

QUEBEC COMPANY installs free circuit training system in Jean Drapeau Park

# Outdoor gym gives average Joe a leg up

ANNE SUTHERLAND THE GAZETTE

Not everyone has the luxury of a gym membership, but if you look around, there are some parks with training equipment, most notably an area in Irma Lévesque park in Outremont and new circuit training system recently installed in Jean Drapeau Park on Île Ste. Hélène near the big swimming pool.

Free access to physical activity is the idea behind both of these installations, which are meant for use by people over the age of 13. No longer just the arena of swings and teeter-totters, parks are catering to the adults, too.

"I think more parks should do this," said Gazette fitness columnist Jill Barker. "We're in good luck because they have this at the Santa Monica Pier and other places in California."

The Société du Parc Jean Drapeau, a para-municipal body that runs the facilities of the island (Notre Dame and Ste. Hélène) made a deal with a new Quebec company, Trekfit, to be the first to have a high-performance concrete and stainless steel installation that allow participants to exercise every part of the body, doing pull-ups, step-ups, squats and body dips to name a few.

"We wanted to complement the sports centres (basin, track, pool) we already have with this kind of outdoor gym," said park spokesperson Nathalie Lessard.

Eric Tomeo, president of Trekfit, said many elite athletes train at Jean Drapeau Park - rowers, cyclists and swimmers - and having circuit training on site was a natural fit. The system also is for your average Joe and Josephine who'd like to get a complete workout, at a kinder, gentler pace.

"An elderly couple and a baseball team can both use the same equipment, just at different levels," Tomeo said.

Parks, like libraries, are the responsibility of each individual borough, so Tomeo will have to make his pitch to all the boroughs and Laval for any future sales as there is no one blanket policy on park equipment. The Société, with its seven-person board, makes its own



DAVID ARKLA THE GAZETTE

Thierry Canape tries out new exercise equipment at Jean Drapeau Park yesterday that's designed for both elite athletes and weekend warriors.

decisions on where to spend money.

Trekfit's system normally costs \$70,000, but the park paid under \$30,000, a deal Tomeo said was a promotion to show other municipalities and boroughs what this kind of program is all about.

"Parks are great places to go and exercise and this gives people more

ways to get fit in the open air," Barker said.

The equipment is treated with a special surface that is easy to clean, in case Montreal's graffiti vandals come calling, Tomeo said.

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# Armed Muscovites shoot at snowclearing vehicles

Next time you catch yourself whining about Montreal traffic, just be happy you're not driving in Moscow.

Or, to more precisely, be happy you're not immobilized in Moscow traffic.

Of course, Russia is a good place not to be on general principles. With all due respect to Andrei Markov and Stolichnaya, the land of my maternal forebears has issues. And the Russian capital, with its teeming population of 10.5 million, isn't about to join Montreal on that Lonely Planet list of the world's happiest places.

There is a case to be made, and today's edition of the New Yorker makes it, for Moscow traffic jams as the least happy places on Earth.

Traffic in Moscow is so bad, Keith Glessen writes, it poses "an existential threat" to the city. Moscow, a traffic expert said, is "on the brink of transportation collapse."

"Moscow will simply cease to function as a city," Mikhail Blinkin told the New Yorker. "Some people will live in one neighbourhood, and others will live in a different neighbourhood, and that will be fine, except they won't be able to get from one neighbourhood to the other."

The seeds of Moscow's dilemma were sown long before the invention of the automobile. The city suffers gridlock because it isn't laid out on a grid.

Moscow was built (and rebuilt after numerous sackings) as a concentric series of forts, with the Kremlin at the centre. The oldest part of the city is enclosed by the Garden Ring Road, which varies from 12 to 18 lanes of traffic and is intersected by the giant avenues, constructed under Stalin, that radiate out from the Kremlin.

Broad vistas are great for May Day parades in a communist country that had few automobiles, save for the black ZIL limousines transporting party bigwigs. But then the Soviet Union collapsed, and Moscow went from 60 cars per 1,000 residents in 1991 to 350 in 2000.

Chaos has ensued, exacerbated by Yuri Luzhkov, a kooky mayor who thinks he can solve the problem by eliminating traffic lights. Luzhkov also is opposed to improving Moscow's public transit system - the city's metro has 12 lines, 182 stations and is in desperate need of expansion. The mayor favours the construction of more ring roads and vast boulevards, each of which is choked with traffic the day after they cut the ribbon.

Google "Moscow traffic" for some scary photos. Moscow's traffic jams make the Decarie Expressway at



MIKE BOONE on Russian gridlock

"Moscow's traffic jams make Decarie look like The Boulevard at 4 a.m."

rush hour look like The Boulevard at 4 a.m.

In Moscow, rush-hour traffic can last six hours. Armed motorists shoot at snow-clearing vehicles. Patients die in ambulances that are stuck in traffic.

There is no paid parking. Muscovites park everywhere: crosswalks, sidewalks, public squares.

And with the brutal heat wave Russia is having this summer, the smog in Moscow has become deadly - the equivalent, reports suggest, of a two-pack-a-day cigarette habit.

The situation is not nearly that bad in Montreal. There is a strong impetus toward reducing the use of cars in the city and in enlightened boroughs such as Plateau Mont-Royal, where, on a per-capita basis, there are fewer cars (and possibly more unrepentant Marxists) than in Moscow - steps are being taken to reduce congestion.

A Japanese traffic expert, quoted in the New Yorker piece, cited driver behaviour as an important factor affecting Moscow's hopeless traffic. Russian drivers are "impatient, angry" and eager to "seize whatever inch of road is offered to them."

They manifest this attitude by routinely entering intersections just before the light changes, blocking cars that have green lights and making gridlock worse.

This is the vehicular analog of the boors and imbeciles who rush onto subway cars before passengers can get off. And in my experience, this thoughtlessness is more common on the metro than on Montreal's roads.

But again, it could be worse. Some Montrealers may be too much of a hurry, but we're not Russian.

A not-so-funny thing happened to Homo Sapiens on the way to socialist Utopia.

Maybe he got stuck in traffic.

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# Bus service in thriving Little Burgundy is sketchy

Resident wants stops added to 747 route

Q: I live in Little Burgundy and the Georges Vanier metro station (at the corner of Georges Vanier Blvd. and St. Antoine St.) is the only station in the entire system that isn't served by a bus. I see the 747 express bus drive by Georges Vanier every 11 minutes or so on its way to and from the airport - without stopping. The STM's promotional page for the 747 advertises "nine stops in each direction," yet despite the bus driving straight through Little Burgundy, there are no stops between the corner of Guy St. and René Lévesque Blvd. and the Lionel Groulx metro station. The residents of Little Burgundy could use an airport bus just like everybody else. The 747 also would permit us - provided we are monthly passholders - to get to and from downtown, facilitating connection with the green line when we live along the orange line. Why has my neighbourhood been overlooked for bus service - again? - Genevieve D. Markle

A: George Vanier station is, indeed, the only station in the 60-station network without a single connection to a bus route, acknowledged Société de transport de Montréal spokesperson Isabelle Tremblay. "In fact, when I look at my map of bus routes, there's not much bus service at all right in that neighbourhood," she said. "It's unusual."

The 747 is not meant to be a local bus route, she added. It's an express service linking downtown, where many hotels are located, and the airport. But the sight of it zooming by Georges Vanier station does remind residents that the station and the neighbourhood don't have a lot of bus service.

The STM may have overlooked

the neighbourhood because there has been a lot of recent residential development there, and STM planners may not have got around to adjusting for that increase in population yet, she explained. The agency does regularly adjust bus routes, she said, but a request for adding a new route usually comes from borough officials.

Markle said simple reroutings of two existing routes, the 57 Point St. Charles and the 36 Monk, might do the trick. Those routes now skirt the perimeter of Little Burgundy, she noted.

Normand Parisien, executive director of the Transport 2000 Quebec transit users advocacy group, said the process of getting bus routes adjusted starts at the borough level. He did it for one route in his neighbourhood with the help of his borough councillor. The process can take six months, but it can pay off, he said.

Benoit Dorais, mayor of South-west borough, where Georges Vanier is located, is a member of a key city council commission on transport, infrastructure and the environment and would likely be an ally, he said (Dorais was on vacation last week). A good addition to Little Burgundy might be some shuttle buses, he said. They could provide local service between metro stations and elsewhere.

Where does one reload an Opus card at the airport? Q: I would like to know if there are any Opus reloading machines at Trudeau airport in Dorval. When I return from my vacation, I would put a weekly or monthly fare on my Opus card and then take the 747 bus into town. I would prefer not to pay \$7 if I am already going to buy a weekly or monthly pass, which would provide me the ride (at no extra cost). - Christina

A: Two bus ticket vending machines were installed at Trudeau airport on June 10, the STM said in

a statement. They only sell the \$7 tickets for the 747 bus and the three-day passes, for \$14. Those machines are helpful, as coin collectors on STM buses don't accept dollar bills or provide any change.

For Opus card users, there is one currency exchange store, called ICE (for International Currency Exchange) that sells fares to load onto the cards. It is in the international arrivals area and is open from 7:30 a.m. until 1 a.m. There are several ICE currency stores in the airport, but that outlet is the only one selling Opus fares. Outside of that outlet's hours, your only option is cash for the 747 bus or the 747 ticket machines.

Machines selling 747 tickets are being installed this summer at the main downtown bus terminal, at Berri UQAM metro station, and two of the nine stops on the 747 bus route.

The 747 bus ticket also gives the user access to the STM bus and metro network for 24 hours.

ANSWERS COMPILED BY  
MAX HARROLD OF THE GAZETTE

**LOTTO 6/49** Draw results: 2010-08-01

03	08	10	14	15
16	25	28	33	38
42	48	49	59	69
32	61	64	67	70

Day: 19 Month: MARS Year: 99 BALANCE: 7584118

**LOTTO 6/49** Draw results: 2010-07-31

01	35	38	29	04	09	12	33
40	47	48	49	34	38	49	49

Weeks: 66 Price: \$3,900,235.50 Wins: 0 \$2,000,000.00  
 66# 2 \$135,722.70 56# 1 \$75,000.00  
 56# 73 \$3,071.70 56# 17 \$750.00  
 46# 4,279 \$89.30 46# 730 \$75.00  
 36# 86,290 \$400.00 36# 12,934 \$10.00  
 26# 61,858 \$5.00 26# 7,862 \$5.00  
 Total sales: \$12,538,254 Total Sales: \$716,861.00  
 Next grand prize (August 1): \$7,000,000

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In the event of discrepancy between this list and the official winning list of Lotto-Québec, the latter shall prevail.

## SQUEAKY WHEELS

### GETTING AROUND THE CITY

SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS

By car, bus, bicycle, train or metro, you've got to get around. If you've got questions about Montreal's roads or public transit, Squeaky Wheels is dedicated to answering them. Go to [montrealgazette.com/squeakywheels](http://montrealgazette.com/squeakywheels) to send your questions. We'll do our best to answer them in this column on Mondays.

**LAST WEEK'S POLL:**  
Have you ridden on an articulated bus yet?  
Yes. The back is cool! **65%**  
Not yet; I would be leery of turning corners: **3%**  
No, but I can't wait: **32%**

**THIS WEEK'S POLL:**  
What is more important to you?  
1) More bus routes  
2) More frequent buses  
3) More modern metro cars  
4) Extending the metro  
5) Adding tramways, trains

To answer, go to [montrealgazette.com/squeakywheels](http://montrealgazette.com/squeakywheels)

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