



A HAT TRICK FOR ROOKIE
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SINCE 1778

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OLD MONTREAL FIRE

City secures owner's buildings

Benamor ordered to hire guards, install alarms at two properties

KATELYN THOMAS

The owner of the Old Montreal building that burned down last week was ordered by the city on Friday to station security guards at two of his other nearby properties because of security issues, the Montreal Gazette has learned.

Two of Emile Benamor's buildings on Notre-Dame Street had no fire alarm systems, according to preliminary inspection reports

from the Montreal fire department obtained by the Gazette. In one of the buildings, several units did not have a second exit, the report said.

In response to the findings, the city added temporary fire alarms to the properties at 698-704 Notre-Dame St. W. and 400-406 Notre-Dame St. E. and stationed a Montreal police officer at each building until Benamor could find security guards to take their place.

The guards are there to ensure the building can be evacuated safely in the event of an emergency.

The Notre-Dame properties are among nine owned by Benamor across the island of Montreal, all of which are currently being inspected by the city following the five-alarm fire on March 16 that destroyed his building at Place d'Youville and du Port Street, killing at least five people with another two missing and presumed dead.

Many units in Benamor's Old Montreal building were being rented out illegally on the short-term rental platform Airbnb. Past

travellers had raised concerns about the safety of the building in general — the front door didn't lock, they said — and also about some of its units, including one without any windows at all and another in which they were glued shut.

"I was livid after leaving because in no circumstances should that be an Airbnb," a woman who stayed in the building in early 2022, who asked that her name not be published, told the Gazette last week. She had urged Airbnb to investigate the building and the host after her one-night stay.

SEE BENAMOR ON **A2**

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MISSISSIPPI

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HELLENIC CANADIENS



ALLEN McINNIS

Marco Guaiani, 12, and his brother Giuliano Guaiani, 9, support both the Habs and the Greek parade as they watch along the route on Jean-Talon Street during the Greek Independence Day celebrations on Sunday.

Ending single-use plastic is not as hard as it seems



ALLISON HANES

There's not a disposable stir stick, spoon, creamer or even napkin to be found in Café des Habitudes on St-Zotique Street

in Rosemont — and it has nothing to do with Montreal's new ban on single-use plastics that comes into effect Tuesday.

Owner Joanna Nisenbaum founded the popular neighbourhood coffee shop in September 2021, with the goal of producing as little trash as possible. She said Café des Habitudes is 95-per-cent zero waste, serving vegan treats on china dishes with stainless steel cutlery to

patrons who dab their mouths with tea towels while sitting at second-hand tables and chairs.

The plant-based alternatives to dairy she uses, like oat or almond milk, come in old-fashioned returnable bottles from Montreal-based DAM drinks, a move she said has saved her tossing 5,000 tetrapaks in the garbage each year. Even fruits and vegetables are delivered in boxes that are recirculated.

Although Nisenbaum encourages customers to stay a while sipping their beverages, those that do order to go can take their snacks in cloth bags made from leftover fabric swatches for \$1.

SEE HANES ON **A3**

SPORTS

CANADIENS

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