regret is the loss of this opportunity to invest in our community life. And I believe a new facility for the new generation of MoWesters is the best investment we can make.

Elizabeth Ulin, *Councillor Public Works, Environment and Communication*
eulin@montreal-west.ca



BECAUSE GOOD PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IS PRICELESS

When we first realized that investing more public funds into a decaying arena was no longer viable, I started talking to residents about the need to construct a new space. Residents were initially very supportive. People spoke with fondness of forging lasting friendships on the rink or watching their children play. Young parents worried that without a rink, they would have to commute across town for the same facilities.

One resident's story really moved me. His support for a new arena and recreational facility came from a deep belief

in the positive impact such spaces have on our mental and physical health. For him, the ability to stay active and to engage in sports year round – close by, with friends and neighbours from his community – gave him confidence and a sense of belonging.

A key element of a great town is one which promotes healthy lifestyles and fosters community well being. But this means investing in spaces where residents can exercise, engage, connect, and remain active and healthy. The proposed sports and recreation centre has been designed keeping these principles in mind. It will offer us a variety of summer and winter activities for all our

residents, young and old, and of different walks of life.

As a Council, we understand that we cannot underplay the cost of a new centre. However, we also do not want to understate its benefits – many of which cannot be quantified. For us, this is a generational investment, one that will foster a healthy town now, and for future generations to come. It is now up to all of us to make this a reality.

Maria Torres, *Councillor*
Urban Planning
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BECAUSE WE CONSULTED AND YOU RESPONDED

In 2015, a building assessment report concluded that the high cost of repairing and upgrading the current arena (\$7.5M) versus building a new recreation centre, did not make financial sense. So, in 2017, Council hired a consultant to survey residents about whether to move ahead with the construction of a new centre with a rink. The majority of the 818 respondents said "yes," and a well-attended meeting was held at the Town Hall to discuss the results. Based on the favourable feedback, Council pressed on, seeking government grants to make this project feasible. In all, three grant applications were made, with three different conceptual designs. We were unsuccessful in our first two attempts.

One of the preconditions of the third grant was to increase our sports and recreational offerings. Based on this, and on the recommendation of residents, a

gymnasium was added to the design. The library was not included in this concept, as the grant was meant for sports and recreational facilities only, and the elimination of the third floor allowed us to cut costs. In May 2021, we were fortunate to secure a \$12.5M grant based on this third design.

All Council members elected or acclaimed in 2021 promised to move forward with the project. So, in November 2021, an architectural firm was hired to design the centre based on the drawings approved by the government. In April 2022, Council once again held consultations. All residents were invited to online consultations, and/or to complete the online survey. 356 residents completed the survey, 48 attended online sessions, and 12 community-based organizations attended a round table workshop. Based on residents' comments, some design elements were changed, most notably replacing the rectangular pool with an

L-shaped one. Following these modifications, the architectural plans were finalized into our final design which was what was sent out to tender for construction.

Council understands we cannot please all the people all the time, and not everyone will be in favour of the project. But residents have been consulted at numerous phases along the way. And now you have the ultimate say. This is YOUR project, not the Mayor's or Council's. Council's role is to work hard to bring it to fruition for the good of the Town, and that includes seeking and securing funding to lessen the impact on taxpayers. This is what we have done, and with your approval, what we will continue to do.

Colleen Feeney, *Councillor*
Finance, MADA, Recreation and Culture
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Lors de la dernière séance ordinaire du conseil, il a été demandé à chaque membre du conseil quelle était sa position par rapport au projet de centre sportif et récréatif. Nous avons tous pris quelques instants pour expliquer nos points de vue individuels et les raisons pour lesquelles nous soutenons ce projet. Voici donc, une fois de plus, **NOTRE RAISONNEMENT** :



PARCE QUE LES GÉNÉRATIONS FUTURES COMPTENT SUR NOUS

Comme il a déjà été annoncé dans le e-bulletin et sur notre site web, nous avons reçu au-delà des 391 signatures nécessaires pour déclencher un référendum sur le règlement d'emprunt pour le centre sportif et récréatif lors de la tenue de registre. Comme nous l'avons répété tout au long du processus, il était toujours prévu de tenir un vote sur le Centre. Le fait qu'il s'agisse d'un référendum sur un règlement d'emprunt ajoute simplement quelques règles supplémentaires auxquelles nous devons nous conformer. Le scrutin se tiendra **le dimanche 18 juin** et le scrutin par anticipation **le dimanche 11 juin**. Ces dates sont déterminées par la réglementation provinciale.

Nous avons mentionné à plusieurs reprises qu'il n'y aura qu'un seul vote. Ainsi, même si vous voterez officiellement pour ou contre le règlement d'emprunt, veuillez comprendre qu'un vote positif est un vote en faveur du Centre sportif et récréatif et qu'un vote négatif est un vote contre celui-ci.

Car sans cet emprunt, il ne peut y avoir de projet.

La Ville distribuera un avis comprenant de l'information sur cet important processus à chaque porte.

Comme c'est le cas pour certaines personnes qui s'opposent au projet, ma femme et moi n'avons plus d'enfants à la maison. En réalité, nous n'utiliserons pas les nouvelles installations autant que les jeunes familles autour de nous. Mais cela ne veut pas dire que nous n'avons pas un devoir envers la prochaine génération de fournir des installations de qualité comme celles que notre propre famille a utilisées lorsque nos enfants étaient jeunes. Alors que nos enfants grandissaient, nous avons payé pour l'exploitation de l'aréna et de la piscine, mais nous n'avons pas contribué au coût de leur construction. Aujourd'hui, c'est à notre tour de contribuer à la construction de l'avenir et nous prenons cette responsabilité à cœur.

Pour être clair, il n'y a pas de plan B. Il ne peut pas y en avoir. Un plan B signi-

fierait que nous aurions eu une autre série de plans détaillés prêts pour déposer une nouvelle demande de subvention. Ce n'est tout simplement pas le cas. Il aurait été absurde d'avoir consacré des ressources à l'élaboration de deux séries de plans pour deux scénarios très différents. Et repartir de zéro sera un processus très long et très coûteux. Après tout, il nous a fallu près de dix ans pour en arriver là.

Nous avons défini le problème, avons proposé une solution, avons consulté l'ensemble de la population à de nombreuses reprises, avons précisé nos plans pour limiter les coûts, avons déposé des demandes de subventions à plusieurs reprises pour mener à bien le projet, avons fait pression pour obtenir la subvention de 12,5 millions de dollars et continuons à voir ce que nous pouvons faire d'autre pour garantir la viabilité de ce projet. Il est maintenant entre vos mains.

*Beny Masella, maire
Ville de Montréal-Ouest
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PARCE QUE NOUS AVONS TOUS BESOIN D'UN ENDROIT OÙ NOUS NOUS SENTONS À NOTRE PLACE

La construction d'un nouveau centre sportif et récréatif dans la Ville servira de point central pour nos activités et constituera la pierre angulaire de notre communauté. Nous avons emménagé à Montréal-Ouest à la naissance de ma fille. Elle a participé à toutes les activités possibles offertes par la Ville et a appris à patiner et à développer ses habiletés au hockey à l'aréna. Elle a passé des heures sur la glace pendant la COVID

à s'entraîner et pratiquer avec son père. Maintenant qu'elle est adolescente, je veux qu'elle ait toujours le sentiment de faire partie intégrante de notre communauté. Avoir un centre sportif et récréatif local bien équipé qui offre des services bonifiés permettra à elle, ainsi qu'à ses amis de rester ici, autant sur la glace qu'en dehors de celle-ci. Pour beaucoup d'enfants de Montréal-Ouest, l'aréna et nos programmes de loisirs constituent leur premier véritable emploi.

C'est maintenant qu'il faut investir. Après presque 60 ans, nous pouvons prendre une décision importante et significative. Je suis fière que les installations prévues soient inclusives et éliminent les obstacles, afin que chacun puisse participer et se sentir à sa place. C'est ce que représente la Ville de Montréal-Ouest.

Lauren Small-Pennefather, *conseillère Sécurité publique*
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PARCE QUE C'EST UN BON INVESTISSEMENT

Comme beaucoup d'entre vous, j'ai été étonnée de voir les soumissions que nous avons reçues pour le nouveau centre sportif et récréatif. Le coût annuel de 436 \$ par ménage moyen (très proche du mien) était élevé et m'a fait réfléchir. Comment justifier un tel coût pour une installation récréative alors que d'autres besoins d'infrastructures municipales sont pressants ? Et comment une personne disposant d'un revenu fixe (comme moi) pourrait-elle se résoudre à payer pour cela ?

Il est un peu plus facile de répondre à la première question. Oui, de nombreux besoins de la Ville sont urgents. Je supervise désormais le portefeuille des travaux publics et je suis plus consciente que jamais de la nécessité de poursuivre les travaux d'infrastructures routières. Par contre, les subventions que nous recevons pour l'infrastructure routière proviennent de sources gouvernementales très différentes. Nous en bénéficions presque chaque année depuis 2009, et nous poursuivons nos efforts en ce sens.

La deuxième question, en revanche, m'a demandé plus de réflexion. Avec mes enfants qui sont partis de la maison, je prévois déménager dans plus petit d'ici cinq ans environ. Lorsque je vendrai ma maison, j'aurai besoin d'en tirer le maximum puisque cette vente sera essentielle pour une retraite confortable. Ces 436 \$ par an représentent une somme importante et, au cours des cinq prochaines années me coûteront environ 2 200 \$. Comment cet investissement se compare-t-il à d'autres investissements que j'ai faits dans ma maison ?

Par exemple, cette année, j'ai changé toutes les fenêtres de ma maison dans le but d'augmenter sa valeur de revente (et parce que certaines d'entre elles ne s'ouvraient plus!) Cela m'a coûté plus de 25 000 \$. Quelques années plus tôt, toujours dans un souci de revente et de confort, j'ai fait installer un drain français pour environ 10 000 \$ et une nouvelle toiture pour environ 5 000 \$. Et les travaux de peinture que j'ai planifiés pour l'année prochaine me coûteront certainement un autre 5 000 \$. Il y a toujours quelque chose à faire.

En réfléchissant aux 2 200\$ pour le nouveau centre, j'ai mieux compris la portée de cet argent. Les acheteurs de ma maison seront certainement une jeune famille qui privilégie les services communautaires et récréatifs. Même si je restais à Montréal-Ouest pendant encore 10 ans, les 4 400 \$ de plus que cela me coûterait seraient en fait un investissement très judicieux. Et beaucoup plus amusant qu'un drain français. Car c'est bien de cela qu'il s'agit, un investissement dans notre communauté, dans notre santé et dans nos propres maisons. J'en suis convaincue.

Oui, les taxes foncières sont élevées ; elles l'ont toujours été, mais j'ai tout de même emménagé ici sans regret. Ce que je regretterais, c'est de perdre cette occasion d'investir dans le bien-être de notre communauté. Et je crois qu'une nouvelle installation pour la nouvelle génération de citoyens de Montréal-Ouest est le meilleur investissement que nous puissions faire.

Elizabeth Ulin, *conseillère Travaux publics, Environnement et Communications*
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PARCE QU'UNE BONNE SANTÉ PHYSIQUE ET MENTALE N'A PAS DE PRIX

Lorsque nous avons réalisé qu'il n'était plus viable d'investir davantage de fonds publics dans un aréna en ruine, j'ai commencé à parler aux résidents de la nécessité de construire un nouvel espace. Au départ, les citoyens se sont montrés très favorables. Ils évoquaient avec émotion les amitiés durables qu'ils avaient nouées sur la patinoire, ou le fait qu'ils avaient vu leurs enfants y jouer. Les jeunes parents s'inquiétaient qu'ils devraient se rendre plus loin pour profiter de ces installations si nous n'avions plus de patinoire. L'histoire d'un résident m'a vraiment émue. Son appui à la construction

d'une nouvelle patinoire et d'un centre récréatif s'explique par sa conviction profonde de l'impact positif de tels espaces sur notre santé mentale et physique. Pour lui, la possibilité de rester actif et de pratiquer du sport près de chez lui tout au long de l'année, avec des amis et des membres de sa communauté, lui donnait confiance et un sentiment d'appartenance.

L'un des éléments clés d'une ville où il fait bon vivre est de favoriser le bien-être et la santé de la communauté. Pour cela, il faut investir dans des espaces où les gens peuvent faire de l'exercice, interagir, nouer des liens et rester actifs. Le centre sportif et récréatif proposé a été conçu en tenant compte de ces principes. Il offrira

une variété d'activités tout au long de l'année à l'ensemble de nos résidents, jeunes et vieux, de tous les milieux.

En tant que conseil municipal, nous comprenons qu'il ne faut pas sous-estimer le coût d'un nouveau centre. Cependant, nous ne voulons pas non plus sous-estimer ses avantages, dont beaucoup ne peuvent être quantifiés. Pour nous, il s'agit d'un investissement générationnel, qui favorisera la santé de la Ville aujourd'hui et pour les générations futures. Il nous revient maintenant à tous d'en faire une réalité.

Maria Torres, *conseillère Urbanisme*
mtorres@montreal-ouest.ca



PARCE QUE NOUS AVONS CONSULTÉ ET QUE VOUS AVEZ RÉPONDU

En 2015, un rapport d'évaluation des bâtiments a conclu que le coût élevé de la réparation et de la modernisation de l'aréna actuel (7,5 millions de dollars) par rapport à la construction d'un nouveau centre sportif et récréatif n'avait pas de sens sur le plan financier. En 2017, le conseil municipal a donc engagé un consultant pour sonder les résidents sur l'opportunité d'aller de l'avant avec la construction d'un nouveau centre doté d'une patinoire. La majorité des 818 personnes interrogées ont répondu "oui", et plusieurs participants ont assisté à une rencontre à l'hôtel de ville pour discuter des résultats. Sur la base de ces réactions favorables, le conseil municipal a continué à chercher des subventions gouvernementales pour réaliser ce projet. Au total, trois demandes de subventions ont été déposées, avec trois conceptions différentes. Nos deux premières tentatives ont été infructueuses.

L'une des conditions préalables à l'obtention de la troisième subvention était de bonifier notre offre sportive et

récréative. Sur cette base, et sur la recommandation des résidents, un gymnase a été ajouté au projet. La bibliothèque n'a pas été incluse dans ce concept, car la subvention n'était destinée qu'aux installations sportives et récréatives, et l'élimination du troisième étage nous a permis de réduire les coûts. En mai 2021, nous avons eu la chance d'obtenir une subvention de 12,5 millions de dollars pour ce troisième projet.

Tous les membres du Conseil élus ou élus par acclamation en 2021 ont promis de faire avancer le projet. En novembre 2021, une firme d'architectes a donc été engagée pour concevoir le centre sur la base des plans approuvés par le gouvernement. En avril 2022, le Conseil a de nouveau organisé des consultations. L'ensemble de la population a été invité à participer aux consultations en ligne et/ou à répondre à un sondage électronique. 356 résidents ont répondu au sondage, 48 ont participé à des ateliers en ligne et 12 organisations communautaires ont participé à une table ronde. Sur la base des commentaires des résidents,

certain éléments du plan ont été modifiés, notamment le remplacement de la piscine rectangulaire par une piscine en forme de "L". À la suite de ces modifications, les plans architecturaux ont été finalisés dans notre projet final et ont fait l'objet d'un appel d'offres pour la construction.

Le conseil municipal est conscient qu'il n'est pas possible de satisfaire tout le monde tout le temps, et que certains ne sont pas favorables au projet. Mais les résidents ont été consultés à de nombreuses reprises tout au long du processus. Et maintenant, c'est vous qui avez le dernier mot. Il s'agit de VOTRE projet, et non de celui du maire ou du conseil municipal. Le rôle du Conseil est de travailler à faire cheminer le projet pour le bien de la Ville, et cela inclut la recherche et l'obtention d'un financement pour réduire l'impact sur les contribuables. C'est ce que nous avons fait et, avec votre appui, ce que nous continuerons à faire.

Colleen Feeney, *conseillère Finances, MADA, Loisirs et Culture*
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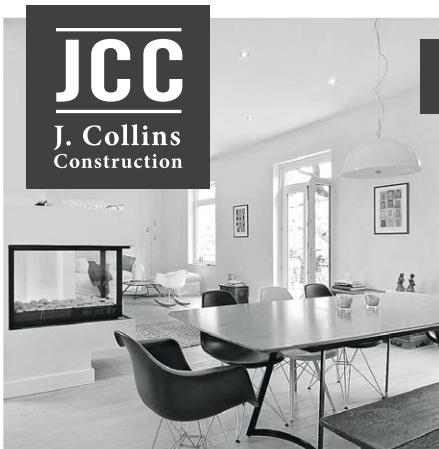


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