



Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal Tenant Newsletter

June 2017 • Volume 16 • No 1

An evening of recognition to thank our volunteers

Central pages

BATIR ENSEMBLE UN MONDE

MONTREALAIS

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Bravo et merci!

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

Message from the Executive Director



Danielle Cécile Executive Director of the OMHM

For clear and open communication

Dear Tenants,

It has now been a little over six months since I have been in this position, and I take every opportunity to meet with you and get to know you better. You share with me your needs when it comes to the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM), and one of those needs is clear and open communication between us, which seems to be very important to you.

As a partner in your living environments, we strive to keep you informed of how we do things, to respond to your requests with care and to provide you with services that meet your needs. That is why general management is now going to work on our ways of communicating with you, the tenants. Of course, you will be involved in the discussions, just like the OMHM Board of Directors and employees.

Since my arrival, I have had the pleasure of getting together with many of you during meetings of the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) or during events marking the completion of projects or anniversaries. These opportunities are invaluable moments during which I enjoyed talking with you in your participatory forums or living environments, always in a friendly atmosphere.

I also took great delight in attending the Recognition Ceremony of Community and Volunteer Action on April 27. For the many volunteers who work in our buildings, we wanted to organize an event that lived up to their commitment. I was impressed by all the things, big and small, that you do every day for the well-being and safety of your fellow neighbours and tenants. I invite you to read the highlights from this successful evening in the central pages of this edition of *La Rose des Vents*!

Let me also take this opportunity to encourage you to participate in the many free activities offered this summer in the city's neighbourhoods to mark the 375th anniversary of Montréal. Lowrent housing tenants are an important part of the Montréal community, so stand proud!

Word from your Representatives ____



Jacques Bradet Chair, Advisory Committee of Tenants

Finding and proposing solutions, together

The role of the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) is to make representations to the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) regarding the services it provides to us as tenants, and that we want to improve. To do that, it consults tenants and gathers information on the issues that often arise in low renthousing. It is not in charge of making decisions.

As tenants, we go through difficult situations to which we cannot find an answer. Our associations support us as best they can, and the CCR makes every effort to represent us appropriately to the OMHM in order to improve our living environments.

The OMHM is a large organization whose employees want to provide quality services to tenants. To succeed in this task, it created various administrative units organized to meet our needs. In 2017, the CCR created subcommittees to take a particular look at sanitation, communications, maintenance, safety and the allocation of apartments. Each sub committee consists of at least three members from all sectors and from the two categories of tenants ("seniors"

and "families and people living alone"). If more information is needed on one of the areas, it asks the OMHM to arrange a meeting with the people in charge of the service in question.

Once the CCR has all the information it needs on a given problem, it is able to make representations to OMHM management so that they can find solutions together. To learn more about how the CCR operates, read the article on page 12.

Together, we, the tenants, will be able to come up with the right solutions.

Word from your Representatives



Ghislaine Laramée Tenant OMHM Board Member

It all starts with the tenant association

When something is broken in our apartment, in our building or in our environment, or when a problem arises, the owner must be told; in our case, this is the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM).

Since the OMHM manages close to 21,000 low-rent housing units, it would be impossible for each one of us to speak to the owner directly. The *Act respecting the Société d'habitation du Québec* therefore states how the many low-rent housing tenants are to communicate with their owner, across all Quebec municipalities.

This document namely talks about sector committees, which appoint tenant representatives to the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants). The CCR sends comments to the OMHM Board of Directors and works jointly with members of its staff. This system runs like a well-oiled machine, but it all must start with tenant associations. Each building should have its own tenant association, not only to organize events, but also to appoint representatives to sector committees.

If I am unrepresented, it is more difficult for me to let the owner know what is not working for me. It is therefore in your interest to take part in creating an association or a tenant committee and to attend their meetings in your building. As the saying goes, we need to "walk the talk."

I am committed, I am involved in my tenant association.



Sylvain Labrecque Tenant OMHM Board Member

Doing the best to represent you

The mission of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) is to properly house tenants based on its budgets and the applicable laws. As a director elected by tenants to work on its Board of Directors (the Board) towards the smooth operation of the OMHM, I really take this mission to heart.

It is a challenge for Board members to make the best possible decisions to improve services. Although each member has jurisdiction and is equal in law, I feel that as a tenant, I have knowledge of low-rent housing that allows me to enlighten the other directors on various situations. I also want to use what I have learned from tenants who are members of the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) to make sure that the OMHM Board makes informed decisions. To me, playing an active role on the Board means asking all the questions that need to be asked, making suggestions or proposing changes constructively, and expressing my disagreement where necessary.

Since the some 21,000 low-rent housing households cannot sit on the OMHM Board with its nine members, I am aware of the huge responsibility I have as a tenant member. This is a role I take seriously and fulfill as best I can, listening to other tenants, the many associations and CCR members.

I end by wishing you a wonderful summer, full of sunshine, flowers and beautiful moments spent outdoors.

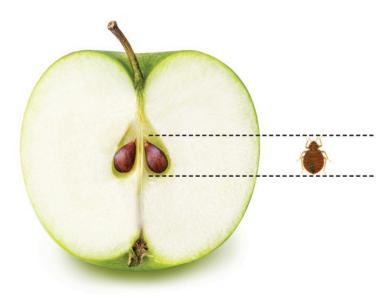
Bed bugs: no one is safe

By Ingrid Dirickx

"Bed bugs don't discriminate. They bite the rich, the poor, the clean, the dirty, the old, the young—everyone!" These are the words journalist Hugo Dumas used when referring to bed bugs in his column in *La Presse* on February 12, 2017. In other words, anyone can have this problem.

"Summer is high season for bed bugs," says Mélanie Sanche, Director of the Sanitation Department at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM). "In Quebec, a lot of people move on July 1. They clean out their apartments and leave furniture, couches and mattresses on the side of the road. This is a treat for these small insects, which hide anywhere there is a crack, including mattress seams, couches, chairs and so on."

For many years, the OMHM has been asking its tenants not to pick up furniture left on the street because it is nearly always infested. Once inside the building, it is very easy for bed bugs to spread in the apartment, and then in the entire building, if the tenant does not immediately call to report the problem. A bed bug can live for close to a year without food and reproduces at lightning speed. It is therefore important to contact the OMHM Call Centre as soon as you spot them, even if it is just one!



Bed bugs look like apple seeds.

SOME TIPS:

- Do not pick up furniture or mattresses from the street. They are definitely infested with bed bugs.
- Immediately contact the Call Centre at 514-872-OMHM (6646) if you see bed bugs in your apartment or in common areas. The Call Centre will send an exterminator to your apartment and will give you instructions on how to get your apartment ready for treatment.
- Do not throw out your mattress because it can be treated.
- Remember: you will not lose your apartment and we will do the necessary treatments free of charge.

Getting rid of bed bugs: a shared responsibility

They live at night away from the light in dark, hard-to-reach areas. There are rumours out there that tenants will lose their apartment if they have bed bugs—that is completely untrue. "No one at the OMHM has ever lost their apartment because they called for a bed bug treatment," explains Ms. Sanche. Like any good owner, the OMHM must provide its tenants with a healthy place to live. If there are harmful pests, it is our responsibility to treat the apartment at our expense. This being said, this responsibility is shared between the OMHM, the extermination company and the tenant. It is very important for tenants to get their apartment ready properly for the exterminator to be able to do the treatment. Without proper preparation, the treatment is useless."

Tenants must not try to treat their apartment themselves with store-bought products. As the *La Presse* journalist explains in his column, "the worst thing to do is to try and resolve the problem yourself. Ten years ago, in an apartment at Promenade Masson, I managed to ward off bed bugs by washing and disinfecting the apartment. A few months later, the effort was wasted. The bed bugs returned in full force. It was finally the exterminator who got rid of them."

Security

Emergency Response Plan The OMHM ready to respond in an emergency

By Marie-Eve Leblanc

The teams at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) deal with emergencies that can occur at any time. Some affect tenants, such as the major fire this past winter at Habitations Boyer, where 96 tenants had to be evacuated. Others involve employees, like the ice storm of 1998. The OMHM must be at the ready to respond.

Although predicting all exceptional situations is not easy, the OMHM has been developing an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) since 2008, as well as response plans for specific situations, such as a fire, electrical failure, an extreme heat wave or a pandemic. The ERP determines the actions that must be taken during and after an event to get everything back to normal. A team is formed to manage the crisis, and each responder has a specific role to play. The proper flow of information is one of the keys to keeping tenants and anyone else in OMHM buildings safe and healthy.

A team that hustles

Around noon on January 2, the OMHM was alerted to the start of a fire at Habitations Boyer. The tenant security agent, who was on the premises at the time, evacuated the tenants. When the extent of the blaze was confirmed, the OMHM deployed its ERP. One of the first actions was to communicate with the directors and staff from key departments. OMHM reinforcements thus arrived one after the other to assist and guide tenants and firefighters. During a fire, firefighters direct operations because the OMHM does not have access to its building. At Habitations Boyer, it was only in the early evening that the Service de sécurité incendie de Montréal gave the OMHM the all clear to go back inside the building to assess the damage. Everything was then done to repair the damage and make the apartments and common areas safe for tenants to return quickly. Employees also came out to help tenants, who were gathered at the community centre or the hotel.

As head of the ERP committee, Serge Villandré, Assistant Executive Director, Low-Rent Housing Management, is pleased with how the operations were carried out: "The employees, suppliers and partners did an amazing job as a team. They were quick and efficient, and the operation was well coordinated."



The OMHM gathered tenants from Habitations Boyer in the common room upon their return to go over the tragedy and address any concerns they had.

With the arrival of summer, the OMHM will be watching the weather closely for heat waves. If the mercury rises too high, the teams will be ready. The forecast temperature and length of the heat wave determine the type of actions, for example: information for tenants, opening of common rooms and door-to-door visits to check on the vulnerable.

DURING AN INTENSE HEAT WAVE, REMEMBER TO:

- » drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day or as instructed by your doctor;
- » spend at least 2 hours a day in an air conditioned or cool place;
- » go to common rooms in high-rise buildings that are air conditioned and accessible.

Common area improvement project Living under a roof that fits who you are!

By Marie-Eve Leblanc

For a number of years, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) has been investing in the common areas in its high-rise buildings to spruce them up. Repairs, painted hallways and apartment doors, modernized lobbies and new flooring are just some of the improvements. This year, the beautification operation has families in its sights. They too will now have a place to live that fits who they are!

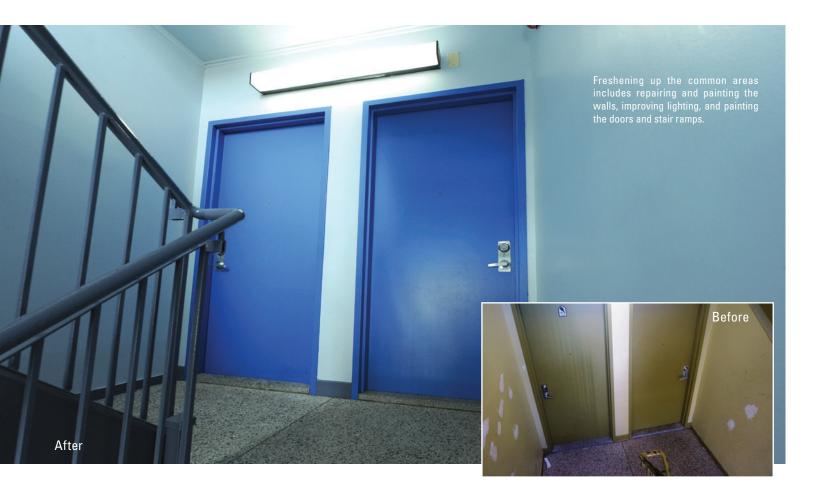
Starting this spring, the common area improvement project launched in high-rise buildings now extends to family buildings as well. In so doing, the OMHM plans to improve the quality of about 300 common areas this year (entrances, stairwells) in buildings around the island of Montréal. The aim is to have all of the 1,541 stairwells in family buildings done within five years. This is an ambitious plan born out of a desire to freshen up the paint in common areas, which in some cases need some "TLC".

Significant investments

However, the OMHM wants to do more than just paint, since this stroke of the brush is also an opportunity to repair broken staircases, replace damaged flooring or even improve lighting or security, for example. Tenants will have clean common areas that are in good repair and that are great places to be in. After all is said and done, close to \$5.6 million will be invested in family buildings to spruce them up.

Tenant cooperation is key

Of course, these improvements will not be possible without everyone's cooperation. To prepare you for the work, notices will be posted in your building. And, don't be surprised to see your director of maintenance and repairs or your community organizer knock on your door to give you additional information. Once the work is finished, it will be up to all of us to work together to keep the spaces in good condition and have a place to call home that fits who we are!



Major Projects

Proud of our low-rent housing projects

By Ingrid Dirickx

We can be proud of our renovated low-rent housing projects. That's, in short, the opinion of the project directors doing major renovations on buildings belonging to the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM).

Since 2008, the OMHM has invested more than \$700 million in a housing stock of 20,810 low-rent housing units. This makes it the largest property owner in Montréal, and work on these buildings has a significant impact on the city. "We have an impact on the built environment and on living environments," says Leonardo Peña, architect and Project Director. "Aside from the work that must be done for the health and safety of our tenants, as well as for the lifespan of our buildings, we are responsible for striking a balance between the lines, shapes, colour and texture of the building so that people are proud to live in it."

Architecture that serves tenants

Some project directors walk the neighbourhood, explore improvements they can make to the building and look at how its tenants live. Consultations organized before work starts are also a great opportunity to really understand tenants' concerns and confirm the improvements that have already been made.

When project directors see, for example, that the balconies at Habitations Marie-Victorin have trellises all around, they realize that tenants want more privacy. They will adjust their project plans accordingly so that balconies are enclosed with panels, in a dark colour to contrast with the building's brick. At Habitations Delorimier, the uniform look of the front of the buildings did not make their architecture very attractive. The project director therefore wanted to make them stand out by using a different material, colour and height for the stairwells at the main entrances. Each address now has an awning over the entrance door in a unique colour that gives tenants a sense of belonging. In addition, he took the opportunity to make the windows larger to let more light into the apartments and offer higher quality spaces.

Every project is a challenge

According to Jean-Luc Gatien, Project Director in the Sud-Ouest borough, "each project is a challenge. We have to outdo ourselves, be able to see the big picture and complete the project on a limited budget. Oftentimes, it's no more expensive to use contemporary materials to update the architecture of a building, while making adjustments that make sense. We must also choose quality materials that have a longer lifespan and are therefore ultimately more costeffective. In short, creativity and talent must offset budget constraints."

The combination of colours, contrasts and textures as well as the building's appearance are elements with which architects can play to turn our low-rent housing units into buildings that shine on the Montréal landscape, buildings we can be proud of.



After

The balconies at Habitations Marie-Victorin were redesigned to give tenants more privacy.



After

Building rules: for better neighbourly relations

By Jocelyne Dorris

With summer nearly upon us, we have two "hot" topics to share with you in connection with the building rules: air conditioning and lease renewals.

Summer means hot weather, sometimes even very hot...To help you make it through the heat, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) allows you to install an air conditioner, with some conditions attached.

Installing an air conditioner

The OMHM prefers air conditioners on wheels, but allows tenants to install window air conditioners, as long as the building rules are followed. The air conditioner must be securely installed, in accordance with the standards and in authorized places only, such as in a window or a specially designated opening. Only Plexiglas may be used to close up the opening. The cooling capacity must not exceed 10,000 BTU. An extra \$5 per month, which is the cost of the additional electricity used, is added to the rent amount for each air conditioner in the apartment.

So as not to inconvenience other tenants in the building, it is strongly recommended that you place a tray under the air conditioner to catch any water dripping from the bottom. Also, be sure not to overload the outlet where you plug in your air conditioner! Remember that you cannot do electrical work in your apartment without authorization from the OMHM.

Your rental agent knows the building and safety rules for air conditioner installation. If you tell him or her ahead of time that you are planning to install one, he or she will be able to give you some useful tips!

Renewing your lease

For many tenants, summer also means renewing their lease. About three to six months before your lease expires, the OMHM mails out documents with renewal information.

You will receive the form entitled "The Composition of Your Household". You must fill it out and sign it before returning it to your rental agent. You will also have to give your rental agent a copy of all documents related to your tax returns:

- your notice of assessment from Revenu Québec (both sides)
- your income tax return (preferably from Revenu Québec)
- all statements attached to your return, for example: Old Age Security Québec Pension Plan social assistance
 - Record of Employment EI, CSST (Commission de la santé et sécurité du travail)
 - etc.

Any other documents relating to other sources of income, including:

- alimony statement
- scholarship
- for children 18 and over still in school, proof of enrollment
- etc.

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Why send all these documents? So that your rental agent can establish your rent amount for your lease renewal. Your basic rent is 25% of the income of all the members of your household who are 18 years of age and over, except if they are in school full-time. It is calculated based on your income from the previous year. Not sure what documents to provide? Talk to your rental agent!

Tax returns and other important documents must be kept in a safe place, because having them on hand when you need them saves lots of time!

Sustainable development

Flower and Garden Club Flowering, greening and sowing to improve living environments

By Jocelyne Dorris

Members of the Flower and Garden Club reap many benefits from their passion for horticulture, because by doing what they love, they are also improving their living environments.

Gardening helps tenants build bonds and break out of the isolation that some people may be experiencing. Landscaping beautifies outdoor spaces and is a source of compliments for tenants from the whole neighbourhood. Growing your herbs and vegetables is a plus for your health! Whether taking care of their flowers or growing their vegetables, the Club's members take great pride in their accomplishments.

Some of the other benefits include the contribution that the Club's members make to the sustainable development actions of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM). Gardening helps with concrete actions that are beneficial for the environment, because greenery and flowers help keep areas litter-free, reduce heat islands and purify the air.

A sharing club

When multiple members from the same building join forces, the chances of success multiply. Being a Club member means sharing a passion with neighbours, building friendships and learning to help one another. Of course, it also means looking after and watering plants together so that they bloom and blossom.

- Members share supplies and equipment when there is more than one team in a building.
- Members offer their help and knowledge if they have particular skills or a green thumb.
- Members offer their neighbours tomatoes, parsley and peas to enjoy the harvest together.
- Members tackle weeds together, or take turns weeding and watering regularly.



Being a Club member means sharing a passion with neighbours, like here at Habitations Lafond in the Rosemont neighbourhood.



Membership Form



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

Sustainable development

Sentier Urbain : six years of partnership

Members of the Flower and Garden Club receive horticultural services from the social greening organization Sentier Urbain, the OMHM's partner from the very beginning. During the season, its horticultural experts go from building to building providing training and advice. The organization is also responsible for ordering the supplies and equipment, such as flower boxes, soil, compost and mulch. Sentier Urbain distributes these supplies and equipment equally among the buildings based on availability, as quantities are limited.

Guided tours

This year, Sentier Urbain is offering two tours of its Circuit Jardins: on July 12, they will visit the Biodiversity and Pollinators garden and on August 24, the First Nations Garden. Activities, snacks, door prizes and music are on the agenda. "This free activity gives participants a chance to discover islands of beautiful greenery. They learn through fun, while savouring some coffee or juice," says Lucie Vallée, a horticultural advisor with Sentier Urbain. The Club's members can register by calling 514-521-5608.

The tour of the Biodiversity and Pollinators garden in July 2016 gave participants a chance to discover the role of bees and the importance of pollinators for plant reproduction.

Young people get involved too

The Club's youth program aims to get young people living in low-rent housing interested in greening their environment by inviting them to get involved in landscaping projects put on by youth organizations. The OMHM provides financial assistance to some 15 organizations so that a hundred or so young people can carry out horticultural projects with their support.

A recreational activity that brings people together and is useful, and is encouraged by the OMHM

All 850 of the Club's members live in low-rent housing. The OMHM supports their projects and initiatives in meaningful ways. In addition to distributing horticultural supplies for free through Sentier Urbain, 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.

Your tenant association, the director of maintenance and repairs and the maintenance and repair worker in your building, as well as your community organizer are there to help you. Feel free to talk to them about your project.

"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. Horticultural achievements benefit the tenants in our buildings and all residents of Montréal," says Brigitte Laliberté, Sustainable Development Project Manager at the OMHM.

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News on tenant action in Montreal's low-rent housing

June 2017 Vol. 16 • No. 2



An evening to say THANK YOU to volunteers for everything they do



The volunteers and staff of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) will remember the evening of April 27, 2017, for its warm and friendly atmosphere. Some 225 people gathered at the Plaza Antique reception hall to celebrate community and volunteer action, "because every little bit counts" within Montréal's low-rent housing.

Spirits were high during the event, hosted by nice actress Suzanne Champagne and Deusdedit Mutima, a young tenant from Habitations Sackville. Both worked the room during dinner to chat with volunteers. A dozen or so attendees talked about their projects and initiatives and the positive effect that these have on their environment.

Various prominent guests also spoke during the event. Christian Champagne, member of the OMHM Board of Directors, reiterated that the work of volunteers on the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) influences the direction the Board takes. He said he was also pleased to see young people in the room because the upcoming generation is important and "it is up to these young people to take up the torch."

During the evening, OMHM Executive Director Danielle Cécile pointed out the many ways in which low-rent housing tenants can volunteer. This ranges from the A Vigilant Volunteer is Watching Over You program to taking responsibility for common rooms, and includes MOUV, in which young people get involved to improve their living conditions. Not to mention the role that tenant committees and the CCR play. She took the opportunity to give them a thousand thanks, as close to 1,000 volunteers in total are active in Montréal's low-rent housing in various capacities.

Russell Copeman, the mayor of the Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough, was also in attendance. As the executive committee member responsible for housing for the city of Montréal, and therefore the low-rent housing file, he took the floor to thank the volunteers who were there for their commitment, reiterating that their role is not always easy because it requires a good sense of organization and selflessness, among other things.

The guests then continued to have fun dancing and mingling to music from the playlist prepared by DJ François "Franck" Marchand. See inside for our photo report.



Suzanne Champagne, actress, and Deusdedit Mutima, young tenant from Habitations Sackville, were brilliant and enthusiastic hosts.



Throughout the evening, Executive Director Danielle Cécile went from table to table to chat with volunteers. She is pictured here speaking with two tenants from Habitations De Fleurimont: Yollande Trachy (right) and Nicole St-Germain (left).





Deusdedit heard from Lucille Deschênes, who lives at Habitations Pierre-de-Coubertin.



Front row, from left to right: Christian Champagne, OMHM board member, Russell Copeman and Karine Boivin Roy, respectively executive committee member responsible for housing and associate counsellor, housing, for the City of Montréal, Danielle Cécile, OMHM Executive Director. Back row: Jean-Jacques Bohémier, political advisor for the City of Montréal, Sylvain Labrecque, tenant OMHM board member, Doris Roussy, from Habitations Jacques-Cartier tenant committee, and Ghislaine Laramée, tenant OMHM board member.



New tenant committees

These past few months, tenants from some 20 low-rent housing buildings elected their representatives. In two cases, they formed a brand new association. Congratulations to the numerous volunteers who dedicate their time to improving the everyday lives of their neighbours!



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Community living

Immigrant grannies: the legacy of an inspiring woman

By Danielle Lacroix and Jocelyne Dorris

Women immigrants 60 years of age and over face many challenges. When they arrive, many experience cultural shock and have difficulties integrating into their community.

In 2002, two years after arriving in the country, Henriette Nzuji Ntumba created «Mamies immigrantes pour le développement et l'intégration» (MIDI or Immigrant grannies for development and integration) to encourage senior women from all backgrounds to take their place and get involved in breaking isolation. Through this organization in Ville-Émard–Côte-Saint-Paul, Mamie Henriette played an instrumental role in their integration into the host society.

Many grannies living in our buildings have used the services provided by the MIDI, such as: storytelling in schools and various family organizations, including two low-rent housing organizations, to bridge the intergenerational gap; storytelling in seniors' residences to bridge the cultural gap; "Grannies at home" to care for children; respite service for caregivers; and the production of a play on senior abuse and neglect created by and for seniors in the fall of 2016, put on for the low-rent housing tenants in Ville- Émard–Côte-Saint-Paul.



Mamie Henriette with Miriam Rouleau-Pérez, community organizer from CLSC Saint-Henri.

Sadly, Mamie Henriette left us on January 12, but her message lives on. "Human connections can prevent racism; diversity is our strength. There is discussion, there is love. Love is a weapon of mass construction," she used to say. MIDI activities continue to be held and are provided by grannies, for grannies. If you live in the Sud-Ouest and Verdun, and want to know more about their services, call 514-903-1380.

Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Montréal-Nord: a resource that does good!

By Julie Marie Dorval

Since 2009, the Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Montréal-Nord has been helping families in difficult times. Its mission is to contribute to the well-being and overall development of children and their families. And, it succeeds in doing so!

Referred most often by organizations, these families are welcomed by the Centre based on a different approach than the one used by the public health system. By building a real relationship of trust with their clients, the Centre's professionals calm their fears and comfort them. They then give them support to resolve all sorts of problems with respect and empathy.

The Centre's services

The Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Montréal-Nord is not a medical clinic where the public can walk in without an appointment. The family must first be assessed. Three key services—day clinics, art therapy and stimulation workshops—have encouraged many families and have given many children the opportunity to grow up happy. Day clinics are organized every Wednesday, with a doctor and a social worker on site. The physical and psychological needs of children and parents are assessed, and solutions are found. The Centre can then pick children for participation in art therapy sessions. Most have fun, open up to others and ultimately feel better. The stimulation workshops, meant for the parents of children 1 to 5 years of age, develop their motor and language skills.

The services of the Centre de pédiatrie sociale de Montréal-Nord are available only to families from Montréal-Nord, particularly those from Habitations Place Normandie where the Centre is located. For information, call 514-303-3351.

Community living

Do you know your CCR well?

By Hélène Morin



Did you know that tenants like you make up the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) and that the CCR will be turning 15 this year?

The CCR of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) is made up of 18 persons, that is, 6 per sector, elected by tenant association representatives who attend sector committee meetings. Themselves representatives of their association, they attend committee meetings of their respective sectors. They are therefore very much in touch with the needs of low-rent housing tenants.

As defined by the Société d'habitation du Québec, the role of the CCR is to promote tenants' participation in community activities, promote community life and make representations they deem useful to the OMHM on any issues of common interest, in terms of both building maintenance and social development.

What does the CCR do?

It meets about ten times a year to discuss and move ahead on issues that are deemed important. Since the CCR is an advisory committee, it does not make decisions. It issues recommendations to OMHM management or transmits advice for discussion to its Board of Directors. Two tenant representatives sit as directors on the Board. They are elected during a general meeting for a term of three years, and are automatically members of the CCR.



The CCR members in February 2017 (certain changes have taken place since).

	2017 CCR MEME	SER2
Sector	Representatives for seniors	Representatives for families and people living alone
East	Jacques Bradet, Habitations Sainte-Brigide	Tina-Lili Gagné, Habitations Saint-André
	Claire Cassault, Habitations Les Jardins Angevin	Gaétan Gauvin, Habitations Séguin
	Serge Arbour, Hab. Terrasse Ontario A et C	Joanne Aubin, Habitations Séguin
Northwest	Raquel Caitak, Habitations Gabriel-Sagard	Marie-Christine Richer, Habitations Place Normandie
	René Cordero, Habitations Saint-Roch	Marie Benoite Bukuru, Habitations Sackville et De la Merci
	Georges Léger, Habitations Saint-Firmin	Chantal Daneau, Habitations Gérard-Poitras
Southwest	Rita Del Grande, Habitations Mayfair	Saima Rana, Habitations Walkley
	François Mikhail, Habitations Adrien-Trudeau	Richard Gagné, Habitations Îlots Saint-Martin
	Lidi-Maria Costache, Habitations Isabella	Marius Negrau, Habitations Bourret
Board members elected by tenants	Ghislaine Laramée, Résidence Saint-Eugène	Sylvain Labrecque, Habitations Jacques-Cartier

2017 CCP MEMBERS

Why is its role important?

The CCR is the link between tenant associations and OMHM management. It collaborates with the OMHM to improve the quality of tenants' living environments. Through its work, it contributed to beneficial changes over the years: creation of the Security Department, arrangement of consultations before major projects, addition of a performance obligation in contracts awarded to extermination companies, development of the housing transfer policy for seniors and more.

"With the help of low-rent housing tenants in Montréal, and with the cooperation of the OMHM, the CCR can build well-documented records and create winning situations for all involved," said Jacques Bradet, CCR Chair.

You can contact the CCR through its Facebook page «CCR Comité consultatif des résidants des HLM de Montréal» or by email at ccr.mtl@gmail.com

Wellbeing

What is a cluttered apartment?

By Mélanie Samson, social worker at the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal

An apartment is said to be cluttered when it is difficult or impossible to access one or more rooms, or because it is practically impossible to move about on a sizable area of the floor due to the accumulation of objects.

In most situations, apartments are cluttered by many things of very little value, such as broken electronic equipment, old magazines or newspapers, clothes, flyers and so on. Garbage cans might be overflowing because of too much recycling, waste or food scraps. Clutter does not mean squalor, but the accumulation of objects often goes hand in hand with apartment upkeep problems because it becomes very difficult to clean and it starts to smell.

This type of problem is called "hoarding disorder." This could be a mental health issue. People with this disorder have trouble letting go of things, even trivial ones, because the idea of throwing something away makes them extremely anxious. This anxiety is caused by the fear of getting rid of something that they might one day need, or because all the objects have sentimental value.

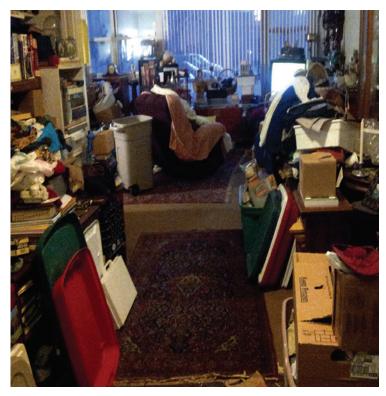
These people do not have difficulties organizing their possessions, and it is not uncommon for them to be very organized in other aspects of their life. They often believe that the hoarding is temporary and that they will eventually sort through all those things. However, months and years go by and they unfortunately never end up getting rid of the unnecessary objects. As time goes by, the thought of fixing the situation causes more and more anxiety.

What are the consequences?

Hoarders often become isolated and are ashamed of the state of their apartment. They tend to lose important documents, and will have trouble functioning normally because daily activities (cooking, showering, etc.) will become increasingly difficult if the room is cluttered. In addition, extremely cluttered apartments pose a safety risk for the tenant, who may trip on objects, may have their apartment become infested with pests and may live in squalor. In a fire, emergency exits can be inaccessible and piles of paper can quickly catch fire.

Ask for help

Someone with a hoarding disorder should not hesitate to ask for help. Oftentimes, the person will become more aware of their situation after talking to a professional. This step to seek support is important because, in addition to the inconveniences already mentioned, this problem may lead to the loss of the apartment.



Extremely cluttered apartments pose a risk to tenant safety.

NEED HELP?

If you believe that someone you know has a hoarding disorder, you can contact the Association québécoise des parents et amis de la personne atteinte de maladie mentale by calling 514-524-7131 for support and information. If you think you might need help, the first step is to talk about it with a psychosocial professional at your CLSC.

OMHM Foundation

Expedition to Morocco Two young people from low-rent housing aim for the summit

By Martin Després

The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) Foundation is organizing a second trip for low-rent housing youth. Mount Toubkal in Morocco, the highest peak in North Africa, will be the destination of this ten-day adventure. Of the 14 brave souls taking up this challenge, two are young people from low-rent housing.

In 2013, Défi Acotango gave three young people living in low-rent housing an opportunity to have an out-of-this-world adventure with a dozen other participants. More than \$116,000 had been raised. This time, 18 year old Deusdedit Mutima and 20 year old Erick Reyes-Cano will be going on this trek.

For Deusdedit, a health sciences student at Collège de Maisonneuve, this is an excellent way to combine adventure with support for youth. "The extreme and the thrill are a motivation for me. Knowing that I can go on this expedition and at the same time support this good cause is simply perfect," says this young man from Habitations Sackville.



Erick, on the other hand, an architecture technology student at Cégep André-Laurendeau, sees this as an opportunity to grow. "As a youth living in low-rent housing, l'm aware of our potential. But we are often held back by our social and economic situation. Being part of this adventure is a way for me to contribute to society in a good way," says this young tenant from Habitations Îlots Saint-Martin.

Don't be shy, applaud these young people on their courage and give them some encouragement. Visit the Trek au Maroc section on the Foundation's website at www.fondationomhm.ca.

A breathtaking benefit event!

By Jocelyne Dorris

On May 30, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) Foundation held the 7th edition of its spring benefit event under the theme "Place aux jeunes!"

The evening was held under the big top of Terrasse du Palais des congrès de Montréal, a truly appropriate place because "big top" immediately bring a circus to mind! This year, the event featured graduates from the National Circus School, who put on breathtaking performances.

The some 400 guests in attendance were moved by the talented and inspiring young artists, and gave them warm rounds of applause. In March, some of the young people from low-rent housing had a chance to experience a day-long introduction to circus art directly at the National Circus School. There was no shortage of enthusiasm to try out the aerial equipment, do some juggling, and attempt balancing acts and acrobatics! You never know, new stars might be born after this experience...



Fondation de l'Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal

This annual activity put on by the OMHM Foundation raises funds to encourage some 10,000 young people living in low-rent housing to stay in school, helping them to prepare for their future. This year, 45 individual scholarships will be awarded and six community organizations working in low-rent housing will receive financial support. The next meeting will take place in the fall, as the Foundation prepares its next benefit show. To find out more, visit the www. fondationomhm.ca website.

Profile

A long-distance runner at Habitations Badeaux-Sauvé At 73, he still runs the equivalent of a marathon a day!

By Julie Marie Dorval

Theo Delacas loves running so much that he does it every day. He does not walk one or two kilometres at a slow pace. Instead, he runs 40, 50 and even 80 kilometres a day, except Saturdays!

A sportsman by nature born in Greece, Mr. Delacas played amateur soccer when he was young. After moving to Montréal with his family in 1980, he became a soccer coach. He combined this occupation with his job as a cook, then with running.

Running for fun

Before he turned 45, he would run about 10 kilometres every day. Then, he set off covering impressive distances of several dozen kilometres! To keep his mind and body healthy, he runs in good weather and in bad, all year round!

His perseverance has won him multiple awards, ones he does not count, however. "I run for fun, for my well-being. That's my job now! I also run for the love of the people I come across on my way," says Mr. Delacas.



This 73-year-old runner is in amazing shape.

His greatest pride

This tenant at Habitations Badeaux-Sauvé, in the Saint-Laurent borough, often meets people on his runs. Some applaud him, others stop him to give him words of encouragement. Even police officers honk their horn to show their admiration. These congratulations and this recognition are a good source of motivation for Mr. Delacas. His many trophies and medals make him proud, but what truly makes him happy is people's appreciation. He recalls one of the Montréal marathons where spectators had cheered him on: "I was more proud of their cheering than I was of getting a medal!"

Recently, he was paid a visit by the mayor of Montréal, Denis Coderre, and the mayor of the Pierrefonds-Roxboro borough, Dimitrios (Jim) Beis, who awarded him a certificate in recognition of his great sporting and human qualities.

In shape at 73

How does he stay so fit at 73? In addition to running, he eats healthily: fruits, vegetables, chicken and fish, but no red meat. He drinks a lot of water and takes no medication. In the early hours of the morning, when it is still dark outside, he is already up and running out the door!

He hopes to be able to run for as long as he can, and jokingly invites other brave souls to imitate him. "They might be able to keep up for a bit, but in the end, they'll definitely need an ambulance!" he says, laughing. His record would indeed be tough to beat: on April 17, 2016, he ran 131 kilometres in 9.35 hours!

Lively, cheerful, determined and full of kindness, he is an example of courage and optimism for many people, including the tenants in his building. His daughter, Tina, who joins him for his marathons in Greece (three to four a year) and in Montréal (one a year), says this about her father: "I'm really proud of him. I support him and encourage him 100%! Dad is healthy, and I'm really happy about that."



Mr. Delacas takes good care of his medals and certificates.

Glasses that play tricks on us... or how to see the point of view of others

By Michèle Marchand and the team of Centre de formation sociale Marie-Gérin-Lajoie

Each person is unique. Their values, their experiences, their sensitivity, their temperament...everything is different from one person to another. The "glasses" through which each person sees the world are therefore not the same. However, the most important thing is not to be right, but to be able to talk about what is posing a problem for us, with sincerity and openness.

So, how do you acknowledge each other's views when a dispute breaks out? Here is a little story to give you an idea: Marie-Ange is an older lady who lives alone and has no family or friends. Her three cats are her whole life. They come and go as they please through the balcony door, always left half open. She also leaves food for stray cats in the neighbourhood.

Benoît has serious respiratory problems. He hates cats because they make his allergies worse. When he

sees them on his neighbour's balcony, he gets angry. He is seriously considering filing a complaint against her. Marie-Ange does

not know that her beloved cats are making Benoît sick. He never spoke to her about it!

Talking it out

Benoît confides in a friend one day, who listens carefully and asks him some questions to help him understand his feelings about the situation: his concern for his health, his irritation with his neighbour's negligence and, finally, his fear. That's it! He feels threatened by all these cats lurking around his door. After talking it out, he realizes that his anger and fear are gone. Once he pinpointed and understood them, they calmed down! So, when his friend asks, "why don't you go talk to her first, before making a complaint", he finds this to be a great idea. He invites Marie-Ange over for a coffee to talk about it. Eventually, she tells him of her love for cats and he tells her about his respiratory problems. Although awkward at first, they manage to explain their situations. Marie-Ange admits that she could stop feeding all the neighbourhood cats and let her own cats out less often. Benoît tells her that he understands how much those cats mean to her. He even asks her what their names are and reluctantly admits that they are cute, which makes Marie-Ange

happy. He also takes the opportunity to invite her to some activities organized in the common room. Marie-Ange accepts shyly. We'll see, she tells herself...They also agreed to speak again if need be.

When they meet again at the Christmas party, now that they know each other, they share a laugh about their differences. Each one saw the world through the other's eyes and made some compromises.

If you are having an issue with someone in your neighbourhood, talk to someone you trust who will listen to you without judging. This could be a friend, a social worker in your circle or a mediator. This will help you better understand what is bugging you and prepare you to talk it out calmly and openly with the person. And, always remember the famous "glasses"...which can make you see the world differently.

The Blue Giant: a collective sound painting at

By Julie Marie Dorval

The creation of a painting brought together all tenants, big and small, from Habitations Hochelaga for six months. The project was launched thanks to artist Joëlle Tremblay and ADT Quart Monde, an organization that combats poverty.

First, the organization's representatives created playing cards with questions on them. Young participants (between 8 and 12 years of age) then asked their elders those questions. The answers had to do mostly with injuries, illness or the trials of life. These exchanges were recorded and incorporated into the work using MP3 players. That is why this is a "sound" painting.

The young and old then painted based on the stories collected during the Q&A game. During all the stages of creation, the tenants expressed what they were feeling and became closer. The project managed to break the isolation that some people might have been feeling and to bring different generations closer together. The people also realized that they were not the only ones to go through trials.



Community living

Reaching for a dream

By Akram Taif, a young contributor to Le Rebond

Djessira Kourouma, 24 years of age, is currently in her third year of the early childhood and primary education bachelor program at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). I worked with her one summer on the clean-up and greening brigade of the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM). I wanted to tell you about her to show how we can learn from the obstacles that sometimes stand in our way.

Akram: How was your childhood?

Djessira: I came to Montréal from Guinea when I was six. I lived in low-rent housing in Petite-Bourgogne and attended the local elementary school there. When I turned 12, we moved out of the neighbourhood because of the shootings I had witnessed. My mother was worried. Me, on the other hand, I wanted to stay because I had friends and I liked our apartment, in which I felt at home.

A: What was your life like after the move?

D: We lived in Saint-Laurent, where I started high school. My first day at school was a nightmare because I didn't know anyone and I was rather shy. Other than that, though, the rest of my time in high school was great. I made friends, I had a very good relationship with my teachers and I participated in the school's social life. For eight years, I worked as a facilitator in a community organization for young people from my neighbourhood.

A: And, how was cégep?

D: At the beginning, it was difficult because I wasn't used to a very busy schedule. I felt lost and alone. I never saw my friends anymore. I earned my diploma all the same after two and a half years, in 2012.



A: Was it any easier at university?

D: It was also difficult because I didn't have much time. I had to take care of the children because my mother had to leave the country for a year. It was complicated because I had my personal life, my part time job and my studies. Despite that, I earned two certificates from Université de Montréal. After that success, I decided to take the teaching program at UQAM. Right now, I'm in my third year, out of four, studying towards my teaching certificate.

A: Congratulations Djessira! You followed your dream without losing sight of your goal and proved that anything is possible!

Habitations Hochelaga

In the end, the collective painting turned out to be 6 feet high by 9 feet wide, and shows a blue giant, named "Le grand blessé" ("the wounded man") by the participants. It is currently on display in the common room at Habitations Hochelaga, after touring around the neighbourhood. In September 2018, it will be presented to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, as part of Joëlle Tremblay's university project.

Young people listening carefully to what the painting has to say them.



Consumer advice

Services at low prices

By Marie Bouchard

Taking care of your teeth, getting new glasses or getting a haircut are major expenses for many people. Did you know that services are available for low income clients?

The opticians at Bonhomme à lunettes provide eye exams and sell glasses at affordable prices for those without access to free healthcare or insurance. They travel from one community organization to another on the island of Montréal. To find out the schedule of service locations and to learn more about the paperwork you will need to qualify for the reduced costs, call 514-303-4315 or visit their website: bonhommealunettes.org.

To help clients who have difficulty moving around, Bonhomme à lunettes can come to your low-rent housing building if four or more people need the service. You can call them to learn more.

FREE OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Optometry services are covered by health insurance for young people under 18 and seniors 65 and over. The eye exam is free for social assistance recipients – they can obtain a pair of glasses for \$20 at Bonhomme à lunettes if they come in with the appropriate form. To obtain this form, call 1-877-767-8773.

Affordable dental care

Being embarrassed to smile because of a broken tooth or living with a toothache are a reality for many people because they do not have the money to go to the dentist. Good news! Those who do not have access to free healthcare or dental insurance can receive dental care at a reduced or at no cost.



The Jim Lund Dental Clinic is a service run by Welcome Hall Mission, and dental care is provided by dental students from McGill University. To take advantage, you must open a file at Welcome Hall Mission's food bank. Feel free to call 514-523-5288. The dental clinic at Université de Montréal is open during academic sessions between September and April. It is important that you register in advance. To call the dental clinic, dial 514-343-6750. The next registration period begins on August 14, 2017.

Collège de Maisonneuve offers a range of care services at low prices through its dental hygiene techniques program. The clinic is open between September and May only, and you must make an appointment by calling 514-787-1702.

Reasonably priced hair cutting and styling

You can get a haircut and change your look without going bankrupt by going to a hairdressing school. You must specify that you want to make an appointment with a student and ask about the price. Our two suggestions are: **Académie de coiffure PURE**, 514-849-1151, at 3458 Saint-Denis Street, and **Saint-Laurent Académie**, 514-284-0661, at 916 Sainte-Catherine Street East.

CENTRE DE RÉFÉRENCE DU GRAND MONTRÉAL

WHO CAN HELP ME?

Centre de référence du Grand Montréal

The Centre can help you find the services and resources you need, such as home care support, food banks, thrift stores and more. This service is available 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Don't wait...call 514-527-1375.

Service location closures

By Valérie Rhême

In early 2016, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) closed most of its service locations (excluding the Lachine office) because of low traffic. However, being close to tenants is still one of our main concerns, and various options are currently being explored to continue to provide you with the same quality services.

The service locations were opened in 2002 during the municipal mergers. The OMHM saw a good way to transition by going from 15 housing boards at the time to 9 service locations, in addition to sector offices. Since then, traffic at the service locations has dropped from 10,000 to 1,800 visits per year, an 82% decrease. By comparison, traffic in sector offices has increased by 10%.

To deal with this new reality, the OMHM explores various options for working closely with tenants by, for example, meeting their needs and answering questions related to their lease. Various solutions will be discussed with the Comité consultatif des résidants (CCR or Advisory Committee of Tenants) and rental agents, and will then be shared with you.

Of course, if you have questions about your lease or good neighbourly relations, you can communicate with your rental agent. The Call Centre team is also just a phone call away for any maintenance, repair and extermination questions. The service schedule and the contact information for the sector offices are on the back of this issue of La Rose des vents.

Office municipal d'habitation de Montréa

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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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QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR LEASE OR GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS

Contact **YOUR RENTAL AGENT** for any information related to the renewal or cancellation of your lease, the arrival or departure of an occupant, your lease payment, parking, a housing transfer or a neighbourhood issue. The telephone number of your rental agent can be found in your lease.