

La Rose des vents



Office municipal
d'habitation
de Montréal

Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal Tenant Newsletter

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PUBLIC HOUSING OF THE FUTURE



Habitations
Parc Royal



Habitations
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Denis Quirion
Executive Director
of the OMHM

Toward the public housing of the future

Dear Tenants,

2014 is drawing to a close, and the OMHM has drawn up a favourable report on this year's achievements, especially with regard to the major renovation work done on our low-rent housing. It has been 10 years already since the OMHM stepped forward to suggest that our partners invest in the creation of a condition overview for its property inventory. And so a team of five experts was put together to evaluate the condition of the low-rent housing stock and develop a portrait of it. By 2008, this report had helped triple the budget dedicated to renovation work on low-rent housing in Montréal, which really needed it!

Since then, our main concern has been to obtain adequate funding for the renovation of our some 21,000 low-rent housing units. In seven years, \$525M has been invested by the Société d'habitation du Québec, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Montréal urban community, to partly make up for the deficit accumulated over the

preceding decades. These investments have borne fruit. You no doubt noticed, on the cover page of this edition of *La Rose des Vents*, the spectacular transformations of buildings in different boroughs. These make-overs are not just in the exterior envelopes but also inside the buildings, and they include upgrades to electrical systems, fire alarm systems and elevators. Several courtyards and properties have also been landscaped, with flowers and greenery, to spruce up the environment. These improvements benefit the low-rent housing residents as well as all Montrealers, because they significantly improve quality of life and help revitalize neighbourhoods.

While lots has been done, there is still a lot left to do, as you well know. It is important to plan major renovation budgets over several years, to avoid cost overruns, to plan the work effectively and to minimize their impact on tenants. The OMHM makes the most of all available platforms to reiterate its

financial needs to the various levels of government and request a RAM budget (renovations, improvements and modernization) of \$125 million each year. For now, we are getting about 60% of this amount on average.

Our team of building specialists in the Condition of the Housing Stock, which is featured on page 3, is continuing its inspections and preventive visits to buildings and units to make sure you have a safe, healthy place to live. Other major renovation work is on the way. The OMHM plans to continue to hold information and consultation meetings with you. Together we are building the low-rent housing of tomorrow.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you a wonderful 2015, full of inspiring plans and projects!

Rep Rap



Francine Cayer
Tenant OMHM
Board Member

Participation is the key!

Last summer, I had the good fortune to be invited by a few tenant associations to community meals in low-rent housing for seniors. In my discussions with the residents, I realized that few of them know where to go to ask questions or speak about their concerns. They do not know about the local resources that have been set up to meet their needs.

And yet these resources are near at hand. For questions related to community life in their housing complex, the residents can go to their tenant association or, if they don't have one, to their community organizer. Problems related to the management of their housing complex are discussed at meetings

of their subsector and sector, where their representatives have the right to speak.

Involvement at the local level is vital. The entire participation structure begins there, and then goes to the Advisory Committee of Tenants (CCR) and from there all the way to the Board of Directors, though your representatives, Ms. Vallières and me. That's why I encourage you to take part in the community life of your housing complex, to create or support your association and to speak up at sector and subsector meetings. This is the only way we can develop a "good neighbour" culture among tenants and between tenants and OMHM employees.

It was with this in mind – helping residents make themselves heard – that I participated in the creation of a provisional CCR for housing in the Logement abordable Québec (LAQ) program and other social housing. I hope that community action will also flourish in these environments.

I am always ready to talk to you about these issues in greater depth. Please feel free to ask your community organizer to invite me to your sector. It would be my pleasure to help you speak out or to pass on your message for you. In the meantime, I wish you a wonderful holiday season and a new year filled with opportunities for participation.

Condition of the Housing Stock

At your service for 10 years!

By Patrick Préville

This year, the team in the Condition of the Housing Stock is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Read on to meet this committed and engaged team, who firmly believe they are working for a worthy cause: your wellbeing!

This team of building specialists was set up in 2004 to develop a condition overview for Montréal's low-rent housing stock. Today, it essentially has a dual role: reporting on the condition of the buildings and carrying out preventive inspections on individual units. It is also responsible for inspecting the facades of residence towers for the delivery of safety certificates. The team has developed effective data collection tools and honed its expertise, making the OMHM a pioneer and benchmark for other housing offices in Québec and establishing a reputation as far away as Belgium.

The role of the team members is not to carry out the work but to provide the OMHM with complete information about the condition of the housing stock. Thanks to their work, informed decisions can be made to carry out maintenance and repair work, and to plan major work on certain buildings.

"Our team has the tenants' wellbeing at heart, and that means ensuring they have a safe and healthy place to live," declared Sylvain Turcotte, who has been the director of the Condition of the Housing Stock since its creation.

Preventive inspections

With a goal of inspecting 8,000 units each year, the team has examined some 80,000 dwellings since its creation in 2004. So there is a very good chance you have been visited by an inspector during this time. What exactly do the inspectors do when they visit?

First, they take note of any problem that could compromise your health, safety or comfort. With an electronic tablet, they tour



Do you recognize any of the members of the preventive inspection team? They visit around 8,000 units each year. (Left to right) Sylvain Turcotte, Michel Prévost, Patrick Edsell, Yves Trudel, Alejandro Pinillos and Louis Philippe Riopelle

every room of your home to inspect the components listed in the form. Every component (for example, windows, faucets, thermostat, water heater) is evaluated using specific criteria to determine whether it is in good condition or needs repairs or maintenance.

The leading-edge technology used by the OMHM automatically generates work orders, based on the level of urgency. Intervention is deemed urgent if your health or safety is threatened, or if the problem detected is damaging the building as a whole.

Your cooperation is important

The way you respond to these preventive maintenance visits helps the OMHM employees do their task to the best of their ability. "From the very beginning, the tenants' cooperation has facilitated the inspections. They're like the eyes of the OMHM. When they point out problems during an inspection, it really helps us do our job thoroughly," explained Sylvain Turcotte.

OMHM CONDITION OVERVIEW GALVANIZED THE PUBLIC HOUSE OF THE FUTURE

The completion of the first OMHM condition overview was instrumental in adding social housing upgrades to the *Programme québécois des infrastructures*. The goal of this investment program, which was launched in 2007 by the Québec government, is to upgrade, restore and preserve public infrastructure. The OMHM's RAM budget (renovation, improvement and modernization) was considerably expanded to carry out makeovers on the low-rent housing stock, which was in great need of it. Major renovation work undertaken in recently years is helping build the low-rent housing of tomorrow.



Nicole Vallières
Tenant OMHM
Board Member

Even greater cooperation

It has been several years already since I became a tenant representative with the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM). This year more than ever I have seen amazing improvements in discussions between tenants and the OMHM – we are moving toward true partnership.

First of all, the consultation about the participatory entities has given me a lot of hope. A real discussion is opening up about how to improve the way the sector committees operate. A task force, which includes several tenant representatives, will evaluate ways to structure these meetings

so that the discussions are egalitarian and the tenants feel they can contribute to finding solutions for problems.

Likewise, the consultations about OMHM services and the report on the strategic plan allowed the Advisory Committee of Tenants to express its satisfaction and expectations on a variety of issues. Our comments will be taken into consideration in the development of the next strategic plan, which will set the OMHM's objectives for the next five years.

I definitely have the impression that the winds of participation are blowing on Montréal's low-rent housing and that they're bringing improvement and beautification along with them. At latest count, the Flower and Garden Club had 600 members, which shows how much the tenants want to get involved. We can all, in our own way, take action to improve our surroundings. I hope that this sense of engagement will permeate your celebrations as the year draws to a close and give you the inspiration to fully embrace 2015.



Sylvain Labrecque
Chair, Advisory
Committee of Tenants

Encouraging involvement and independence

Since the beginning of the year, the Advisory Committee of Tenants (CCR), whose members were elected December 2013, has actively examined its mission and set three major objectives. It has adopted as its mission for the next few months to review the election policies, create an atmosphere of neighbourliness among the tenants and between the tenants and the local Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) employees and launch an action plan to encourage tenant involvement and participation.

To achieve these goals, and we fully intend to do so, we can take action in different ways. We will be

holding meetings in the three sectors to invite you – whether or not you have a tenant association – to share your ideas and opinions. The CCR wants to help you make yourself heard and we want to remind you that you can always speak at the sector and subsector meetings.

We are also hoping the OMHM will grant greater recognition to the tenant associations and delegate more power to them, to encourage you to take charge of your home environment.

Your main concerns, which your representatives took to the annual general meeting last October, are

the same as the CCR's concerns, and it is working constantly to improve maintenance, repairs, security and sanitation. The CCR has also made a commitment to issue notices more frequently to the Board of Directors, to keep management informed about problems that arise in our low-rent housing so we can all work together to correct these situations.

In closing, I would like to wish you all, tenants and OMHM employees, harmonious holidays, and I hope that harmony will continue to resonate in your lives throughout 2015.

Public question period

Residents who are not associated with a tenant committee can meet with their sector managers and share their concerns by participating in the public question period of the sector and subsector committees. For more information on the meetings that will be held in 2015, please call 514 872-2104, after January 15, 2015.

Marie-Claude Savard, vulnerable yet strong...

By Jocelyne Dorris

Did you know that Marie-Claude Savard lived in social housing in Montréal for a few years and that she had a “turbulent” adolescence? La Rose des Vents interviews a woman who sees obstacles as challenges she enjoys meeting!

As a TV host, commentator and journalist for over 15 years, Marie-Claude has carved out a prime place in Québec’s television landscape and in the hearts of TV audiences. Over the years, she has worked for a number of TV networks and made her mark as a sports commentator, a male-dominated field if there ever was one.

For many people, Marie-Claude Savard is the embodiment of success, but few people know that to get where she is, she had to overcome a number of troubles which, she says today, gave her the opportunity to grow. When she hosted the recognition ceremony for the OMHM employees, we learned that she and her mother lived for a while in affordable housing in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

A rebellious adolescent

While she describes this period as “very hard for my mother,” she herself has great memories of that time: “My mom, newly divorced, a single parent, had to deal with what she saw as a series of failures. She was ashamed to have to ask for help. But it was that help that allowed her to regroup and reorient her career, which eventually allowed us to start afresh. As for me, I could feel her sadness, of course, but we lived in a beautiful neighbourhood, and our apartment was small but clean. I understood what we were going through, but my daily life was far from dismal.”

During her teens, Marie-Claude also went through a punk phase. Who would have ever have imagined? She looks as though she has always been as good as gold! Her parents’ divorce, repeated moving and financial stress contributed to her rebellion. “I was sad and angry. At that time, my father had addiction problems and my mother was depressed. I wanted to escape from my family situation. I was no good at expressing my emotions, so I had difficult relationships with



The TV host with OMHM Executive Director Denis Quirion and long-term OMHM employees

them,” she confided. Time and maturity helped her get closer to her parents. In her book *Orpheline*, she talks about the inner transformation she underwent after both her parents died in quick succession in 2009.

Persevering in her choices

She owes her wonderful media career to her talent, of course, but also to her determination. Known as a researcher and commentator for variety shows and news programs, she had to face some prejudice when she began as a sports commentator. “I built a shell for myself, but it was not always completely water-tight. I had moments of discouragement, and I was hurt by attitudes and comments. These rough patches made me stronger. I was never defensive and I tried not to be bad-tempered about it; my male colleagues just had to come to realize I was where I wanted to be. They ended up seeing that I was there to stay and they got used to me.”

For a few years now, she has been giving talks on how to create your own good fortune at work, to help people flourish in their personal and professional lives. And for just over a year, she has taken on the career of restaurateur, as the co-owner of Grenouille in the Plateau Mont-Royal. Marie-Claude says she believes that in any situation, “good fortune is just having more courage than fear!” And when we look at her life’s journey, there is no doubt she has courage, and to spare!



At the employees’ recognition ceremony last year, Marie-Claude held a draw to give away several copies of her book, *Orpheline*.

Knocking on the right door New video clips for you!

A request for repairs, a question about your lease, a concern about security...To avoid inconvenience and wasted time, you just have to knock at the right door to ensure your request gets sent to the right place and the right resource in the right way. These new video clips are less than two minutes each. That's time well-invested to figure things out properly!

Go to www.omhm.qc.ca, to the "OMHM Tenants" section under "The OMHM at your service."



The OMHM in the age of digital telephony

By Martin Després

A few years ago, the OMHM made a high-tech transition to improve its efficiency and the quality of its tenant services. As 2015 dawns, it is time for IP telephony to make its appearance.



IP telephony uses a digital signal on computer networks instead of the traditional "wired" network. It is an advanced and flexible solution that will also give the organization major savings of up to 40%. These savings will help the OMHM make the administrative expense reductions required by the government.

Improving access to our services

The call centre receives and manages nearly 200,000 calls every year. IP telephony will reduce wait time, thanks to better management of employees on the job during peak periods. It will also allow reports and statistics to be generated quickly. The technological upgrade will provide greetings and hold messages that direct tenants toward the appropriate resources.

For tenants, an automated greeting will now be their first response. There will still always be an operator taking calls to take note of requests and answer questions.

Happy Holidays to our tenants!

Please note that all the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal offices will be closed on **December 24, 25 and 26**, as well as **December 31, 2014** and **January 1 and 2, 2015**.

During this period, the **CALL CENTRE WILL REMAIN OPEN: 514 872-OMHM (6646)**.

In homage to a man of commitment

By Jocelyne Dorris



Several members of Michel Perreault's family, including his mother and wife, as well as tenants, the executive director and OMHM employees were quite emotional during the ceremony.

Over a year ago, Michel Perreault, Assistant Executive Director, Operations, at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal, passed away suddenly. A number of tenants, management and OMHM employees have expressed a desire to pay homage to him, to highlight his enormous contribution to social housing in Montréal. Two places that play an important role in the social development and community life of low-rent housing here in Montréal have therefore been named after him.

A multi-service room in Rosemont becomes the Centre Michel-Perreault

The multi-service room at Habitations Rosemont will now be called the Centre Michel-Perreault. The official announcement was made on September 25, and the OMHM says it is pleased to see a place dedicated to community life named in honour of this man of commitment. The designation was made at the initiative of the chair of the Tenant Family Association, Mr. Malherbe Minault. Emotions were high at the event, which was attended by Mr. Perreault's family, many residents, partners, borough representatives, members of management and OMHM staff.

As many will recall, this former garage was completely transformed and inaugurated in 2012 as a meeting space to offer a variety of services and resources to the residents of the low-rent housing complex and the neighbourhood. At the time, Mr. Perreault was an ardent proponent of the project. Since its creation, the room has been used daily by the tenants and other local residents for many different activities. It also serves other community organizations.

Groups that want to use the space can contact the chair, Malherbe Minault, to submit a request (minaultm@yahoo.ca). The activities must reflect the objectives and values of the Centre.

A square in his honour in Little Burgundy

The courtyard of Habitations Albert has been chosen as the location of Place Michel-Perreault, a space named in honour of a man who encouraged innovative projects set up in partnership with the tenants. Why here? For several reasons: its location in the heart of Little Burgundy, which is in some ways the cradle of low-rent housing in Montréal, its proximity to the Secteur Sud-Ouest offices and the fact that it is easily accessible to visitors who want to go there.

In the courtyard, a diagonal line of Corten steel panels will be raised bearing 27 words that describe Michel's qualities and represent the number of years he devoted to his job. The installation will lend itself beautifully to this setting, which already features a magnificent garden landscape created by a Habitations Albert resident from across the road. This symbolic space will definitely be a source of pride for all the tenants and OMHM employees.



(computerized image of the future Place Michel-Perreault)

Closing festival at the Jardin botanique

A burgeoning fourth season for the Flower and Garden Club

By Jocelyne Dorris

The Flower and Garden Club's closing ceremony was held on September 11 at the Jardin botanique de Montréal. At the event, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal celebrated the accomplishments of gardening enthusiasts from Montréal low-rent housing complexes, all of them from the Flower and Garden Club, which now boasts 600 members!

The celebration was held with an audience of some 300 people, including representatives of the Jardin botanique, Ville de Montréal politicians, OMHM employees and, of course, hundreds of Club members. During the evening, the guests were treated to a visual presentation of the gardens planted in low-rent housing complexes all across the city and attended two mini-lectures given by the host, renowned horticulturalist Albert Mondor. A draw was held to give away gift certificates to garden nurseries in Montréal, and a number of door prizes were handed out, from passes to exhibitions to books about plants. The gift certificates given out at the ceremony were in addition to those that were drawn at random last May. In total, some \$15,000 in prizes has been awarded to Club members in 2014.

Inspired youth

A video was also presented showing youth from Habitations Delorimier enthusiastically taking part in gardening. This short film was produced in collaboration with Éco-quartier Sainte-Marie, which guided the youth in their projects over the summer. The youth wing of the Club, which was set up last year, is geared toward youth living in low-rent housing, to cultivate their interest in "greening" their environment by inviting them to take an active part in landscaping projects. With support from the Club, some 15 organizations helped about 100 young residents to complete their horticultural projects.



Mr. and Ms. Hassan Selmini mostly disappear behind the cascade of flowers in the magnificent flower boxes decorating their balcony at Habitations André-Grasset, in Ahuntsic.

New additions appreciated

The 2014 closing ceremony featured two new activities. For the first time, the members were given a free guided tour of the Jardin botanique, thanks to the assistance of Les Amis du jardin botanique. Seven volunteers accompanied the sixty or so members who came for the tour, which began under gloomy skies but ended in radiant sunshine!

Another addition to the ceremony this year was that the guests received excellent advice from Albert Mondor, who gave two short lectures, one on growing edible plants in pots and the other on annuals that require no care. Each talk was enlivened with photos that illustrated Mr. Mondor's words and also revealed his talents as a photographer!

For the first time this year, the members were offered a free guided tour of the Jardin botanique, thanks to the assistance of Les Amis du jardin botanique. Seven volunteers accompanied the sixty-some members on the tour.



Outstanding horticulturalist Albert Mondor skillfully hosted the closing ceremony of the 2014 season of the Flower and Garden Club. His two short lectures were a roaring success.

A valuable partner for the members

This year again, the members benefited from the input of Sentier Urbain, which added a very welcome surprise this year when it handed out over 1,500 bags of compost, soil and cedar mulch, as well as 110 cedar balcony boxes.

As usual, Lucie Vallée, a horticultural consultant with Sentier Urbain, was generous with her advice and shared her knowledge to support the success of the tenants' projects. Throughout the summer season, Ms. Vallée met with members to encourage them, offered training to groups and got her hands in the dirt on several occasions. "I appreciate and strongly support the objective of the Flower and Garden Club, which is to encourage young and old to deck their environment in greenery and blossoms. This approach promotes resident participation and action to improve their home environment, and that matches the mission of our organization, which is to inspire community involvement in social greening," she declared.

The consultant reiterated that gardening projects bring people closer to nature and offer a strong sense of personal and group wellbeing to their enthusiasts.



Ms. Ginette Cadieux, from Habitations Charlebois in the Southwest, shows great imagination in the arrangement of her garden with the addition of amusing accessories.



A new member this year, Gérard Paquette, from Habitations Longue-Pointe, managed to turn this tiny corner of his balcony into a dazzling burst of greenery and colour!

Thanks to our generous sponsors



Special thanks to
Espace pour la vie for their warm welcome:



A Club that just keeps blossoming

The members of the Flower and Garden Club are all low-rent housing residents, and their interest in gardening keeps growing year after year. As OMHM Sustainable Development Director Nicolas Joly explained, "The Club has become a summer tradition that allows the members to develop a wonderful spirit of mutual assistance and solidarity. It is especially encouraging to see their numbers continue to climb." Mr. Joly is certainly right to point this out, because there are now 600 people, a record number, who share this passion for floral and kitchen gardens.

Beautiful gardens and flower borders delight the eye, as the admirable creations of the members attest, but the effects of gardening go much further. Growing vegetables, planting and nurturing kitchen gardens, also builds connections among neighbours and develops a sense of belonging to a community. It has also been proven that well-tended lots increase the safety of the area. Not to mention the pride people feel when they see the results! In addition to making the environment more beautiful, urban greening reduces heat islands. All these benefits enrich the quality of life of low-rent housing tenants and all residents of Montréal's neighbourhoods.

Hooray for all the participants, and here's to the next growing season!



At Habitations Parc Royal, in the borough of Saint-Laurent, the passion for growing veggies starts young. Planting trees takes many pairs of hands...and quite a bit of gumption.



Youth from Habitations Place Normandie, in Montréal-Nord, prepared the seedbeds for next year's gardening season.

Inspiring initiatives to entice young people to take up gardening!



OMHM Executive Director Denis Quirion, Executive Assistant H  l  ne Boh  mier and Board Chair Robert Labelle were on hand to accept the award.

The *Jeunes et verdissement* project, set up by the Service du d  veloppement communautaire et social, earned the OMHM the **2014 M  rite Habitat** award in the social development category from the Regroupement des offices d'habitation du Qu  bec (ROHQ). The award recognizes the remarkable achievements of different organizations in order to spread the word about best practices within the network. This great initiative hired 10 young low-rent housing residents who spent the summer learning the rudiments of urban agriculture. In addition to offering them exciting and rewarding summer jobs, the project raised their awareness about sustainable development and, who knows, maybe also helped plant the seed for future careers in horticulture!

The clean-up brigades project also gave 40 low-rent housing youth summer jobs. This task consists essentially of maintaining the grounds by doing gardening work, raking up dead leaves and sweeping entrance ways.

An evening when all the stars were shining!



On May 7, 2014, some 250 volunteers were hosted at the Plaza Antique, on Sherbrooke Street East, for the Community Activity and Volunteer Recognition Ceremony. The red carpet was rolled out and a photographer welcomed the guests at the entrance to make this evening memorable from start to finish.

Unique entertainment

To express their appreciation for the commitment of these volunteers, the employees of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) presented a musical number that was created especially for them! Serge Villandré, Assistant Executive Director, Low-Rent-Housing Management, and Nathalie Morin, Director for the promotion of social development and consultation, sang their appreciation to the tune of *Star d'un soir*. A group of dancers and singers from the Service du développement communautaire et social, including Director Esther Giroux, accompanied this performance, which put a smile on everyone's face. Volunteer Beverley Derooy also contributed spontaneously by singing a tune *a cappella* with great emotion and talent.

Here are three of the volunteer stars that shone brightly on the evening of May 7.

1. **Nicole Binette Guay**, a kind-hearted woman who has organized numerous parties over the past 14 years in the De Salaberry housing project in the northwest sector.
2. The Plateau Mont-Royal housing project, in the east sector, has in **Monique Gauthier** an astute administrator who never hesitates to offer assistance to the tenants.
3. Dynamic and generous, **Iluminada Averion** is recognized for her landscaping work on her balcony and around the Place Newman housing project in the southwest sector.

Continued on page 2.

A year of positive results



For a little more than a year now, we have been conducting consultations on the operations of the Advisory Committee of Tenants (Comité consultatif des résidents, or CCR) and the sector and sub-sector committees. This exercise has revealed numerous strong points in these participating entities, but also elements that could be improved.

Early last October, we presented results in the three sectors and to the CCR that generated a lot of interest. Five tenant representatives have volunteered to take part in the task force that will explore, over the next few months, ways to inject new dynamism into the sector committees. We will get back to you with more detail on this subject in a future edition.

For its part, the CCR will implement the recommendations related to its operations. In fact, it has been thoroughly committed all year long to continually improving the pertinence of its actions. It has formed several committees to analyze in detail such questions as the assistance to be provided to tenants and their associations, the welcoming of new tenants and problems with maintenance and repairs. You should be proud of your representatives; they are committed to presenting your concerns to the Office's Board of Directors and, above all, to returning to you with solutions.

We have also continued to hold information meetings for tenants not represented by an association. These meetings, which have been held in the three sectors over the course of the year, inform the tenants about the participatory bodies and the services of the Office.

With 2014 drawing to an end, it is time to prepare your annual activity reports. We will soon be sending you the form to be filled out to obtain your 2015 subsidies. In the meantime, I sincerely hope you have a wonderful holiday period and that you start the new year filled with joy.

Esther Giroux
Director
Service du développement communautaire et social

Continued from page 1.

Personalized tributes

Between the appetizer and the main course, employees from the OMHM and members of the Advisory Committee of Tenants (Comité consultatif des résidents, or CCR) took to the microphone to pay a personal tribute to each of the stars being honoured. They started by saluting the efforts of 11 young volunteers and then praised the work of 34 adult volunteers that the tenant associations of the OMHM consider to be models of commitment to their housing projects.



To a tune sung by Serge Villandré and Nathalie Morin, the social and community development team gave a performance to thank the volunteers for their commitment.

After enjoying a great meal, while viewing their photos on a large screen and discussing among themselves, the guests continued to celebrate and danced to music chosen for the occasion by the DJ. Judging by the comments received, the evening was much appreciated and put joy in the hearts of all the participants.

A video of the event is available on the OMHM website. Check it out at www.omhm.qc.ca, under "OMHM tenants," "Community living in public housing."

THE WORK OF THE CCR

The Advisory Committee of Tenants (Comité consultatif des résidents, or CCR) is your spokesperson. The OMHM consults it on all important issues and it works to improve the quality of your living environment. The CCR represents the entire tenant community.

Tenants' Annual General Assembly

A lively and rewarding meeting

On October 23, some 45 representatives attended the Annual General Assembly of the tenant representatives of Montreal's low-rent housing projects. Three elected members of the Advisory Committee of Tenants (Comité consultatif des résidents, or CCR) hosted the day: Nicole Vallières, from the Richmond housing project (Southwest), Richard Fitzgerald, from the Terrasse Ontario housing project (East), and Marie-Benoite Bukuru, from the Sackville housing project (Northwest).

A CCR that knows its business

In the morning, the session leaders presented the report of the CCR and reviewed the initiatives undertaken in 2014, including the major RAM (replacement, amelioration and modernization) projects and budget, assistance to tenants and their associations and the welcoming of new tenants. A discussion period followed, to allow the tenant representatives to state their priorities for 2015.

A number of questions were raised, such as «what to do about the loss of autonomy of our neighbours?» and «how to know how much time is allowed to move when an apartment becomes too big or too small?» The members of the CCR answered all the questions and encouraged the tenants to use the various resources available to them.

Instructive presentations

In the afternoon, Ms. Bukuru, Ms. Vallières and Mr. Fitzgerald explained in detail the participatory bodies that are accessible to residents and the way they interact. Following that, Serge Villandré,

Assistant Executive Director, Low-Rent-Housing Management, presented the three videos *Knocking at the right door* that clarify who to contact when you have a problem. You can watch these videos at www.omhm.qc.ca, under the "Current tenants" section, click "OMHM Tenants," then "The OMHM at your service." Mr. Villandré then described the roles of the various members of the local support team and answered questions from the tenant representatives.

At the end of the day, several representatives thanked the CCR for its conscientious work and the wealth of content of the assembly: more informative than ever.



The members of the Advisory Committee of Tenants (CCR), elected in December 2013, presented their first report to the Annual General Assembly on October 23, 2014.



Meeting at the crossroads

Seeking ways for different cultures and generations to live together

All together at the beach!

One of the challenges facing a tenant committee is organizing get-togethers that are fun for everyone. «In summer, a trip to the beach at Cap Saint-Jacques is always a success for the tenants of the André-Grasset housing project in Ahuntsic, because families just dream about outdoor activities," explains Claire Katma, a community outreach worker involved in the OMHM's Living Diversity project.

The concept is simple: everyone brings their barbecues and their food; the tenant committee supplies the briquettes. The participation fee covers admission to the beach and part of the cost of transportation by bus. The difference comes from the committee's budget.

«Each time, it has been a memorable sharing experience,» adds Ms. Katma. «Last year, a woman made sticky rice for everyone, and another offered tea. The people are very generous and proud to have you taste their specialities.» Claire Katma also noted that "some elderly people complimented the parents because they found their children to be well brought up and helpful." After such a beautiful day, the smiles and hellos are more frequent in a housing project.

New tenant committees

Numerous elections have been held in the low-rent housing projects since last spring. We have counted 31 of them, including 2 that gave birth to new associations. Our congratulations to the 165 newly elected representatives and thank you for committing to this great adventure!

EAST SECTOR

Plateau-Mont-Royal **S**

Denise Gagnon
Monique Gauthier
Simone Fortier
Jean-Claude Sauriol

De Maisonneuve **F**

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Mounira Khalek
Rajaa Samir
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Pierrette Grenier
Christian Houle
Denis Marisseau
Glenmore Browne

Des Pointeliers **S**

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Thérèse Guilbault
Jacqueline Marcotte
Francine Boisjoly

Viauville **S**

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Josette Duguay
André Lafleur

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Claire Richardson
Lise Galipeau

Les Jardins Chaumont **S**

Jacques Pilote
Claudette Baron
Yvonne Audet

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Lise Chrétien
Marie-Anne Allard
Nicolas Dattoli

André-Grasset **F**

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Drenimi Seid Djimet
Eminne Versaillau
Hakima Amroune
Samira Wardi

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Eva Bleau Benjamin
Pauline Barsalou
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S

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Andrée Legault
Claire Desjardins
Diane Tremblay
Rachel Nadon

S OMHM low-rent housing for seniors

F OMHM low-rent housing for families and people living alone

This information is provided as a guideline and is subject to change as tenant associations evolve.



A strong association is one that treats all its members equally. Each association has its by-laws so that all its members follow the same rules. This avoids a lot of problems between tenants.

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Lise Leduc
Marcel Tringue
Marie-Thérèse Gauthier

Finding a family doctor

By H el ene Morin

For some people, looking for a family doctor is like entering a labyrinth. And yet it can be simple. There are two ways to find a family doctor, and the best idea is to use them both at once, to speed up the process if possible.

Step 1

- Contact the Health and Social Services Centre (CSSS) in your neighbourhood (see the map to figure out which CSSS to apply to) or your CLSC and ask to be put on the waiting list for a family doctor.
- You will be directed to the family doctor research centre (Centre de recherche de m edecin de famille) which will make sure you went to the right CSSS and that you don't have a family doctor already assigned to your file.
- They will enter your name on the waiting list and give you a phone interview with a nurse.
- The nurse will fill out a form for you over the phone, evaluate your request and assign you a priority, based on your state of health.

Step 2

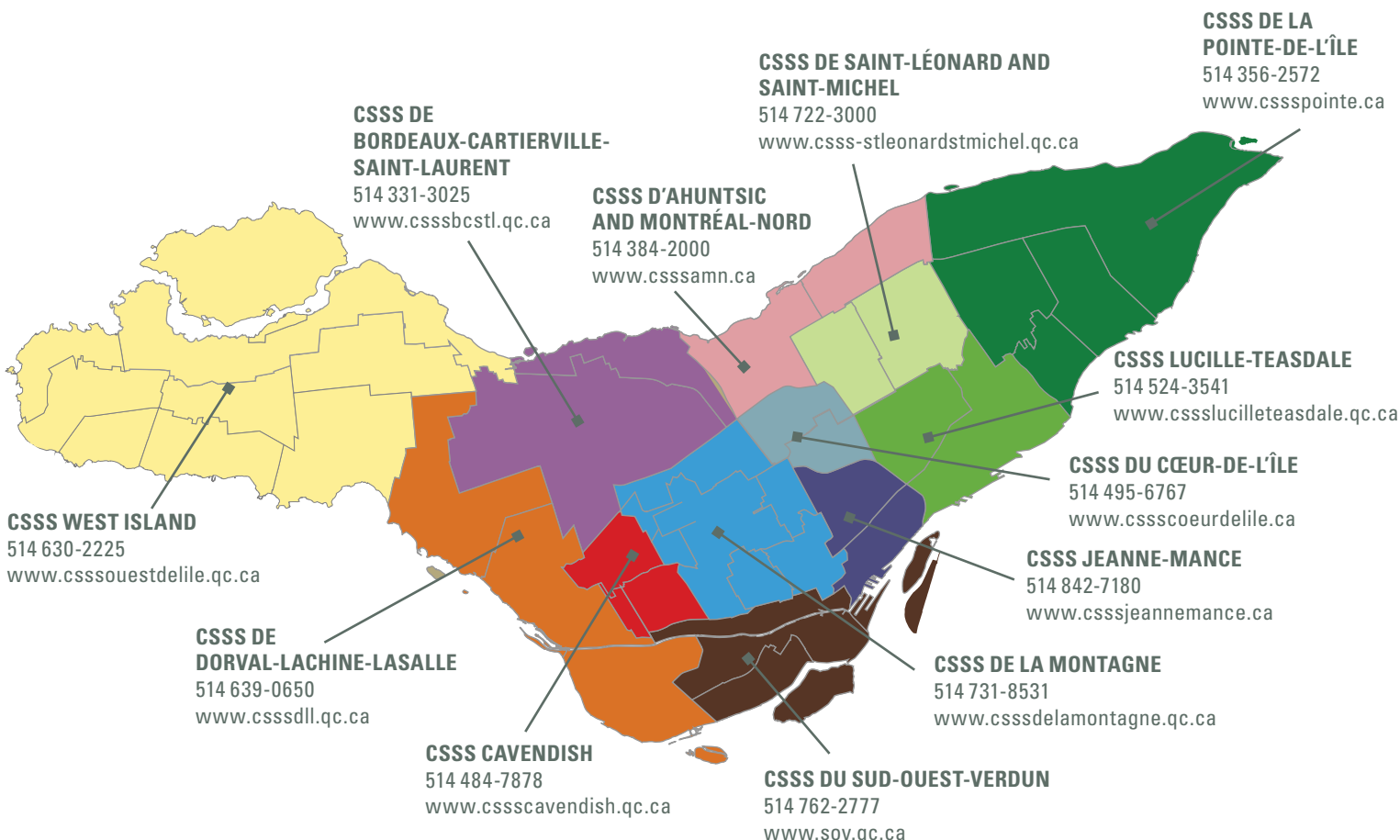
- Since no one can predict how long this process will take, we recommend that you do your own search at the same time.
- Contact the clinics and family medicine groups in your neighbourhood to see whether they are accepting new patients. Your CSSS can give you a list of these establishments in its territory.

When you find a doctor who agrees to take you on, you will be given a form to complete to register as a patient.

Remember that you can still go to a doctor even if you do not have a family doctor. To do this, just go to the walk-in clinic at your CLSC or a neighbourhood clinic to see the doctor on duty.

CSSSs ON THE ISLAND OF MONTR EAL

These are administrative centres. There is no point in going there in person. First find the CSSS in your territory and call to register yourself on the waiting list and ask for any other information (for example, the address of your CLSC if you need to see a doctor immediately). If you have access to the Internet, check your CSSS website for information about how to start your search for a family doctor.





The emerald ash borer: still breaking news!

By Brigitte Laliberté



This insect pest, originally from South-East Asia, was discovered for the first time in Montréal in July 2011. It is especially destructive and a major threat to the over 200,000 public ash trees on the island of Montréal, not counting those on private land. Since ash trees are easy to grow, resistant to difficult growing conditions and quick growing, there are plenty of them on the island. In North America, the emerald ash borer exclusively attacks ashes of all species. While it is extremely devastating for these trees, the insect offers no risk to humans.

The Ville de Montréal has already screened its ash trees and compiled a registry of infestation foci in some neighbourhoods. As part of the intervention, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal was informed that 56 of its low-rent housing complexes are located in these infestation areas. This is why, last June, the OMHM undertook an internal process to develop an initial report on the situation and take the required actions.

Forewarned is forearmed

From this screening work, we estimate that about 60% of the ash trees on our properties are already infested or at risk of infestation. But the signs of blight may be caused by other diseases, such as a fungal disease called *anthracnose* or bull's eye rot, which also attacks ash trees. Because of this, only an expert can determine whether the ash borer is the culprit.

The OMHM has decided to follow the Ville de Montréal strategy and take action in infestation areas. We have put forward an action plan that will be carried out in several annual phases and will require interventions based on changes in the infestation areas targeted by the city.

What is the plan?

The plan is, initially, to do a tree inventory on all the low-rent housing properties in the infestation areas. Next, depending on the recommendations of the experts, infested trees will be felled and trees in infestation areas that show no signs of blight will be vaccinated. If we have to cull or vaccinate trees near your home, you will be informed as quickly as possible. The ash trees have to be felled between October 1 and March 15 to avoid propagating the ash borers. The vaccination-injection treatment has to be done when the adult stage of the bug is active, so no earlier than the beginning of June and no later than the end of August. The injection treatment presents no danger to human health.

Then, depending on the scale of the damage, we will have to think about planting other species of trees to replace the magnificent ash trees destined to be felled, because we have to remember that besides their esthetic value, trees provide a cooling effect during periods of intense heat and serve as natural filters for fine particle pollution as well as rain water collectors.

For more information on the emerald ash borer, please go to: ville.montreal.qc.ca/agrile.



«D» shaped holes

Infested ashes may show a wide variety of signs and symptoms, but the only sure sign of its presence are «D» shaped holes made by the emerging adults.

Source: Ville de Montréal

Jacqueline Marcotte: an inspiration to her community

By Daniel Deslauriers



Still active, Ms. Marcotte, right, won the prize for top score in bean bag toss last May. She poses proudly with the tenants who won in other categories.

She's 84, but she still works tirelessly for others and shares her joy every day...

We're talking about Jacqueline Marcotte, a resident of Habitations Des Pointeliers, in Pointe-aux-Trembles. Ms. Marcotte knows her neighbourhood like the back of her hand, as well as the 50-some tenants in her seniors' residence.

She was one of the first residents to move into this building, over 27 years ago, when it was brand new. "Of those, there are only nine left," explained Ms. Marcotte with some nostalgia. She has experienced all the subsequent changes and actively

participated in many, as a member of the Pointeliers tenant association from the very beginning.

Faithful to her task

For 27 years, she has been faithful to her task, except for a few years when she took a lesser role due to health problems. "I have served as advisor and treasurer," announced the octogenarian with no small pride in her lively voice. Today, she wears two hats – as secretary and treasurer. This warm-hearted woman patiently prepares all the documents by hand.

For her, there is no real question of using a computer. She moved to Pointe-aux-Trembles in 1965 as a young housewife with three children, two boys and a girl, to whom she dedicated all her love, along with her two other hobbies: gardening and sewing. "I would sew for anyone and everyone until I was 70 and my eyes started to give out," she said ruefully.

After her husband died, a few months after they moved to Habitations Des Pointeliers, Ms. Marcotte stitched together a new life dedicated to her tenant neighbours. As usual, she poured all her heart and soul into it. "I'm sociable. I like people. I'm still very independent. I want to help the people in my building, who are like members of my family. "

With 27 years of involvement behind her, Jacqueline Marcotte is in a better position than anyone to tell you that the success of an organization like the one at Habitations Des Pointeliers is first and foremost a matter of compromise. "If you want to succeed and stay strong, you have to put a little water in your wine. Because above all it is team work. "

The people who know her all gladly repay her kindness to them. Her commitment and enthusiasm are a source of inspiration for everyone. She is a role model with a clear place in the history of Habitations Des Pointeliers.



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8th super-neighbour meeting

Celebrating volunteers in the Plateau Mont-Royal!

By H  l  ne Morin

A big party brought over 60 people from nine low-rent housing complexes in the Plateau Mont-Royal to Habitations Drolet last June 5. It was the 8th meeting of the super-neighbours.

This is an important celebration for neighbourhood residents who spend time together all year round. "We're aware of what is going on in the local housing complexes. We share our experiences and we do shared activities," explained Jean-Claude Sauriol, chair of the tenant committee at Habitations Plateau Mont-Royal. "The party was organized by the Alliances 3^e   ge Grand Plateau round table to recognize the work of the volunteers and the solidarity of the residents in these low-rent housing complexes," added Lorraine Decelles, coordinator of La Maison d'Aurore.

This year, the high point of the meeting was unquestionably the performance of a song composed by the tenants to the tune of "Partons, la mer est belle." All the guests raised their voices together, accompanied by an accordion player. Each of the nine complexes had its own verse. "We held three meetings in each building to choose the content of their verse, write it and rehearse it," said   ric C  t  , the community worker who ran the writing workshops. "It was a real challenge to figure out exactly what they wanted to say, about what makes them unique." But once they got started, the residents joined in enthusiastically and joyfully blended their voices on familiar tunes like "Mon Pays" and "Le P'tit Bonheur".

The super-neighbours include tenants from the following Habitations:

De Lanaudierre, De Mentana, Drolet,   mile-Nelligan, Laurier, Plateau Mont-Royal, Sainte-Agn  s, Sainte-Croix and Sainte-V  ronique.



With good humour and a spirit of sharing, the older people and the youth chatted together during the party.



To the strains of the accordion, the residents of the nine Plateau Mont-Royal housing complexes proudly sang out the song they had composed for the super-neighbour meeting.

Réseau d'entraide: seniors team up!

Two women with a single mission: creating connections among seniors

By Daniel Deslauriers

Their names are Linda Pierre and Noria Belamri. Together, these two community development officers coordinate the Réseau d'entraide. This pilot project is part of a mobilization process for people 55 and over who live in Montréal-Nord.

The goal of the Réseau d'entraide is to counter the isolation, exclusion and poverty of seniors in this neighbourhood and support people with reduced mobility. The project is for tenants at Manoir Gouin and Manoir Aimé-Léonard, but all the residents in the sector benefit. It is supported by the Centre d'action bénévole de Montréal-Nord in collaboration with the Comité de suivi de mobilisation des aînés (Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal, the Accorderie de Montréal-Nord, the CSSS-CLSC Montréal-Nord, Parole d'excluEs, the Carrefour des retraités Montréal-Nord and the Table de concertation des aînés de Montréal-Nord). This initiative was made possible thanks to funding from the borough of Montréal-Nord.

No money changes hands

"The Réseau d'entraide is modelled on the Accorderie, which has the mission to develop mutual aid and solidarity among neighbours and promote their respective competencies and experiences. The Accorderie is a service exchange whose social currency is time. Money doesn't exist," explained Ms. Pierre and Ms. Belamri. A service point for the organization is located at Manoir Gouin and serves as the hub for the project.



Information sessions are held periodically for residents.



Every week, the Réseau d'entraide holds coffee meetings where neighbourhood people can get to know one another.

For example, with the Réseau d'entraide, someone might need a hand shovelling their balcony. At the agreed on time, the person who is receiving the service could, in return, teach the other person to knit or to cook a healthy meal or to do yoga or provide some other useful service.

And it works! Launched last June, the project has already connected about 100 people. About twenty of them participate regularly in activities. Every week, the Réseau d'entraide also holds coffee meetings where people in the neighbourhood can get to know one another.

"Some of them exchange phone numbers and take the sharing adventure further. This is how we achieve our goal: breaking isolation and fighting exclusion and poverty," declared the two community officers. The Réseau d'entraide participants who are members of the Accorderie get additional benefits and can check their member space on the website (accorderie.ca) to learn more about the service exchanges offered by the Réseau d'entraide.

The Réseau d'entraide development agents can be contacted by phone at 514 507-4551, by email at lpierre@cabmtl-nord.org or nbelamri@cabmtl-nord.org or in person at their office, at 6750 Gouin East, suite 140, Montréal-Nord.



“Welcome home!”

Or how to welcome new residents moving low-rent housing complex

By the Centre de formation sociale Marie-Gérin-Lajoie team

If the arrival of new neighbours is a source of worry for you, imagine what it is like for them! Welcoming them appropriately can establish the foundation for a good relationship and at the same time make things easier for the newcomers. Everybody benefits!

Of course, it is important to respect everybody's limits and take the time to get used to one another. But a simple hello can be enough to start a bond of trust.

Three simple gestures to build trust:

1. GO INTRODUCE YOURSELF!

Offer to explain the local services that are available: community groups, businesses, the activities of your housing complex...

Shyness, fear of bothering the other person and even some **prejudices** can sometimes make us hesitate to reach out to others. And yet a few words of greeting and small talk can help us feel more at ease. Then it will be easier to bring up a delicate topic, if ever one should arise: the volume of the TV, the slamming of doors, where to put the garbage, etc.

Good quality connections help prevent conflict and allow people to bring up problems more calmly and with greater confidence.

2. GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER

Greeting each other, smiling, asking for news, especially at the beginning, helps break the ice. And feel free to tell the newcomer about the little idiosyncrasies of your neighbourhood: Marcel leaves for work at 4 a.m., Mayda's kids like to play in the hallway sometimes...

Of course, to do this, you have to talk to each other!

3. ANTICIPATE NEEDS: A COURTEOUS GESTURE

Ask your new neighbour whether there is anything in particular that is bothering them, so you can do something about it. There is a good chance your neighbour will ask you the same question in return.

This demonstrates your good will and your concern for others. And then... you will be less hesitant to mention any kind of problem that may arise.

Other ideas?

Offer to help, even just to lend a tool or carry a grocery bag, take out the garbage if your neighbour has a back ache... Being able to count on someone in our immediate environment is always reassuring.

Doing things together also helps build ties. Remember to tell your new neighbours about the activities held in your housing complex and invite them to join in!

And why not form a little sponsorship committee to welcome newcomers and support their integration?

A FEW SUGGESTIONS FROM THE OMHM:

- At the end of each month, ask the OMHM community organizers which apartments have new tenants in them.
- Put a welcome sign on the door.
- Post a list of community activities where it can be easily seen.
- Holding welcome meetings to:
 - invite the newcomers to community activities
 - explain neighbourhood resources
 - pass on the meeting schedule and the contact information for the tenant committee and encourage them to join

AND DON'T FORGET: A TRUE WELCOME IS DONE IN A SPIRIT OF OPENNESS TOWARD THE OTHER!



Rubbing Shoulders

Beautiful day to hold a picnic for tenants of Manoir d'Anjou

Several Manoir d'Anjou residents took advantage of a magnificent sunny day to hold a picnic in the Promenade Bellerive park, right on the bank of the St. Lawrence River.



Habitations Mayfair blows out 40 candles

About 50 tenants and their guests celebrated the 40th anniversary of Habitations Mayfair, in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, on June 28. On the program for the evening: a mouth-watering buffet, a succulent cake, a selection of drinks, dancing and lots of fun! The guests threw themselves joyfully into the celebration and thoroughly enjoyed the live musical offering from Greg Innis on the keyboard.



Joyful 40th anniversary of Habitations De Maisonneuve

A great party was held at Habitations de Maisonneuve on August 7 to celebrate its 40-year anniversary. Young and old alike feasted together. The OMHM took the opportunity to pay homage to Claude Monette, one of the original residents. Congratulations, Mr. Monette!



Impressive young athletes from Habitations Boyce-Viau!

The seventh "Défi soccer" featured a lively match between teens from the Centre des jeunes Boyce-Viau and police officers from neighbourhood station 23, in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve district. Over 270 people showed up to cheer the soccer players on at Théodore Park last July. Their encouragements paid off, because the match ended with a score of 4 to 3 for the kids!

A lovely country outing for seniors

On July 30, some twenty tenants from Habitations Ahuntsic and Crémazie, along with members of Entraide Ahuntsic-Nord, spent a memorable day at the Maison Juliette-Huot, in Oka. The house offers a spectacular view of the Lac des Deux-Montagnes. The outing gave the seniors a chance to discover a lovely spot in an enchanting setting.



Rain or shine, we get together to celebrate!

Despite the rainy weather, the residents of several low-rent housing complexes and others from the Little Burgundy neighbourhood came together at Oscar-Peterson park to have fun, dance and share snacks at the 20th Festival de la Petite-Bourgogne. The friendly atmosphere and the warmth of the partiers completely made up for the lack of sun.

Rubbing Shoulders

International cuisine at Habitations De Terrebonne



The tenants of Habitations De Terrebonne, in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, came up with a great way to get healthy and combat solitude. Every two weeks, the residents are invited to taste intergenerational dishes from different countries, to the accompaniment of music from the featured country. This free activity is organized with the assistance of Action Communiterre.

Residents of Habitations Dublin-Fortune win a “Sud-Ouest en fleurs” prize



Several tenants at Habitations Dublin-Fortune helped design a floral garden arrangement in the back courtyard of their building. They tended it carefully all summer, and their efforts have been rewarded. For the “Sud-Ouest en fleurs” competition, in October 2014, they won the borough prize for best group project in Pointe-Saint-Charles. Bravo to the residents, and we can’t wait until next spring to get gardening!

CELEBRATING THE END OF RENOVATIONS!

End-of-works parties are a great opportunity for tenants, partners and other people affected by the project to get together to celebrate the end of major renovations. They also give the residents the chance to reclaim their environment and, above all, catch up with each other. This fall, tenants at Habitations Quesnel Coursol II in Little Burgundy, Habitations Sainte-Catherine d’Alexandrie in Ville-Marie and Habitations Laporte in Pointe-aux-Trembles got together to celebrate the metamorphosis of their buildings and share the pleasure of finally being able to settle back into their homes for good!



By tradition, the tenants receive a laminated sign describing the various stages of the project and their contribution to the project’s success. Serge Villandr , Assistant Executive Director, Low-Rent Housing Management, and Caroline Stewart, community organizer, gave the sign to the Habitations Laporte tenant committee.



The major renovations carried out at Habitations Laporte included the landscaping of the bank and grounds.



Despite the chilly weather, the tenants of Habitations Quesnel Coursol II turned out for the end-of-works party!



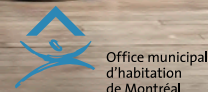
The tenants of Habitations Sainte-Catherine d’Alexandrie presented Andr  Poulin, of Trempro Construction, with a golden stud. This symbolic reward was given to him in appreciation for his cooperation and respect for the residents during the renovation work.

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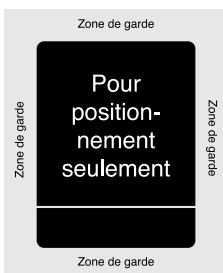
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Rose des vents

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In case of emergency only, our employees work until 11 p.m. on week nights, as well as during the day on Saturdays and Sundays. Don't be surprised if a maintenance and repair worker or other OMHM specialist (plumber, electrician) arrives at your door outside regular business hours. You can let him in without fear for your safety, once he has identified himself.

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*Open Wednesday, 9 to noon
and 1 to 2:30*

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bureau 100

*Verdun, QC H4H 2T2
Open Wednesday, 9 to noon*

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255, boul. Crémazie Est, bureau 150 Montréal, QC H2M 1M2

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