

La Rose des vents

Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal Tenant Newsletter

December 2017 • Volume 16, No 2

Office municipal
d'habitation
de Montréal

They climbed to the top of Morocco for the benefit of the Foundation

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Happy holidays to our tenants!

Please note that the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal offices will be closed on **December 25, 26 et 27, 2017** and on **January 1, 2 et 3, 2018**.

However, the Call and Security Center will be open for emergencies: **514-872-6646**.

La Rose des vents is also available at www.omhm.qc.ca, under the News and Publications tab



Danielle Cécile
Executive Director
of the OMHM

Communicate and cooperate to preserve the quality of our relationships

I touched on it briefly in the previous edition of *La Rose des vents*, but now it's official: our work on communication has begun. Communication with tenants is paramount and affects all our interactions with you. That is why we are going to take the necessary steps and time to do things right and successfully complete this major project.

As I was expecting, the initial analysis and validation show just how significant the contribution of the three tenant representatives will be. They are in a great position to know what communication issues there might be with the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) and to express your views. I would like to take this opportunity to thank

Ms. Lili-Maria Costache and Mr. Richard Gagné, members of the Comité consultatif des résidents des HLM de Montréal (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants), and Mr. Jean-Claude Leblond, from the Comité consultatif des résidents Enharmonie (Interim Advisory Committee of Tenants), for having accepted this mandate.

You will also note that some articles and messages from your representatives in this edition of *La Rose des vents* remind us of the importance of cooperation between the OMHM and its tenants to preserve the quality of living environments, whether in terms of cleanliness and maintenance or relationships between tenants and employees. I share this vision because we all stand to benefit from working

together and maintaining relationships based on mutual respect.

You will also have seen our cover page, which highlights the exploits of two young men from low-rent housing, Érick and Deus, as they scaled Morocco's highest peak with support from OMHM Foundation. They tell us all about the ups and downs of their adventure on page 17. They are proof that youth in low-rent housing have great potential and should be encouraged to make their dreams come true.

As I wrap up, I wish you a very happy holiday season and a wonderful time with your loved ones. Let's also not forget about those who are alone or ill and let's try to give them a little bit of our time, if we can, so that they too can get into the festive spirit.

Word from your Representatives



Ghislaine Laramée
Tenant member of the
OMHM Board

Litter is everyone's business

Litter can be a receipt that falls out of your grocery bags onto the floor in the corridor, a plastic wrapper that gets blown by the wind when you leave the building, an apple core someone throws on the ground without a second thought...

It often takes just one scrap of paper, a single piece of garbage for another and then a dozen and soon hundreds to pile up. That first scrap sends the signal that the cleanliness of our surroundings is not important to us and that it is none of our business. And that is how a community ends up living in untidiness.

The solution is simple, and everyone can do it. All it takes is being mindful of not throwing anything on the ground, and bothering to pick up whatever it might be, whether it is outside or in the building, and throwing it in the garbage, even if we were not the ones littering!

This solution also applies to the common room, which is meant to be used by all tenants. Everyone should take responsibility for clearing the tables and putting back any chairs or armchairs. This room belongs to all of us. It takes just a little bit of care to keep it inviting. If everyone does their part, our environment will stay clean and we will all be able to take great pride in it.



Marie Benoit Bukuru
CCR Interim Chair

Every tenant, even a young one, has an impact on their environment

Since being on the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) with former engineers, professors and lawyers, I have realized that low-rent housing tenants are just like everyone else.

This is also true of our young tenants. They are full of talent and knowledge, as you can tell by the articles in *Le Rebond*, their online magazine, and the activities organized by MOUV members, the youth engagement forum at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal. Young tenants in low-rent housing are, ultimately, the master keys that can open any door.

We must encourage them to become involved in our daily lives so that they realize their full potential and so that our living environments benefit from it. The way to achieve this is through such things as tenant committees. This way, they would be able to develop their community spirit and self esteem, learn to take thoughtful action and open up to people by participating in community life.

By contributing to community-based activities or projects, they can bring positive change to their communities, break the isolation felt by seniors, make it easier for newcomers to integrate and inject energy into

their neighbourhood. But, what role can young people play currently on tenant committees? We must ask ourselves that question to see how we can give them more space.

Every tenant, even a young one, has an impact on his or her environment. We will all benefit from creating opportunities for young people to improve not only our environments, but the entire community as well. We hold the key to making this happen.



Sylvain Labrecque
Tenant member of the
OMHM Board

Calling for new blood

All of you out there who see what could be improved in our living environments, who want to get involved, who have that little spark that can change things, let us hear you!

Tenant representatives for families and people living alone are most needed. Are you interested in creating a tenant association in your building? Do you have ideas to encourage good neighbourly relations? Do you have a project in mind that could improve your environment? Wait no longer!

To get involved, discover ways of launching projects or participate in existing initiatives, speak to your community organizer. The community organizer's role is to accompany you in improving your living

environment. If you do not know his or her name, contact your rental agent or the OMHM Call Centre (514-872-6646) for this information.

We, as your elected representatives on the Board of Directors and the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants), need to hear from anyone and everyone who wants to make positive changes. New blood is vital. We are counting on you to keep tenant participation forums, such as sector committees, the CCR and the Board of Directors, going in the future. Make your voice heard! Get involved! Your ideas are welcome.

Bed bugs: how to reduce the risk of getting them

By Ingrid Dirickx, OMHM Communications Officer

Bed bugs can be everywhere: on public transit, in hotels, in libraries and, of course, in our homes...in fact, anywhere there are humans. So, what can we do to keep these unwelcome guests out?

Two tenants, Monique Beaudry from Habitations Chaumont and Johana James from Habitations Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, agreed to talk about what they did when they were dealing with bed bugs.

Regular inspections

Both agree that the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) must continue its inspection visits. "It's thanks to one of these inspections that I found out I had a bed bug problem," said Ms. Beaudry. "I had three bites on my arm, but I never thought a bed bug was the culprit."

Quick response

When Ms. Beaudry learned that the exterminator had found a bed bug, she and her daughter carefully prepared the apartment for treatment, particularly by running all their clothes and linens through the dryer. "And I had tons of fabric," confided Monique Beaudry, "because I'm a professional seamstress. After just one treatment, all the bed bugs were gone." According to Mélanie Sanche, Director of the OMHM Sanitation Department, "three treatments are typically needed. Fortunately, Ms. Beaudry had very few bed bugs in her apartment and took action quickly."

Do not treat your apartment yourself

When she learned that her neighbour had bed bugs, Ms. James bought an insecticide and spread it at the bottom of her door. "It did nothing because I got them anyway," she explained. Mélanie Sanche says it is unfortunate that the first thing some tenants do is get store bought products because all they do is chase the bed bugs to other rooms or next door. These products are also a health hazard if not used properly.

Do not pick up used mattresses or furniture

Ms. James also recommends never picking up used mattresses or furniture. Mélanie Sanche confirms that they can introduce bed bugs into an apartment. "Sometimes, we see mattresses being thrown out by a tenant, only to be quickly picked up by a neighbour, when they could be infested. No one would ever do this if they knew just how demanding it is to get the apartment ready for treatment. Used clothes can be another source of infestation. Before wearing them, put them in the dryer on the hottest cycle for 30 minutes, before you even wash them. If there are any bed bugs, they will be killed along with their eggs."

A clean, decluttered apartment

Ms. James and Ms. Beaudry agree that having a clean apartment increases the chances of successful treatment. And it should not be cluttered. When there are a lot of things in the apartment, treatment can't be done because there are too many places for bed bugs to hide.

"We all do things, often unintentionally, that can put us at risk. But, when we are aware of these risks, it's easier to be cautious and avoid them next time," said Mélanie Sanche.

« Seeing bed bugs?
Call 514-872-OMHM (6646)
immediately. »

- Director of the Sanitation Department



Johana James's apartment was cleaned and tidied for treatment.

Your satisfaction is important to us!

By Mathieu Vachon, OMHM Director of Communications Department

At the end of 2016, more than 1,000 tenants from the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) completed a telephone survey conducted by Saine Marketing to evaluate tenant satisfaction.

This survey is conducted every three years to hear what you have to say about various topics and to then make the necessary improvements. We would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who took the time to complete the questionnaire.

Respondents gave a general satisfaction rating of 8.2 out of 10 for the overall quality of services provided by the OMHM, a slightly higher score than in the 2013 survey. While this result is good, there are of course aspects with which tenants were less satisfied.

Improvements are underway

We take the observations and comments received very seriously. The OMHM took note of frustrations as well as of more positive aspects. Projects are being initiated to improve services to tenants on an ongoing basis, for example in the four areas where satisfaction was lowest:

Maintenance

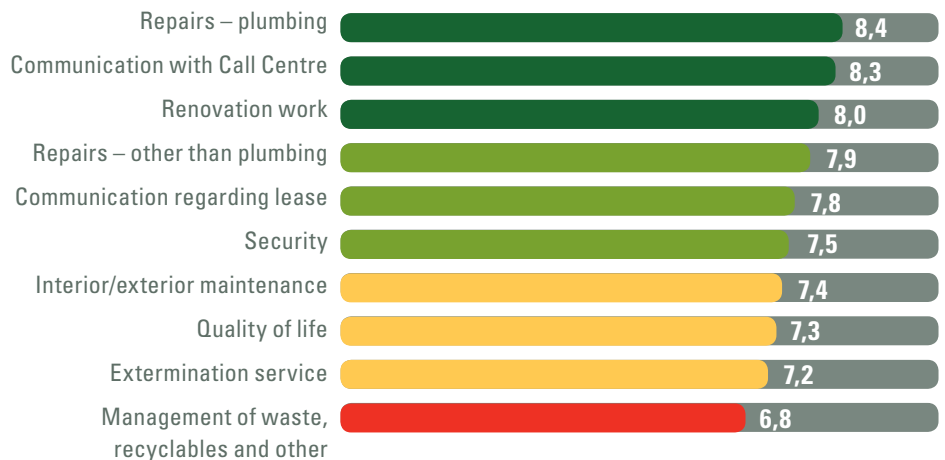
Significant changes are underway, particularly through the project to improve common areas in buildings for families and the project to standardize maintenance methods, products and equipment.

Quality of life

This aspect has to do with neighbourly relations, among other things. We are continuing our efforts to raise awareness about following building rules by incorporating various ideas that you gave us through the survey.

KEY RESULTS TABLE

0 = Not at all satisfied; 10 = Fully satisfied



Extermination

Having vermin problems is very unpleasant. We are working hard to reduce response times for treatments and maximize results. We have shared our expectations with extermination companies, with whom we are working intensively to improve services.

Waste management

We continue to refine our work methods and develop projects to encourage tenants to follow the rules when it comes to disposing waste (garbage, recyclables and bulky objects) on the premises.

These four aspects of living in low-rent housing have one thing in common: responsibility is shared between the OMHM and tenants. You have an important role to play in maintaining the quality of your living environments. Your contribution is essential. Without you, our efforts cannot give you the results you expect.

TAKE THE SURVEY ON COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE OMHM AND ITS TENANTS

Many interactions occur between the OMHM and its tenants every day. They can be phone calls, meetings, documents sent by mail and so on. As a partner in your living environments, the OMHM strives to keep you informed, to process your requests carefully and to provide you with services that meet your needs.

The OMHM wants to hear from you. What are the strengths and where are areas for improvement in our communications? We invite you to complete a short survey on our website by January 12, 2018: www.omhm.qc.ca/survey.

Your opinion counts. Thank you for your participation!

Maintenance quality standards for better living environments

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

This fall, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) submitted the maintenance standards for its buildings to the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) and made a commitment to tenants to make cleanliness one of its priorities.

Because maintenance needs vary from building to building, CCR members welcomed these standards, which focus on quality and results, not frequency. The work of maintenance and repair workers is more effective if it is done based on actual needs rather than on a repetition of tasks that are unnecessary.

Below is a table summarizing the maintenance standards that will be applied in your building:

CONTINUOUS MAINTENANCE STANDARDS	
MAINTENANCE LOCATIONS OR ITEMS	CLEANLINESS OBJECTIVES
<p>OUTDOOR SPACE Clean ground: paper, litter, leaves or other unusual items (April to late November) Management of large waste (furniture) left by tenants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No paper or litter on the ground ✓ Waste placed at the curb or in designated locations on scheduled pick up days
<p>LOBBY Floor, carpet, walls, frames, intercom, reachable windows Elevator cabin (maintenance of walls, floors, frames, light fixtures, emergency telephone)</p> <p>STAIRWELLS Maintenance of floors, steps and risers, handrails, stringers, ceilings, walls, frames, reachable windows, light fixtures</p> <p>CORRIDORS – BASEMENT CORRIDORS Maintenance of floors, carpet, walls, frames, reachable windows, ceilings and garbage chutes Maintenance of light fixtures, accessories, ventilation hatches and foot traffic areas with presence of unusual items</p> <p>LAUNDRY ROOM Light fixtures, floors, accessories, ventilation hatches, reachable windows, garbage bins</p> <p>COMMON ROOM Washrooms inside or outside the room, light fixtures, floors, accessories, ventilation hatches, reachable windows</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No signs of dirt (fingerprints, stains, traces of liquid, dust, insects, cobwebs, cloth marks on top of baseboards, marks made by mobile equipment on the floor, scratches, holes in walls, graffiti)
<p>WASTE BINS AND GARBAGE ROOMS Maintenance and management of garbage bins / recycling bins / compost bins / identified bins</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clean bins, placed where they belong and not overflowing

Upcoming building maintenance audits will measure in a concrete way up to which point the results have been achieved. Tenants will also have an opportunity to express their satisfaction during the next survey, planned for fall 2019. Remember, your cooperation is important in keeping your living environments clean!

WHAT IS AN AUDIT?

An audit is a type of “review” designed to check whether a business and its services are running properly. The OMHM maintenance auditing committees, made up of two OMHM managers and one tenant, assess the general maintenance quality and the safety level inside and outside the building. Auditors do not enter apartments. When doing this review, they assign points for each aspect of the building they see (outdoor space, lobby, elevators, etc.). Depending on the results, corrective work is done where necessary. There are generally two audits a year per sector.

Secure building facades are an obligation

By Marie-Eve Leblanc, OMHM Communications Officer

Wondering why the Office municipal d'habitation (OMHM) is doing work to make the facades of its low-rent housing buildings safer? Why is this work being done before other work you feel is more important? You will find the answers to these questions in this article.

Every five years, the OMHM inspects its buildings with five or more storeys because this has been an obligation for all owners since 2013. It must ensure that there are no dangers jeopardizing the safety of the people living in its buildings, visiting them or walking nearby.

This regulation stems from requests from the fire prevention community and recommendations made by coroners to prevent fatal events (see our box below).

A SAD MEMORY...

In 2009, a Montréal woman met a tragic end when a concrete block broke off from the 18th floor of a downtown hotel and came crashing down on the restaurant table at which she was sitting.

Inspections identify the necessary corrective maintenance and repairs. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, this work must be done immediately or within a short period of time. It can involve:

- the structure and siding of exterior walls (concrete, brick, etc.);
- awnings over entrance doors, balconies and railings; and
- other related objects (chimneys, antennas, air conditioners, etc.).

Why not use the opportunity to modernize my building?

Modernizing a building, improving comfort or doing work inside apartments takes quite a lot of design and completion time. In addition, these projects must be prioritized based on all the needs of the OMHM's housing stock. They must be separate projects.

Maintaining, repairing and securing our buildings' facades keeps them in good condition and ensures everyone's safety until major renovations are undertaken.



Introducing special measures to minimize the inconveniences for you

Work to secure facades is done while tenants are in the building and can cause a great deal of disruption, for example:

- noise and dust;
- limited balcony access;
- having to take out air conditioners; and
- keeping doors and windows closed.

To keep these impacts to a minimum, the OMHM sends out its teams, works in partnership with contractors and implements certain measures, such as:

- providing access to an air conditioned common room at all times; and
- renting out portable air conditioners, as required.

If such work is planned in your building, a RenoUpdate bulletin will be sent to you. You will also be invited to attend an information meeting, where you will be able to find out more about the work and its impacts, share your concerns and ask questions so that you, we hope, will be less bothered by the work.



EVERY YEAR, THE OMHM:

- inspects an average of 25 buildings with five or more storeys;
- carries out a dozen projects of this nature; and
- invests \$6–7 million in securing the facades of its low-rent housing buildings following inspections.

Building rules: for better neighbourly relations

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

Your lease, which includes the building rules, is a contract between you and the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM). If you want to get out of your lease before it expires, here's how to go about it.

You can terminate your lease before it expires, provided that you notify the OMHM in writing through your rental agent three full months before the date on which you wish to leave. If you move out before the mandatory three months, you will still have to pay your rent for this period even though you are no longer living there. There are exceptions, however, such as if the person dies or is admitted to a nursing home (CHSLD). The rental agent will inform you of the timeframe within which you have to cancel your lease, depending on your situation.

During this time, you will need to provide access to your apartment to employees and future tenants for visits. When you vacate your apartment, you must take all your furniture and belongings with you. We recommend doing a walk-through of your apartment to make sure everything is in order. The OMHM will conduct an inspection of the premises to check if the apartment is in good condition. If work is required due to negligence or poor maintenance by the tenant, the OMHM has the right to send the tenant an invoice in order to get reimbursed for the costs of the work needed.

This winter, we are talking about a topic you want to hear about: snow removal!

Everything looks so pretty when the snow starts to fall. Then, the shovels come out! Every winter, the OMHM Call Centre receives a lot of questions about snow removal, for example, who is responsible for it and how much snow needs to be on the ground for it to get removed.



Everyone's responsibilities

Someone who lives in a townhouse or a semi-detached home is responsible for removing snow from all exits and access paths all the way to the sidewalk. He or she is also responsible for spreading salt or sand when there is ice.

The entrances and exits of high-rise and multi-unit buildings are cleared by private contractors, who are under contract with the OMHM. Snow removal is required at all times at the following locations: main entrances, handicapped ramps, emergency exits, access to common rooms, garages and parking lots.

Access routes must be clear of snow to allow pedestrians and cars to move around easily and safely. The contractor is also responsible for spreading salt or sand when there is ice or ice formation. The service contract states that:

- removal is to take place once there is 5 cm (2 in) or more of snow on the ground, even if this accumulation is caused by drifting snow;
- removal is to begin when it is no longer snowing; and
- the time to start removal is within 3 hours for high-rise buildings and 24 hours for other buildings.

Each tenant is responsible for removing snow from their outdoor parking spot. A private company ploughs traffic areas.



These reminders about building rules can be found in the Tenant's Guide you were given when you signed your lease. If you misplaced your guide, ask your rental agent for a copy. It is also available online at: <http://www.omhm.qc.ca/en/tenants-guide-public-housing>.

Flower and Garden Club Members achieve great things all season long

By Jocelyne Dorris, OMHM Communications Officer

The Flower and Garden Club lets its members showcase their horticultural talents and put urban agriculture principles into practice... to the great benefit of tenants and the neighbourhood!

When the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) created the Flower and Garden Club in 2011, there were two main goals: to boost participation and sharing between tenants, and to enhance greening and urban agriculture projects. Six years in, you can say these goals have been met.

The landscaping done by the members beautifies the outdoor space and lets tenants build ties with one another and with people in the neighbourhood. This collective work also breaks the isolation felt by some. For a number of club members, growing herbs and vegetables is a plus for their health and a source of pride at harvest time.

Some of the other benefits include the contribution that members make to the OMHM's sustainable development actions. Indeed, their concrete environmental actions help improve and maintain cleanliness, fight heat islands and improve air quality.

An invaluable partner in the Montréal community

Through its involvement as a Flower and Garden Club partner, Sentier Urbain has been helping to improve the living environments of Montréal's low-rent housing tenants for many years. The Club's members benefit greatly from their horticultural services.

NOT A MEMBER YET?
Just fill out and return
the form below

During the summer, Sentier Urbain experts go from building to building providing training and advice. The organization is responsible for ordering and distributing supplies, such as flower boxes, soil, compost and mulch. It also makes sure that these supplies are distributed equally among the buildings based on availability, as quantities are limited.

This year marks the organization's 25th year in the Montréal community. An accomplishment to be commended!



Anne-Marie Bernier of Éco-quartier Saint-Jacques has created beautiful landscaping with youth from the Association des voisins des cinq continents, which works in a number of buildings in the Centre-Sud neighbourhood.

Membership Form



Together, we make life beautiful!

Over \$10,000 in prizes!

A draw will be held at the beginning of the season. Members can register in different categories (balcony or land). As a member, you can benefit from several other advantages, such as advice, training, garden tours and donations of gardening material (limited quantities).

For further information, go to the "Existing Tenants" section under the "Thinking Green" tab at www.omhm.qc.ca





During the tour of the *Cultures amérindiennes* garden, tenants joined Brigitte Laliberté, Sustainable Development Project Manager at the OMHM (back right), and three Sentier Urbain employees, Mourad Shalaby (back right), Thomas Roussele Roozmon (back left) and Lucie Vallée (front left).

Guided tours

This summer, Sentier Urbain offered two tours of its Circuit Jardins. Brigitte Laliberté, OMHM Sustainable Development Project Manager, participated in one of them. "I was pleasantly surprised to see just how much interest our members have in all things to do with biodiversity, the effects of climate change and citizen actions in connection with sustainable development. Tour participants were well aware of the issues," she said.

These tours include animated activities, snacks, door prizes and music. "This free event lets participants discover oases of greenery right in the heart of the city, while they enjoy a coffee or juice in a friendly atmosphere. They are interested in many topics and take an active part in the workshops," said Lucie Vallée, a well known horticultural advisor at Sentier Urbain.

A unifying recreational activity encouraged by the OMHM

The OMHM actively supports the projects and initiatives of members, the young and the young at heart. In addition to distributing horticultural supplies for free, it organizes a draw for gift certificates towards purchases at various nurseries at the beginning of the season. We would like to thank the following participating nurseries: Angel Jardins, Frank Fleuriste, Mega Centre Montréal, Les serres Noël Wilson et fils, Pépinière Jasmin, and Willy Haeck et fils. For the names of the 2017 gift certificate winners, visit www.omhm.qc.ca/en/flower-and-garden-club.



Drissi Hamed poses proudly, and rightfully so, by the vegetable garden he takes care of at Habitations Côte-Des-Neiges.

In addition, through its youth component, the Club provides financial support to some 15 community and environmental organizations so that a hundred or so young people can carry out horticultural projects with their support.

"The Flower and Garden Club has individual and collective benefits, which shows just how much of a unique project it is, one that brings people together," concluded Brigitte Laliberté.

To see some of the Club members' accomplishments, visit www.omhm.qc.ca/en/flower-and-garden-club.

Participant's first and last name (Only one membership per household)

Address _____ Apt. _____ City _____ Postal Code _____

(_____) Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Which of the following best describes your project?

Balcony Land Balcony and land

N.B. As a member of the Flower and Garden Club, your membership will be renewed every year.

Information
514-872-2016

You can fill in a membership form online at www.omhm.qc.ca, under "Existing Tenants", "Thinking Green".

OR

Send your membership form to the following address:
OMHM - Club Fleurs et Jardins
415, rue Saint-Antoine Ouest,
2^e étage, Montréal, Qc H2Z 1H8

By joining the Flower and Garden Club, I authorize the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal to use my photo in various publications.



Tenants helping to improve the training



The highly interested participants greatly appreciated the practical content of the training on bookkeeping held on November 7 and the discussions that followed.

This fall, tenant association treasurers helped adapt a course on finances to the needs of volunteers. As a result, on November 7, an improved training session on bookkeeping was given in French and, for the first time, in English.

Constructive comments

The course has been around for a long time, its main purpose being to show volunteer treasurers how to prepare a financial report, including all the steps it involves throughout the year. However, participants often mentioned that they would like the contents to be more practical to help them better understand the subject matter, which can be quite difficult for people without any accounting experience. As well, Anglophone tenants asked to have the training in English.

"It occurred to us that we could improve the training thanks to our volunteer treasurers' know-how," explained Danielle Lacroix, the community organizer who coordinated the consultation.

An interesting (little) exercise

In September, trainer Normand Gilbert of Centre Saint-Pierre met with two volunteer treasurers, Antonin Gagnon and Suzanne Payant, to learn about the tools and methods they use on their committee. Ms. Payant, of habitations de l'Érablière, found it very rewarding. "We sometimes wonder about our abilities. When I was asked to take part in the consultation, I felt rather appreciated."

As for Mr. Gagnon, of habitations Desjardins, whereas he found the experience interesting, he had hoped for in-depth exchanges and more participants. "I was expecting more people to attend." Two more people were supposed to take part in the exercise but had last-minute conflicts.

(Cont'd on page 2) →

You will be my motivation



I am pleased to join an organization that works to improve the quality of life of its tenants, and to foster their involvement in their living environments and in the decision-making process.

Throughout my professional life, I have always been involved with task forces, consultation groups and community engagement organizations that aim to improve living conditions and rights, whether in Quebec or internationally. I cannot think of working any other way. As a result, I feel like I have landed in just the right place at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM). Not only is the blend of sensitivity and professionalism of my colleagues, not to mention the employees in the different departments of the OMHM, really boundless, but I feel truly inspired by the commitment of the tenants. I can assure you that it will be a source of motivation in my work.

I hope to be able to lend my style, with a healthy dose of good humour and respect, to the OMHM's social and community development department. This will involve working closely in ways that will, I am convinced, lead to great achievements!

I want to thank the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) and my colleagues for their warm welcome, as well as for their transparency and shared commitment to ensuring that my integration unfolds swiftly and harmoniously. I am already all in, and delighted to have the opportunity to help you improve your living environments over the coming years.

I wish you wonderful holidays, filled with peace and joy. I hope that 2018 will be marked by progress that will preserve our excellent relations.

Lorena Garrido, Director
Social and Community Development Department

→ (Cont'd from page 1)



Volunteer treasurers Antonin Gagnon and Suzanne Payant (left on the photo) met with Danielle Lacroix and Normand Gilbert to improve the training on finances for tenant committees.

Nonetheless, Danielle Lacroix believes that the exercise was useful in terms of adapting the training. "The associations do lots of transactions, even if the amounts involved are modest. This presents a high risk of error," she said. By consulting with skilled people who have developed methods adapted to the reality of low-rent housing, she believes that the training now better meets the needs of volunteers. The comments she received on November 7 from the participants were very positive. They felt that the training was instructive and that the tools provided were useful. They now have a better understanding of the different stages of accounting, and they enjoyed the discussions with their colleagues.

Upcoming training sessions

These free training sessions provide the tools you need to fulfill your role. Make the most of it!

Date	Theme	Address	Metro station
February 22, 2018	Rôle et responsabilités d'un comité de locataires (in French)	Habitations Jean-Talon 7255, rue Durocher	Jean-Talon
February 22, 2018	Role and responsibilities of a tenant committee (in English)	Habitations Place Lucy 5600, boul. Décarie	Snowdon
March 8, 2018	Preparing for a general meeting (in French)	Habitations Gabriel-Sagard 3001, rue Everett	Saint-Michel
April 12, 2018	The role of the secretary: taking the minutes at meetings, preparing the minutes, invitation (in French)	Habitations Clotilde-D'Amico 4000, rue Bannantyne	De l'Église
May 3, 2018	Recruiting and coaching volunteers (in French)	Habitations Sainte-Catherine d'Alexandrie 970, rue Robin	Berri-UQAM

Sessions are held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in a low-rent housing project near a metro station. Lunch is included, but participants' transportation costs may be borne by tenant associations. To confirm your attendance, contact Suzanne Morissette by phone at **514-872-2104** or by email at suzanne.morissette@omhm.qc.ca.



Meeting at the crossroads

Seeking ways to live together in harmony

Breaking through isolation...with a game

The old industrial neighbourhood of Saint-Henri developed around the railroad track that runs through it, and its past is the stuff of great storytelling. The women of the Centre communautaire des femmes actives (CCFA) wanted to learn more about that history and share it. So they decided to create a board game based on their neighbourhood to strengthen their sense of belonging and solidarity. These women all live in low-rent housing units in the Southwest Sector, and regularly meet at the CCFA to help one another, learn, become more independent and develop their network. Thanks to a grant from the New Horizons program, they had the opportunity to review a number of games before designing *À la découverte de Saint-Henri*.

This collective project involved a great deal of research and allowed the women to develop new skills, create new relationships and improve their self-esteem. They expressed their pride in their work at the evening reception marking the launch of their game on September 22.

The board is a reflection of their neighbourhood. Designed by some of the younger members of the CCFA, it is built around the ever-present railroad and a few well-known buildings and structures. In order to move ahead, players have to answer questions and demonstrate their knowledge of the neighbourhood history.

CCFA founder and coordinator Alice Robertson, a resident of habitations Lenoir-Saint-Antoine and a member of the brand new tenant association formed by four low-rent housing projects in Saint-Henri, points out that the final product is very professional. "We ordered 50 copies of the game, and its quality astounded our members, local officials, the OMHM and the CIUSSS."

Copies have already been given to the schools, youth shelter, local libraries and senior's club. They all felt that the game was truly educational. Encouraged by this success, Alice Robertson is now looking for funding to produce more copies to meet the high demand!



In the À la découverte de Saint-Henri board game, the coloured railroad winds its way through the local points of interest.



Alice Robertson (centre) piloted the production of the game, which involved several members from the centre. Here she is joined by Linda Lemaître and Colette Latour, who, along with her, founded the CCFA in 2005.

The CCR's priorities for 2018

Every year, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) asks the Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) to set out the budget priorities for low-rent housing tenants before it finalizes its budget.

After consulting with the sector committees, the CCR informed the OMHM Board of Directors that residents' top three priorities for 2018 were as follows:

- sanitary conditions,
- the maintenance of indoor and outdoor common areas,
- security.

As a result, these three aspects are reflected in the 2018 budget that the OMHM submitted to the sector committees in the fall. The CCR also highlighted the need to improve communications between the OMHM and tenants, as well as the quality and monitoring of major works and repairs.

In the coming months

The CCR resolved to include in its upcoming meeting agendas the following three important issues for low-rent housing tenants: communications with the OMHM, restructuring participation forums, and maintenance and cleanliness.

New tenant committees

The following are the results of the elections held in the low-rent housing projects in Montréal in the fall of 2017. Note the creation of a new association grouping together four low-rent housing projects for families and single people. Congratulations to all of the new representatives, whose commitment gives a boost to your living environments.

EAST SECTOR

Adélarde-Langevin **S**

Albert, Huguette
Belisle, Monique
Bouthilllette, Danielle
Mathieu, Robert
Laforge, Lise

Les Jardins Chaumont **S**

Bélanger, Marcel
Dugas, Lise
Gervais, Céline
Rivest, Hélène
Fournier, Barbara

Marguerite-Bourgeois **S**

Aubin, Yves
Caceres, Mary
Tremblay, Bernard

Saint-André **S**

Miranda, Magali
Roussel, Lucienne
Sisouk, Somchith
Gagné, Tina-Lili
Leblanc, Maurice
Pereyra, Idelca

Thomas-Chapais **F**

Arseneault, Marcel
Aubry, Chantal
Bergeron, Bruno
Picard, Nathalie
Bouchard, Nancy
Janvier, Carole

Sainte-Catherine d'Alexandrie **S**

Brunet, Monique
Green, Francine
Lapointe, Manon
Martel, Monique
Martel, Jean

NORTHWEST SECTOR

André-Grasset **F**

Amroune, Hakima
Charles Duperron, Maliska
Kherbache, Hamida
Morales Branda, Doneris J.
Duperron, Danielle

Émilien-Gagnon **S**

Jacques, Laurence
Delle Donne, Mario
Mathurin, Laurette
Pampena, Maurizio
Zapata, Guillermo

Jean-Talon **S**

Kornafel, Krystyna
Leconte, Louis
Vogas, Dimitrios
Zukowska, Marianna

Saint-Vallier **S**

Morin, Richard
Owens, Sherry
Richer, Jean-Paul
Taillon, Jocelyne

SOUTHWEST SECTOR

Adrien-Trudeau **S**

Vallino, Pauline
Mikhail, François
Leduc, Lise
Smith, Harold
Malette, Carol

Curé Vianney-Savaria **S**

Bélanger, Louise
Sévigny, Lise
Lampron, Monique
Walton, Delia
Joe, Jacqueline

NEW ASSOCIATION

Bourget/Desnoyers/ Lenoir-Saint-Antoine/ Saint-Antoine **F**

Langlois, Colette
Robertson, Nathalie
Constantin, Francine
Diboune, Habiba
Robertson, Alice



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.



The Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) 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.

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.



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Project Manager: Jocelyne Dorris **Writing and Coordination:** Hélène Morin

Photos: OMHM, Centre communautaire des femmes actives **Translation:** Ubiquis

Graphic Design: Communication Art & Graf

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

Tenants at Habitations De Mentana proudly going green

By Ingrid Dirickx, OMHM Communications Officer

On Saturday, June 10, tenants from Habitations De Mentana proudly welcomed representatives of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM), the borough of Plateau-Mont-Royal and community organizations gathering to celebrate the opening of the new courtyard and green alley.

Over 40 tenants and neighbours of all ages worked all day long to beautify the spaces around them, plant flowers and spread mulch to be ready for the official opening. Together, they have been proving their team spirit since the project first started in 2014 when Habitations De Mentana was battling an ongoing problem with accumulating waste.

Consultations to find solutions

Called on by tenants, the OMHM quickly created a team to help them find solutions, funding and partners. According to Michèle Daniels, OMHM Community Organizer and a member of the team, "this project has been achieved through patience, perseverance and the participation of many tenants in consultations over the past three years. They were very generous with their comments and time. They can be proud of their accomplishments."

Today, the area has truly been transformed into a green space. For example, where waste used to accumulate near the concrete wall, a bed was put in with plants and shrubs. Parking spaces gave way to more greenery, therefore flowing into the green alley, which is now reserved for pedestrians. In the courtyard, the vegetable

garden has come to life thanks to, among others, Sentier Urbain and the ID²EM program, which gave tenants a grant so that professional workers could come out to help children maintain the garden. Throughout the summer, children cleaned and watered the plot of land, taking great pleasure in reaping the fruits of their labour.

"In addition to creating a sustainable solution to the waste problem, the OMHM and its partners wanted to improve waste management (garbage, recycling, etc.), ease traffic, reduce the heat island effect and collect rain water," said Brigitte Laliberté, OMHM Sustainable Development Project Manager and a member of the work team. "All tenants joined forces to improve waste management and the cleanliness of their environment. We owe this success to them."

"These accomplishments have allowed tenants and neighbours to build close ties and improve their living environment. The challenge now is to ensure on-going maintenance and beautification so that our efforts continue to be rewarded," concluded Michèle Daniels.



CERTIFICATION FOR THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

Habitations De Mentana obtained My Space for Life Garden certification, awarded by the City of Montréal in the Edible Garden category, for the vegetable garden in the courtyard. This certification is a recognition of actions taken by residents to make their living environment greener.

Some 40 tenants worked all day long to beautify the spaces around them.

Free Juripop legal aid clinics are back in the metro in 2018!

By Julie Marie Dorval, special contribution

February is Justice Month. To mark the occasion, Juripop will be holding public legal clinics in the metro, where you will be able to seek advice for free.



The sessions will take place five Mondays in a row, starting January 29, 2018. You will be able to register on site. A clerk will assign a lawyer or notary to you, based on your needs. You will then be given a 15 minute consultation that could make a big difference in your life!

To check the schedule and metro stations where the clinics will be set up, go to the Juripop website (www.juripop.org), keep an eye out for information in newspapers or call 450-845-1637.

What is Juripop?

Founded in 2009 by two students committed to equality for all before the law, Clinique Juripop advocates for access to justice. It provides legal services at below market cost to people who cannot access legal aid. The rate, either \$55 or \$65 per hour depending on income, is well below the rate usually charged.

To find out more about Juripop's services, visit their website at www.juripop.org, call 450-845-1637 or write to info@juripop.org

Welcome financial support for your children's education

By Julie Marie Dorval

Low-income families can receive government assistance for their child's education through the Canada Learning Bond.

The Canada Learning Bond (CLB), offered by the federal government, is an additional incentive to the Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) to help low income families begin saving early for their child's post secondary education.

How can I access the Canada Learning Bond?

To receive the CLB, parents must have an RESP account. Speak with an advisor at your financial institution to find out if the institution offers the CLB. He or she will then check whether your child is eligible based on your income. Lastly, the advisor will help you open an RESP if you do not already have one. The advantage of the CLB is that parents do not have to pay anything for the government to put money into the child's RESP, unlike a regular RESP, which is an investment into which a parent must put money in order for the government to also contribute.

Here is how it works: the Government of Canada deposits an initial sum of \$500 into your RESP. It then adds \$100 every year until the child turns 15. So, if you open an RESP when the child is born, he or she will have \$2,000 in the bank to help pay for post secondary education. Your child is eligible for the CLB if he or she:

- was born on January 1, 2004, or later;
- is a Canadian resident;
- has a Social Insurance Number; and
- comes from a low-income family.

This is a good tax free way to help your children pursue post secondary education. Find out more and apply! For more information, visit: www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/learning-bond



Grief: getting through it

By Mélanie Samson, OMHM Social Worker

Grief is an adjustment period that should not be seen as a problem that needs solving. Everyone's experience is different and involves different steps, which can take a short or long time to get through depending on the person.

To help you accept this difficult event and realize that what you are going through is normal, below is a description of the stages of grief as presented by Jean Monbourquette, an author of multiple books devoted to dealing with grief.

The eight stages of grief

Shock sets in when a death is announced. It is more intense when a death is accidental. It is marked by feelings of unreality, a state of confusion and sometimes memory loss. A goodbye period with the deceased is a decisive factor in the intensity of the shock.

Denial is the period when there is virtually no emotion. We look for explanations or someone to blame. It is only after we leave this stage of grief that the reality of the loss sets in.

Emotional expression is the most painful stage. All emotions are acceptable and appropriate: sadness, irritation, anger, fear and anxiety. Other feelings often experienced during this stage are low energy, loss of interest in activities, doubt and distress. It is at this time that we truly feel the loss we suffered. This stage seems endless for those grieving and may even seem to get worse with time, before it begins to subside. The person generally needs to reminisce and find support to get through these difficult times.

Then comes time for **concrete action**, such as fulfilling the deceased's final wishes or taking care of his or her personal effects. The grieving person must be left to do these tasks at his or her own pace.

At the **searching for meaning** stage, people try to give meaning to their grief, take stock of the event and find out how they have changed.

When we forgive the deceased and forgive ourselves for the shortcomings in the relationship, we reach the **forgiveness** stage.

Letting go means accepting life without the loved one's presence.

Lastly, **legacy** is what we want to continue to live through us, the deceased's qualities and strengths. This is a way of keeping our relationship with this person alive.

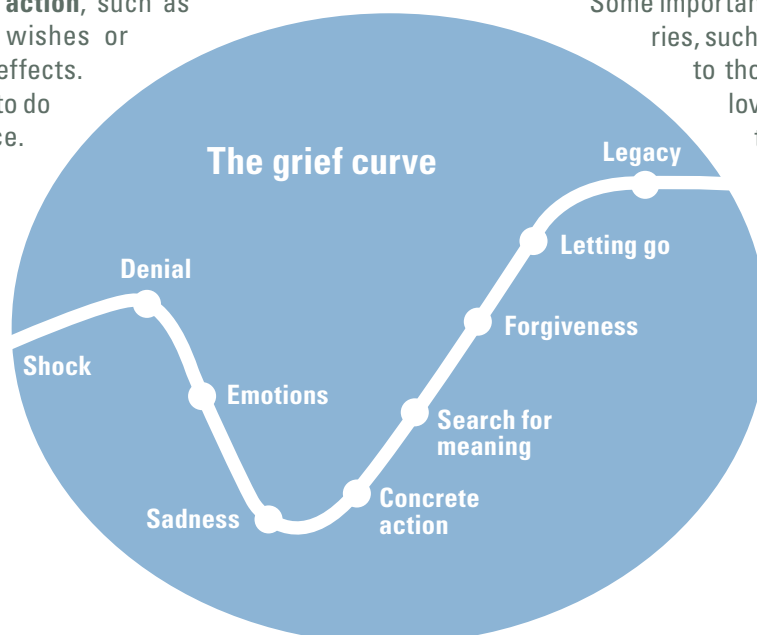
To get through grief, we need time to feel, reminisce and reflect. If we keep our thoughts constantly busy to suppress our emotions, we will not move through the stages. The important thing is to make progress, no matter the pace.

Helpful resources

Maison Monbourquette provides support to those who are grieving. You can sign up for support groups, for a \$5 voluntary contribution, or for free one on one meetings. Call the hotline at 514-523-3596, extension 2, available seven days a week. You can also visit their website at: www.maisonmonbourquette.com/.

If you have dark thoughts or have lost a loved one to suicide, the Suicide Action Montréal team can help you (514-723-4000).

Some important dates bring back difficult memories, such as Seasons holidays. Be attentive to those close to you who have lost a loved one during the year and offer them your support.



Better waste management for a better quality of life

By Martin Després, OMHM Communications Officer

Waste collection is a big environmental issue for cities and large organizations such as the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal. And, it quickly becomes an issue for a building if waste management is not taken care of properly. The key to success is YOU!

These days, we have no fewer than six categories of waste: recyclables, food scraps, household hazardous waste (HHW), electronic products (ICT), bulky items (furniture) and end waste (real garbage) (see our table).

The famous green bin

We can say that the green bin has now become a collective habit for Montrealers. Recycling considerably reduces pollution caused by landfilling, while preserving our natural resources. Thousands of products are also made from recovered materials, such as magazines, cans and even park benches.

Food scraps collection

Food scraps collection, in place since 2008 in some Montréal boroughs, allows more than 400,000 households to reduce about 25% of the traditional content of their garbage bags. What is even more interesting is that this type of waste is used to make compost. This valuable material could be used as rich fertilizing soil for gardening. Composting reduces the content of a garbage bag and therefore reduces the amount of space taken up by garbage at landfill sites, which should have only end waste.

HHW and ICT in ecocentres

Everyone is aware of the importance of not sending HHW (household hazardous waste such as paint, mechanical oils, batteries and incandescent light bulbs) to the landfill in order to protect the environment, since this type of waste contains

contaminants and heavy metals. The same goes for ICT (information and communications technology products such as TVs, computers, printers, cell phones and DVD players). These items should therefore be disposed of properly at ecocentres or during mobile collection days at temporary sites.

This is also the case for bulky items such as old mattresses and household appliances, which can be picked up by municipal services on specific collection days. They should be left only at the designated locations on the designated days. Placing items in the wrong place, at the wrong time is a violation that carries a fine. For your health and safety, never pick up furniture left on the curb. It can be hiding vermin.

The City is aiming to recover 80% of recyclables, organic matter, HHW, renovation, construction and demolition waste, and bulky items by 2019. You have a key role to play in helping to achieve this objective. Not only will this improve the quality of living environments, but future generations will thank you for it as well!

Waste collection varies by borough



To check the collection schedules and drop-off locations in your neighbourhood, contact the City of Montréal at 311 or visit the Info-collectes website <https://servicesenligne2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/sel/infocollectes/?lang=en>

Silvia and music: a marriage for life

By Julie Marie Dorval, special contribution

A tenant at Habitations Saint-Sulpice, Silvia Ricciotto was born in Argentina to Italian parents. But, Montréal is where she discovered her calling: bringing happiness to people's lives through music and song.

Silvia has been surrounded by music for as long as she can remember. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, her father was a famous violinist. Her family home was filled with poetry, philosophy and song. For her, music was a destiny that had been charted well in advance: "Music chose me. It's a marriage without the possibility of divorce!"

At age 24, she moved to Montréal because of her love for the French language, among other things. An adventurer at heart and familiar with the immigration process, owing to her Italian parents' journey to Argentina, she had no trouble settling in. In fact, she had been talking about leaving her birth country and adopting another from the age of 5.

Singing for the most needy

She studied music and music therapy, and began working in her field. What interests her most is helping marginalized people, often poor, sometimes forgotten. She likes to sing and to play her guitar for them, to see them happy and in harmony with themselves.

Her clientele grew and, for many years, she focused on her preferred clients: patients in palliative care. With her powerful voice and unique guitar work, she brings them comfort and, in her own way, lets them leave this world in peace. In 2013, she was a semi finalist on Canada's Got Talent, but she is far more proud of having been there for people in their end stages of life and having been their confidante.

Today, she works primarily with seniors, people with dementia or Alzheimer's, and people with mental health problems. In addition, she has set up well being workshops on self introspection entitled "Ateliers initiatiques d'introspection vers soi." They are for women only and are held at the Ahuntsic Community Centre.

A travelling singer with an adventurous spirit

She also likes to share her talent with the public in general. She travels around Montréal, singing to whoever wants to listen before passing around her hat. This gig as a travelling singer lets her reach people from all walks of life and raise money to live...and travel!



Silvia and her inseparable guitar

Every year, she embarks on a journey that speaks to the human spirit of sharing, receiving room and board in exchange for services. This is a wonderful way for her to live her passion for travel and music, take in nature and meet people from all around the world.

Most of the time, however, she stays in the city at Habitations Saint-Sulpice, in the Northwest Sector. She feels lucky to be living there. "I see trees from my balcony, watch birds and can take the time to admire what's around me. This is my retreat."

Involved in her community, Silvia, a member of the Flower and Garden Club, is known to many low-rent housing tenants as musician and performer Silvia Sabash during their tours of Sentier Urbain gardens. She continues to do good through her singing and guitar, which she never goes anywhere without. "My guitar is my greatest companion," she confided.

To find out more, watch Silvia's videos on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/silviaricciotto. Visit her Facebook page by searching Silvia Sabash.

Proud of our home!

By Marie Benoite Bukuru, Interim Chair of the OMHM Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants)

Over the past few months, Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) management has been working to define the standards for building maintenance and sanitation to improve the cleanliness of our buildings. As tenants, we must also do our share to improve their quality.

The work of maintenance and repair workers involves cleaning and maintaining our buildings. The cleanliness of our surroundings is of prime concern for us as tenants. It is therefore normal to expect the work to be done and to be done well.

However, we also have an important role to play in keeping the spaces clean. A few small gestures can make all the difference: not littering, observing garbage and recycling pick up times and days, and urging our neighbours to keep our buildings clean are some examples of encouraged behaviours.

By cooperating with the OMHM, we can make a difference. Employees will feel supported by us and encouraged in their work. In addition, we will help improve the image of our low-rent housing, Montréal's collective heritage, and we will live in cleaner environments.

The key to successful collaboration between the OMHM and tenants is to establish smooth and effective communication. For all maintenance, repair or sanitation requests for your apartment, contact the OMHM Call Centre (514-872-6646). When you run into

THE WORK OF THE CCR

The Comité consultatif des résidents (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) is a link between the OMHM and Montréal's low-rent housing tenants. It addresses tenant-related issues such as safety, work in the buildings and community based projects. It assesses needs and priorities from the tenants' perspective, and then makes recommendations to the OMHM Board of Directors.

the director of maintenance and repairs for your building, take the opportunity to say "hello" and ask questions concerning your apartment, the common room, the outdoor space and so on. By taking more opportunities to talk with other tenants or with OMHM employees, avoiding unnecessary confrontations and respecting one another, we will collaborate better.

If maintenance and repair workers do a good job cleaning our buildings and if our gestures and actions support their efforts, we will all come out winners. We will live in nicer, more pleasant and cleaner environments. In short, our well being and interpersonal relationships will improve. And, we will all be proud of our home!

This page is available to your CCR so that it can address topics that affect or concern you, or topics on which you want more information. To reach the CCR, feel free to write to ccr.mtl@gmail.com or ask your tenant committee to put you in touch with an elected representative in your sector.

Les Sœurs Boulay sing to help youth succeed

By Martin Després, OMHM Communications Officer

On November 14, this year's annual fundraising concert organized by the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal Foundation featured Les Sœurs Boulay in the Pierre-Mercure room. This 3rd edition brought an important new aspect, as the Foundation joined forces with Éducaide to put on this must-see event.

Both organizations have a common goal: to support youth in their academic achievements. Their collaboration in awarding individual scholarships to youth from disadvantaged backgrounds led them to organize a joint event that would guarantee success. The event, for which close to 700 tickets were sold, raised a net amount of \$85,500 to be split between the two organizations. The Foundation would like to thank Éducaide, event partners, concert attendees and the invaluable volunteers, who together made this success possible.



Les Sœurs Boulay pictured here with Stéphane Corriveau, President of Éducaide; Isabelle Grenier, Chair of the Éducaide Board of Directors; Martine Philibert, Senior Vice-President of Ivanhoé Cambridge and Vice-Chair of the Foundation; Fabien Courmoyer, Chair of the Foundation's Board of Directors; and Frédéric Soucy, President of the COGIR Management Corporation and honorary chair of the event.

Érick and Deus at the top of North Africa

By Marie Bouchard, OMHM Communications Officer

Last summer, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) Foundation made it possible for Érick Reyes and Deus Mutima to set off on an extraordinary 12 day journey in Morocco. They took up the challenge of embarking on a long trek in the high mountains of North Africa, and took away a highly enriching human experience from the journey.

Deus and Érick were part of a group of 14 adventurers, 6 of whom were OMHM employees. Of that number, 11 had vowed to raise \$7,500 each for the Foundation. We asked these two young men to share their impressions.

Deus, from Habitations Sackville, is very grateful to the Foundation. "They gave us a golden opportunity to travel to the heart of a fantastic country," he said. Deus was selected because of his involvement in his neighbourhood. He has been volunteering for many years with Voisins en action and is a member of MOUV, Montréal's engagement forum for youth from low-rent housing.

"Even though I play sports and dance actively, I was hit by the harsh reality of walking for an average of 10 hours a day. I had to work on my endurance. Like in life in general, I learned that it was worth the effort to get the most out of this trek," explained this strong 18 year old young man. Used to succeeding at school and in many activities, Deus admits that this outdoor challenge was a humbling experience.

For more photos: www.fondationomhm.ca



Érick (in the foreground) and Deus on a trail

For Érick, from Habitations Îlots Saint-Martin, the lack of sleep was a hurdle. "We would go back to our tents around 11 at night and when the guide, Christine, would wake us up at 5 in the morning, the shock was brutal for me," he told us. Aside from this drawback, Érick was thrilled to be immersed in Morocco. "In Montréal, I have many Arabic friends. So, I was really happy to be in one of their countries," he said. "After two or three conversations with the Berbers who were guiding us, our contact was friendly and I felt close to them. I realized then why I like them so much."

He showed great interest in the local High Atlas community. During the trip, he often used an Arabic dictionary that the guide had given him. Before leaving, Érick managed to say a few words of gratitude to the Berbers working for the expedition in their own language.

For these two young men, who grew up in low-rent housing, this expedition left an everlasting impression on their personal journey. Today, Deus and Érick are continuing their cegep studies, and their mission is to encourage the young people around them to stay in school and persevere in all spheres of life.

THE EXPEDITION IN NUMBERS:

- 8 days of mountain trekking
- Temperatures between 0 and 43 (add centigrade)
- 150 km of walking in total
- 1,000 metres of climbing each day

The expedition's 14 members reached the summit of Mount Toubkal with the support and work of the Berbers, who took care of the meals, encampment and mules for transporting supplies.

Rubbing Shoulders

A very special Echinacea for Manoir Roger-Bernard residents



Garden brigade members Cleuza Goncalves, Lynda Bernard and Romuald Paradis as well as Linda Smith (not pictured) from Manoir Roger-Bernard got their hands on a variety of Echinacea specially developed by the Botanical Garden at the City's request to mark the 375th anniversary of Montréal. They got really lucky because these plants were meant to adorn city hall, the Botanical Garden and the boroughs. They are rare in private flower beds!

Community eats at Habitations Les Pointeliers



It's now a tradition! When bean bag toss season comes to a close, tenants from Habitations Les Pointeliers meet up for some eats. They use this friendly get together to talk about the exploits of their best players.

Habitations Pierre-Bernard is celebrating its 35th anniversary

Tenants at Habitations Pierre-Bernard, together with Chez-Nous de Mercier-Est, organized and held an evening celebration to mark the 35th anniversary of their building. The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal unveiled a plaque to commemorate three decades of tenant action in their living environment. The volunteer committee said it was very proud of how successful the evening was and promised other great events in the future.



Popular corn roast at Habitations De Marseille...



In the dead of winter, it is nice to think back to the joys of summer, like the corn roast. For Habitations De Marseille tenants, this is a golden opportunity to get together and have a good time. Congratulations to the organizers!

...and at Habitations Parthenais

The tenant committee at Habitations Parthenais organizes many activities throughout the year. Any celebration is a good reason to get together and have a party, whether it is for Mother's or Father's Day, a national holiday, a marriage between tenants or, of course, the always very popular corn roast. Hats off to this new dynamic committee!



Invitation to share

Do you too have wonderful memories to share? Send your photos, along with a brief description, to:

jocelyne.dorris@omhm.qc.ca,

or, by mail, to:

La Rose des vents

415, rue Saint-Antoine Ouest, 2^e étage

Montréal (Québec) H2Z 1H8

To know all about the OMHM
www.omhm.qc.ca



Fondation
de l'Office municipal
d'habitation de Montréal

Pour la réussite des **jeunes** en HLM

www.fondationomhm.ca

Gateway to Tenant Services in Three Steps

1

WHERE TO DIRECT YOUR REQUEST

CALL AND SECURITY CENTER

514-872-OMHM (6646)

For any requests related to:

- maintenance
- repairs
- sanitation
- security (noise, intruders on OMHM premises or in apartments, intimidation, any other security-related issues)

A receptionist will pick up and will take down your request so that it can be handled by the right person.

RENTAL AGENT

The rental agent's telephone number is on your lease, in your *Tenant's Guide* or in any letter sent to you.

For any information on:

- lease renewals or cancellations
- rent payments
- parking
- housing transfers
- problems with neighbours

You can call your rental agent or write to him or her at your sector office (the address is in *La Rose des vents* and in your *Tenant's Guide*).

2

THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVED WAS NOT TO YOUR FULL SATISFACTION?

Call the **Call and Security Center(514-872-6646)** to have a message forwarded to the director of the department concerned; the director will call you back as soon as possible. The receptionist will know which director to contact based on the type of your request. Please note that the director has 20 business days to process your request and respond.



3

HAVE YOU RECEIVED NO RESPONSE OR ARE STILL DISSATISFIED WITH HOW YOUR REQUEST WAS HANDLED?

It is at this time, once steps 1 and 2 have been completed, that you can file a complaint with the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal **Complaints Office**, which will investigate within 20 business days of the case being opened.

- You can reach the Complaints Office in writing at:

Bureau des plaintes
Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal
415, rue Saint-Antoine Ouest, 2^e étage
Montréal (Québec) H2Z 1H8

- By phone: 514-868-5999, Monday to Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- By email: bureau-plaintes@omhm.qc.ca
- In person; you need to make an appointment by calling 514-868-5999, Monday to Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.



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Project Direction and Coordination: Jocelyne Dorris

Contributors: Marie Bouchard, Martin Després, Ingrid Dirickx, Jocelyne Dorris, Julie Marie Dorval, Marie-Eve Leblanc, Hélène Morin, Mélanie Samson, Mathieu Vachon

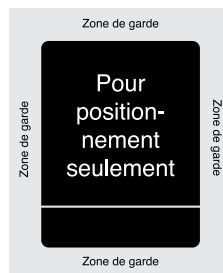
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