

COUNCIL ROUND-UP

City participation in Earth Hour 2012 sparks debate

An annual global movement to shut off electricity in homes and buildings for one hour on March 31 has garnered the interest and participation of municipalities around the world with more than 5,200 cities and towns in 135 countries signing on.

In the past, Côte St. Luc has participated in the effort on an official level and it will again in 2012. However, the vote to participate was not without debate as District 3 councillor Dida Berku voiced strong support for the measure and District 8's Ruth Kovac demanded more than just an annual event.

"I think, after five years, we should be moving it up a notch," said Kovac. "Like doing it once a month, not once a year. I think it's benign to do it once a year. It's sort of meaningless."

Berku, on the other hand, suggested CSL follow Westmount's lead in its higher level of participation that includes citizen-led candlelight vigils and municipal facilities being blacked out.

"I don't believe our small gestures don't make a difference," said Berku. "I believe they do make a difference."

The measure passed with three against.

vCOPS are on the move

CSL Volunteers on Patrol program had a busy year, according to District 6 councillor Glenn Nashen.

The volunteers patrol the streets, call police as needed and even respond to accidents with traffic control or other services until help arrives. In 2011, the vCOPs worked over 6,400 hundred hours, covering 36,000 kilometres. About 800 of those kilometres, he noted, were eco-friendly as volunteers cruised the streets on electric scooters.



Library continues to be hopping: Goldbloom

District 1 councillor Sam Goldbloom noted the Bright Lights Film Club is offering free, Tuesday-afternoon movies and facilitated discussion afterward at the Eleanor London library. The screenings will continue until March 17, he said.

Tech Tuesdays, he added, are also

restarting for residents who want to learn a few key computer programs.

Trash collection down, city awarded: Erdelyi

District 4's councillor Steven Erdelyi said the end-of-the-year garbage reports indicate trash collection is down — a sign, he says, that residents are either recycling, reducing or composting organic waste. There were over 8,400 tons of garbage collected, he said, which is a four percent reduction. Over the last five years, he said, "We have managed to reduce

the amount of garbage going to the landfill by a staggering 31 percent."

The province, he continued, recognized the city's waste management and reduction techniques in the form of \$315,000 (\$100,000 more than the usual contribution). If people continue to reduce trash production, he noted, it could mean even more money for the city in the future.

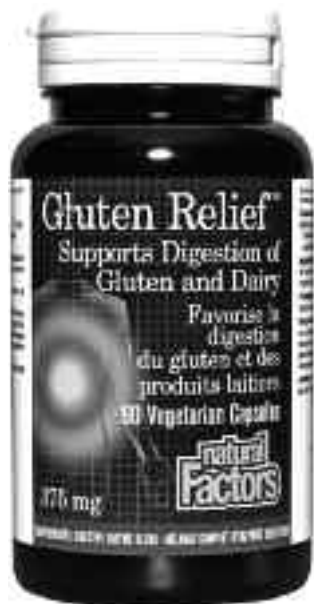
— Isaac Olson

continued from Preliminary, p. 14

direction and, on the same token, we also have a lot of seniors moving to the area and that's also very good," said Cohen. "This is a vibrant, exciting community with lots of activities and that's why our senior club is so active and our ACC is such an inter-generational centre."

When asked why he thinks the city's population is showing signs of increasing, Mayor Anthony Housefather said the complete census results are still coming in, but he hopes the continued influx of younger residents, many with young children, are coming to the area for the more affordable housing combined with a vast array of recreational and cultural services. From the ACC to the newly redone tennis courts, the mayor noted there are also many programs for children.

"The goal really is to have programs that really attract people here," said Housefather. "Whether it is at the library, the Recreation department or elsewhere. Maybe people move here because composting is attractive to them. We're trying to be an innovative city and perceived that way. It's far better to be growing rather than shrinking, so we're happy the numbers went up like that."



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