



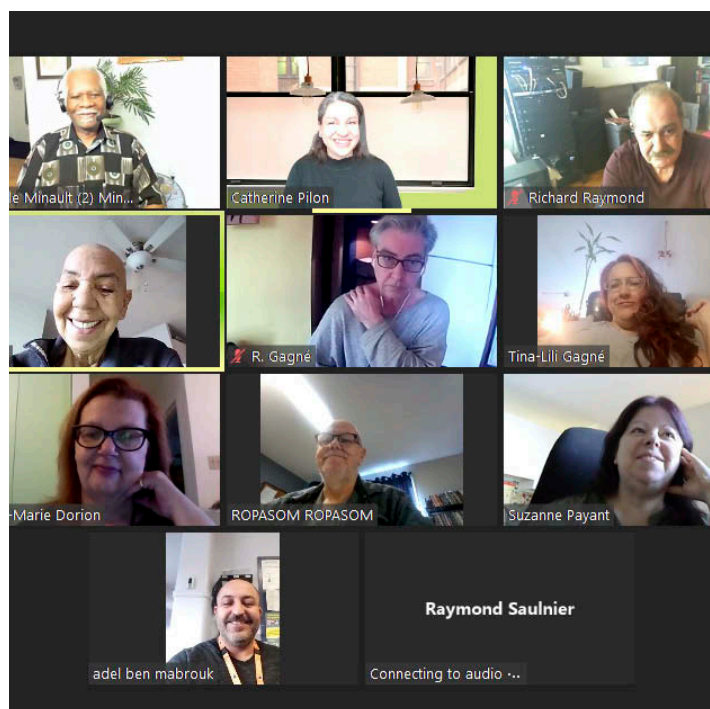
Tenant committees move into the 21st century

It is with great enthusiasm that the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR, i.e., Advisory Committee of Tenants) is preparing to computerize tenant associations in the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM)'s low-rent housing. This ambitious project is being carried out with assistance from the Groupe de locataires-ressources (GLR, i.e., Tenant Resource Group), formed this past year, and with the support of the OMHM and the Fédération des locataires d'HLM du Québec (FLHLMQ).

According to tenant resource Richard Raymond, "The survey our team conducted last summer revealed that most associations don't have computers or Internet access, let alone Wi-Fi." This is an unacceptable situation these days, when access to a connected device has become essential for all citizens—a reality that has become even more apparent in the current pandemic crisis. The CCR will draw on funds that remained unused this year due to the exceptional situation to reduce the "digital divide", that is the inequality of access to computers and Internet that low-rent housing residents experience. The CCR budget meant to support tenant participation forums in 2020 will therefore be used to increase tenant committee actions.

CCR Chair Richard Gagné explained how the operation will proceed. The CCR is currently looking for tenant associations that are strong candidates for receiving a computer. "We're looking for active associations that regularly participate in sector committee meetings and want to learn computer skills so they can use them on a daily basis."

The 60 desktop computers and 20 laptop computers that the CCR purchased will be delivered to the FLHLMQ in January. "We hope that the GLR will distribute and install them by the end of March," he added. Gagné noted that the laptops will be reserved for associations operating without a common room in low-rent housing for families and people living alone. GLR members will provide basic training to tenant association members once the pandemic situation permits such activities.



The OMHM's Groupe de locataires-ressources (GLR, i.e., Tenant Resource Group) conducted many virtual meetings throughout the summer and fall to get this important project underway.

In addition, the OMHM is currently negotiating an agreement with the FLHLMQ to find an Internet provider so common rooms can be connected and wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) can be installed. With this project, we will finally be able to say that our low-rent housing units have entered the 21st century.

2020: It will be remembered for a long time!



We're all probably a little relieved that 2020 is drawing to a close. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended everyday life for people around the world, including you. We

know that it has been difficult to keep your associations active, especially since in-person meetings have not been permitted. However, the end of 2020 comes with some great news for community living. The OMHM entered into a partnership agreement with the Fédération des locataires d'HLM du Québec (FLHLMQ) and your Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR, i.e., Advisory Committee of Tenants) to roll out a project to computerize tenant associations in 2021.

We would like to sincerely thank you for your commitment. There were no major COVID-19 outbreaks in our low-rent housing projects in 2020, and your vigilance made a big difference.

We wish you all a very happy Holiday season and a unifying, dynamic 2021—the opposite of this year!

Nathalie Fortin
Directrice de la gestion
des milieux de vie
Director of Community Relations
Management

Low-rent housing volunteers have been w

A well-oiled machine

At Habitations La Seigneurie des Rapides, a whole range of services have been on offer since March, without missing a beat. How? Thanks to seven dedicated people who share the workload.

From Wednesday to Friday, Dominic Mancuso, Barbara Thompson, Carole Guilbault and Lise Morrisette work in the kitchen to cook and serve three meals a day that tenants can either take home or eat on-site while complying with all sanitary measures. "We may do Monday to Friday in the winter, when no one goes out anymore," said Mr. Mancuso, whose fish and chips, made with fresh cod, is very popular. Johanne Lacombe supports the team by preparing the common room and making sure the dishes and premises are clean.

Mabble Norman manages the free used-clothing depot. She collects used clothing, makes sure it is in good condition and maintains the room. "I'm open Fridays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.," she said. "It's an opportunity to welcome people, listen to them, give them some encouragement."

Raymond Brisson, a rather solitary person, takes care of big and small repair and renovation jobs. This year, he built a pergola and renovated an outbuilding on the grounds. "I also like to help our older ladies who need a hand," he added. Each in their own way, these dedicated individuals make life more enjoyable for their neighbours and friends.



Mabble Norman manages the free used-clothing depot with great dedication.

Carole Guilbault proudly poses near the pergola that Raymond Brisson built last summer.

From the skies to J. Ernest-Paquin

In the last several months, 22 seniors at Habitations J. Ernest-Paquin have been receiving free frozen meals every week. These unused airplane meals are being redirected to low-rent housing projects in the Rosemont neighbourhood by Bouffe-Action de Rosemont. Mr. Laverdière, spokesperson for the Les Étoiles tenant association, personally oversees distribution on Fridays. As a thank you, the association made a donation to Bouffe-Action de Rosemont, which Mr. Laverdière personally doubled! The office of Vincent Marissal, Member of the National Assembly for Rosemont, also made a donation to Bouffe-Action de Rosemont.

Working miracles for months. Here are a few inspiring examples!

A decorating contest

At Manoir Aimé-Léonard, residents are invited to decorate their doors for Christmas. The tenant with the best decorations on each floor will receive a prize of \$25.

"To avoid favouritism, each floor will form a three-person committee. On December 20, each committee will select the winner for another floor," explained Diane Tardy, Chair of the tenant committee.

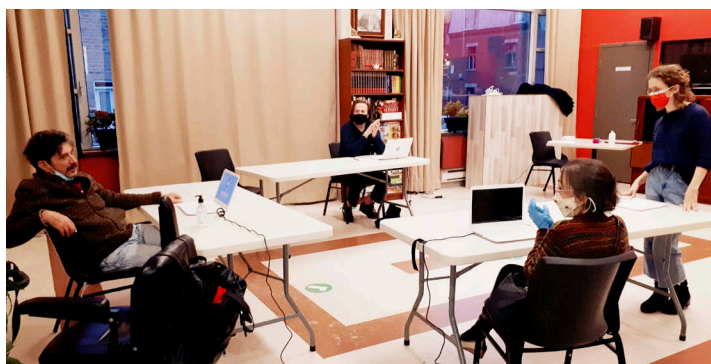
Children made giant Christmas cards for each floor and wrote messages in various languages, including Creole, English, Spanish and Arabic. This year, the Christmas spirit is alive and well at Manoir Aimé-Léonard!



The residents of Manoir Aimé-Léonard get in the Christmas spirit as they eagerly decorate their doors.



Habitations Sainte-Brigide got a new, long flower bed in spring 2020.



The extremely popular computer workshops began in late November for around 20 people divided into four small groups, so social distancing measures can be observed.

Focus on mental health

At Habitations Sainte-Brigide, Silvia Rocha, Chair of the tenant association, takes measures to combat the general feeling of gloominess and brighten up the atmosphere in her building.

This spring, she started outdoors, where it's easiest to follow social distancing rules. "I decided to plant flowers and start a small community garden," she explained. Tenants came to see it, pick things, make suggestions. "It was exactly what I wanted: to create interactions." This winter, Silvia potted some of these flowers and placed them in the common room, staircase and laundry room, to add a little life to the building. "A rose bush just bloomed inside. It's beautiful!"

She also reorganized the common areas to limit the risks of spreading the virus and make the areas more inviting. She purchased second-hand pedal garbage bins, a table, a lamp and a large mirror, all at very affordable prices.

She will use the *New Horizons for Seniors* subsidy to offer customized computer workshops so that residents can access the Internet and connect with their loved ones. She does all of this on top of providing food aid, which is essential to her neighbours' sense of security.

A vaccination clinic that ran smoothly

At Habitations Sainte-Catherine d'Alexandrie, Jean "Johnny" Martel thought of everything to get his people vaccinated. He put up a notice about the clinic at the entrance and handed out the forms in advance to anyone who was interested.

At 3:30 p.m. on November 18, red dots were placed on the floor in the room to ensure that everyone followed physical distancing rules. "In an hour and a half, about 30 tenants got vaccinated, most of them in the room, some at home if they had limited mobility," he said.

This was the quickest vaccination clinic yet, even though three times as many people showed up as in previous years!

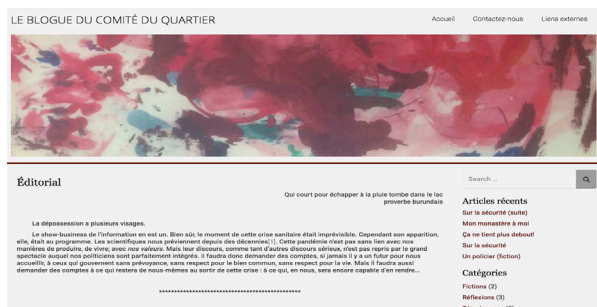
A blog about the real world of social housing

Recently, a blog was born in Petite-Bourgogne. Its fictional stories and touching real-life accounts reflect a life in social housing that is marked by challenges and enriched by mutual support.

Designed by a tenant, the blog is supported by the Petite-Bourgogne neighbourhood committee. "The authors are all social housing tenants," explained Richard Gagné, the editor of the blog.

Visit lecomiteduquartier.com to discover the blog's literary talents as they recount the social inequalities they experience every day.

To submit a text, contact info@lecomiteduquartier.com.



WIN

\$1,000 IN GROCERIES
WITH ÉCONOLOGIS!

A win-win program!



Consultants from the Éconologis program return to low-rent housing to offer tips on how to reduce humidity and drafts in apartments. They also perform small jobs such as caulking windows, installing weatherstripping and insulating electrical outlets. In addition, tenants who participate in the program have a chance to win \$1,000 in groceries!*

Tenant associations may benefit from informing tenants about the Éconologis program and encouraging them to register. By contributing to ensure their members' comfort, they receive \$10 per tenant visited.

Suzanne Payant, a tenant at Habitations De l'Érablière, encourages tenant associations to promote the service. "I learned a lot during the visit. This is an opportunity to help tenants. With the money we received, we were able to serve one of our weekly meals to around 30 people."

For more information, please contact Anik Leroux at 1-844-575-5123, ext. 271.

*Some conditions apply. The contest is organized by Expertbâtiment, a service provider for the Éconologis program.

Reminder of measures to observe



- ▶ Wearing a mask or face covering is strongly recommended in buildings
- ▶ No visits inside apartments (except for compassionate reasons, repairs, or—in the case of a person living alone—one visitor at a time)
- ▶ No indoor or outdoor gatherings
- ▶ Common rooms closed and locked, except for organized humanitarian services (food aid, psychosocial support, homework help, etc.)

If you are experiencing any flu-like symptoms (congestion, cough, fever, diarrhea, loss of smell, etc.), call the COVID-19 line: 514-644-4545.



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Please send your comments and suggestions to suzanne.dupaul@omhm.qc.ca.