

# The Outreach Observer

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Montreal, Quebec

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24 Hour Row Raises \$3,595 For The Montreal Generations Foundation



Perspective High Schools raise \$7,573 for Ellie White

## Fight for Ellie

By Arshad Kachchi

Ellie is a 7 year old little girl who is fighting for her life. She is the granddaughter of Barbara White, head teacher at Perspectives I High School. Ellie was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia 2 years ago when she was 5 years old. What is leukemia? Leukemia is a cancer in the blood and bones. This cancer makes Ellie very, very sick.

The entire school community has been raising money for Ellie's treatments. She has had to go through chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant. She is now in Columbus, Ohio for an experimental treatment. To raise money for Ellie's treatment, we have sold ice cream, hoodies and in the month of October, we collected donations for a raffle.

On October 31st, Perspectives I and II gathered together to announce the winners of the raffle prizes. Some of the prizes included Montreal Canadiens tickets, restaurant gift cards, retail store gift cards, beauty treatments and more. Tickets were sold to staff members, students, their families and members of the EMSB community. The raffle event raised a total of \$7,573.15.

Ellie is still fighting leukemia and is now in Columbus, hoping that this experimental treatment will help cure her cancer once and for all. The treatment costs almost one million dollars and we will keep raising money this year to help Ellie. If you want to help Ellie too, please visit her GoFundMe page at: <https://ca.gofundme.com/f/fightforellie>. Ellie, her family, as well as the Perspectives school would like to thank all those that contributed to making our fundraiser a success.



# 24-Hour row raises \$3,595

By Billie White

Jason Gannon, a staff member from Options Alternative High School was the organizer and motivator behind the 24 Hour Row project that began on October 17th, 2019, at 12:30 pm and concluded on October 18th, 2019, at 12:30 pm.

To ensure the success of the project, the staff and students were divided into three teams of eight. The teams started rowing for 22-minutes at a time and then had a

2 and a half-hour break, as their peers took over the machines.

Together the students and the staff went on and never quit, representing the "All Go, No Quit" motto created by Jason Gannon. He chose this motto as he knew this would be a great help in reminding students that they can do whatever they put their minds to, and be successful, by never giving up.

The goal was to raise \$1,000 by October 25th, 2019, but as the week

went on, Options High School raised \$3,595 through direct donations and from their GoFundMe page.

I loved how all of the staff and students came together to make the 24 Hour Row successful. This was a great 24 hour fundraising experience, and I enjoyed seeing how many people were having fun while completing the project.



# My Journey

By Dodridge

A year ago, I was living in Laval and attending Laval Junior Academy. Laval was tough; I failed sec 1 and 2, I had no friends, I had no one to talk to, and because I was being bullied, I began to get in fights with other kids and spiral towards depression. Two years went by so fast and suddenly it was the summer of 2019. The summer of 2019 was a different summer; it was a breakthrough for me and a time to grow up. Three sessions

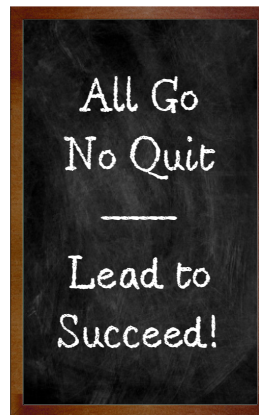
of camp were over in a heartbeat. My mindset was like, "I'm in sec 3 and going to Laval Senior Academy". A couple weeks later, I find out that I'm not going back to Laval.

At the end of a summer where I felt I had grown so much, a bomb was dropped on me. I was told that I would be staying in Montreal and attending a brand new school. At first, I was told I would be attending Lauren Hill Academy and I felt like the rug had been pulled from underneath me. I didn't want to change schools and was nervous about the changes. But then, on the 23rd of August, I switched group homes and was informed that I wouldn't be going to Lauren Hill, but rather another school. I was happy I moved group homes, but I was really nervous about my new neighbourhood in NDG, a place I hadn't been to in years. The head staff

at my group home told me that Westmount High might be a good fit. After thinking it over, I thought an alternative school would be the best thing for my future.

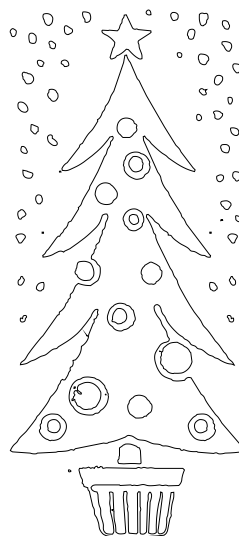
September rolled around and I had many meetings regarding my schooling. At first, everyone thought Mountainview would be a good fit. The head staff then told me about this school called Focus that was right down the street from my home and geared more towards my needs.

When I first got to Focus, I was really nervous. I have a stutter and was worried about what people would think of me. I would think to myself, "what if people ask me my name or start asking questions?" Overall, I was worried about all the changes coming my way. On the first day of school, I was actually fine! Everyone was really cool, outgoing, and had great energy. I saw that the



school was really made for kids like myself who sometimes struggle with behavioural issues and academics.

Focus is a great school and I have a great teacher. The staff is very helpful and understanding of what kids are going through. I'm excited for the rest of the year and all of the opportunities to come during my time at Focus.



Mountainview hockey practice.

## Mountainview hockey program

By Kody Grenier Atkinson

Every Thursday from 10:40 to 12:30 we go play hockey. For the first half of the school year we go to Doug Harvey arena in NDG. At the end of the year we go to an excellent ice arena in Kirkland. All players from beginner to intermediate are welcome. We don't just play hockey, you can also just come to skate. The school provides full equipment for boys and girls. People are also invited to bring their own equipment if they have.

This program is beneficial in many ways. It's a great stress relief and helps burn energy. The satisfaction of gliding across the ice and moving at a high speed feels like freedom. You're going faster than any Naruto run. The ability to move with such agility is extremely satisfying.

Even though being on the ice is amazing, stepping off the ice feels just as good because you know that you've accomplished something. Not to mention having a hot or cold shower afterwards is one of the most refreshing parts of the day. There are several former students who return to play as skaters or goalie because of how much they enjoyed it. We have had a hockey program for over 30 years and I'm excited to say I'm a part of it.



# A Day in an Alternative High School

By Destiny Nahwegahbo

There's a pre-conceived notion about Alternative high schools that I hear from my friends and family a lot. I get asked if it's a school for dropouts or if I was doing not so well in a regular school, but the truth about alternative high schools is that we're a small space with big personalities.

Let me walk you through a day at Vezina (Friday addition!)

Fridays are extremely different from our regular weekdays at Vezina; we only have one of five academic classes in the morning, followed by our first choice group (a choice group is an extracurricular activity that the students get to select: music, art, cooking, community service, or photography. We get a break for 20 minutes where we can talk to our friends and go out for air. After our break we have our second choice groups which students have also chosen out of the list above. Each choice group lasts for 50 minutes. At 12 pm we welcome Vezina's community building animator, Myron, who comes in with a very bubbly attitude to inspire and uplift students and push them to do the best

they can in spite of their situations. Myron shares stories and does art projects with students for the remainder of the day before our early 1 pm dismissal.

Teacher and student opinions on our Fridays at Vezina:

Penny (Head Teacher): "Fridays are organized chaos! I love it- seeing students grow and trying new things while learning outside the classroom is great!"

Lori (Special Education Technician): "Fridays are fun days! We do a variety of activities that help form bonds between staff and students. We get to know students on an individual level whilst teaching them in a hands on manner."

Maverick (Student): "I think Fridays are fun! Less work and I'm happy for the half days"

Andrew (Student): "Very abstract, interesting."

Jayden (Student): "Interesting and surprisingly fun."

# My Life in an Alternative School

By Chaim Maizenberg

Life is not that easy when you are in an alternative school, but after a while you kind of get used to it. If you're lucky, you will actually like it. What I want to talk to you about today is about my life as a student and the changes that I made when I moved to Vezina Alternative High school.

Three years ago when I left my old private school and came to a public alternative high school, I didn't really like it. I came from a respectful and a proper environment, and when I left that and got to a not so proper environment, it changed me. It changed who I was, it changed my mind! At first, I didn't like it, I always said that I wanted to go back to my old school, but I knew that the past was in the past and I just had to make the best out of it. So, that's exactly what I did. I started studying this new environment, and to be honest, it was hard; in fact so hard, that I was actually faking being sick.

After a difficult year, I started getting used to it, and after that year, I even started to like it. The positives about Vezina High School are as follows:

There is a lot of help from teachers and staff, there is a small amount of students, we all receive the attention needed to succeed, we have a great cafeteria and music program, and the Monday YMCA program is extremely fun.



Summary: Me being in an alternative high school really changed who I am, and I am happy to say that I really enjoy it!

Riddle: What goes up but never comes down? Find out in my next time article.



## Bill 21 is widely hated amongst the youth of Quebec, but are we in fact heading in the right direction?

By Kaesy Duncan

ON June 16th 2019, Bill 21 went into affect and an outcry came to be. I'd never really thought about it until recently because it doesn't affect me. This Bill prohibits religious symbols in the public sector, so anyone working for the government. Finding out launched me into thinking about all the people I'd ever seen wearing religious symbols and their newfound pain. I was not born into a religious family, but I could imagine losing the things that make me who I am. As I started listening and searching for arguments both for and against, I learned something; the arguments of those being attacked started to sound reasonable.

Now before you get your pitchforks and torches out, let me justify why I've said this. The reason that some of the 70% of Quebecers who support this Bill is because they believe it will stop the forcing of religion upon others. They believe that this so called "forcefulness" can be fixed with rules and the removal of possibilities. The truth is that yes making us all equal with no pain and suffering; prejudice, is the ultimate goal. Though, should we enforce a law that breaks the Fundamental Freedoms

part of The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

"The Fundamental freedoms are: freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of thought, freedom of belief, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association." This is what it says in Section 2 of The Canadian Charter. Bill 21 goes against that right for the so called "greater good". It says that it's a freedom, but they found a way around it to "help us". They are thinking of doing the right thing, but they are going about it the wrong way. What makes us Canada is not just our name/reputation, but it's also the fact that we have a lot more freedom than most other countries. We're supposed to be the country that people take asylum in, we're not supposed to continue the torture that people already lived. Forcing someone to take off their cross, kippah, hijab (etc..) is like telling them not to be themselves. This bill is altering how people were raised to be, the way they are, and criminalizing it. It is taking away their right to show who they are inside. The right to follow their god's beliefs, in the clothing they wear.

Bill 21 punishes the wrong people. Someone expresses themselves, someone else doesn't agree with their choice of expression, and they get punished? After years of dealing with people's constant remarks on what girls can and can't wear in public places, I realized something. Just like the people Bill 21 attacks, the wrong person is getting hurt. As a female, It's my right to wear what I want, religious or not. But the thing is, they regulate what I can wear, prohibiting me from wearing certain types of clothes. Instead of teaching boys that they shouldn't treat women like disrespectfully. In the case of Bill 21, they are teaching the same thing. "You can't be who you are, can't dress the way you want because this set of people are going to attack you." Punishing you for what someone else might do instead of teaching them not to. We let the wrong person get away every time.

"The bill will help to protect the freedom of conscience of at least some users of public services, and especially pupils in public schools, by making sure that they are not subjected to unnecessary displays of religious

publicity." This quote was given by the CAQ for CBC News. In theory it doesn't sound like a terrible idea, they explain it as a protection of our people. Though, the execution of their ideas only furthers the outcasting and racism that many live through everyday. This only proves to the racists and terrible people that they can do whatever they want and get away with it. So although this Bill was made to "help", the enforcement is hurting many.

Peace is what we want and with every new law or rule, we hope to achieve it. But as I sit here writing this I realize that we don't know how to get there yet. Bill 21 goes against freedoms of all those Canadians who were always told they could be themselves. The truth is, although we may think that we're helping everyone by forcing people to hide what they believe in, that is no better than a school that treats a girl like a monster just because she wore shorts or a tank-top.



## Santa's Visit

By Savannah Riddell

Little 7-year-old Arie was pretending to be fast asleep while her parents said their goodnights on Christmas Eve. Once they left, Arie hopped out of bed to go wait for Santa. She took her stuffed animals Zim and Zie, so she wouldn't be alone.

Arie opened the door quietly, but it made little creaks until it was fully open. She stuck her head out to see if her parents were asleep. They were in bed, so she stepped out with Zim and Zie, tip toeing to the staircase. When she got to the bottom of the stairs, there were no presents yet, so she knew that Santa had not come by.

When she saw that her parents forgot to put out cookies and milk, she made her way to the kitchen taking out a small plate and a glass cup. She sat Zim and Zie on a nearby chair. As they watched her open the fridge, Arie took out the milk and brought it to the counter. Arie noticed that she was a little too short so she brought another chair to climb on. She hopped up and stood on her feet. Arie opened the milk and lifted it, putting it over the glass, but spilling it a little bit. She filled the cup half way, putting the milk back on the counter and closing it. She hopped off the chair opening the fridge once more. She pulled out a few chocolate chip cookies for Santa and some baby carrots for his reindeer. She picked the cup up off of the counter and brought it to where her Christmas tree was all decorated and lit up, with a golden star on the top. She put it on the little table where her parents put their coffee in the morning every Christmas. She went back to the kitchen taking the plate of cookies and carrots and put them next to the cup of milk, then ran back taking Zim and Zie.

Little Arie sat on the couch watching Peppa Pig and waiting for Santa to come. Arie's eyes felt heavy, so she laid her head down on the couch, but didn't realize she had fallen asleep.

While she was asleep, a big man in red, white and black came through the chimney. He saw little Arie fast asleep, and he smiled, taking out a small little present and putting it right beside her. He drank the milk and ate the cookies. As he put the rest of the presents under the tree, he stuffed the carrots in his sack. With a snap of his fingers, he cleaned up the little mess that Arie had made, then he climbed up the chimney and hopped in his sleigh.

The next morning, Arie woke up very early to dozens of presents under the tree. She looked at the cup and plate she had left for Santa and saw that they had been cleaned up. Her dad walked into the living room and smiled at her. Arie was disappointed she couldn't stay up, but when she looked beside her she saw a tiny present. She ripped the paper and undid the bow, opening the box to reveal an orange ornament, with Santa on the front. She knew he had come.

She opened her other presents, she had gotten exactly what she asked for, a new bike so her dad could teach her to ride and a sled to go sledding with her parents.

Later that day they were all getting ready for their Christmas party. Arie was wearing a black and red dress with white tights and little black shoes that had a small heel, and a small bow at the front that was pink. She was also wearing a white sweater. It was shiny and silver on the outside, and on the inside it was cozy and white. Her hair was in a small bun just on top of her head, with an orange scrunchy holding it up.

She said "Hi" to her family and played with her cousins. They had a big supper and lots of desert. At around 10:00 pm Arie's family started saying goodbye. Arie yawned multiple times, she looked at her mom and said, "Mom, can we have Christmas again?" her mom laughed and brought her to bed. She turned to look at her new ornament one last time, and caught Santa sending a wink.

## Get the energy you need this holiday season with Raw Date Energy Balls!

By Elizabeth High School Students & Staff

**W**e make these sweet snacks as an alternative to packaged snacks that usually contain loads of refined sugar. They are full of fibre, natural sugars and healthy fats and will give you a boost when you need some fuel, whatever you may be doing this holiday season.

Why raw?

These energy balls are raw, meaning simply that you don't need an oven to make them. Keeping them raw also keeps all of the vitamins and nutrients in the ingredients intact. Your body will benefit from all of the good stuff found in dates, coconut and walnuts: fibre, potassium, vitamin B-6, omega 3 fatty acids and manganese.

What follows is the process for making these nutritional superstars in 4 easy steps.

This recipe will make approximately 14 energy balls.

Equipment: a blender, a fridge, a large bowl & a spatula

### Ingredients:



- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 cup dates (with the pits taken out)
- 2 tablespoons cacao powder
- ½ cup unsweetened shredded coconut

### Step 1:



Put the walnuts in a blender or food processor and blend until they have a crumbly texture, but not so much as to make them turn into a paste.

### Step 2:

Add the dates and cacao powder and blend until all the ingredients have been incorporated well. If the mixture is too dry, try adding a tablespoon of water, one at a time, until the mixture is easier to blend (don't put too much or it will be too liquid).

### Step 3:



Make the mixture into small balls with your hands.

### Step 4:



Put the shredded coconut into a bowl and toss each of the energy balls in and coat them with the coconut.

# Crossword Puzzle

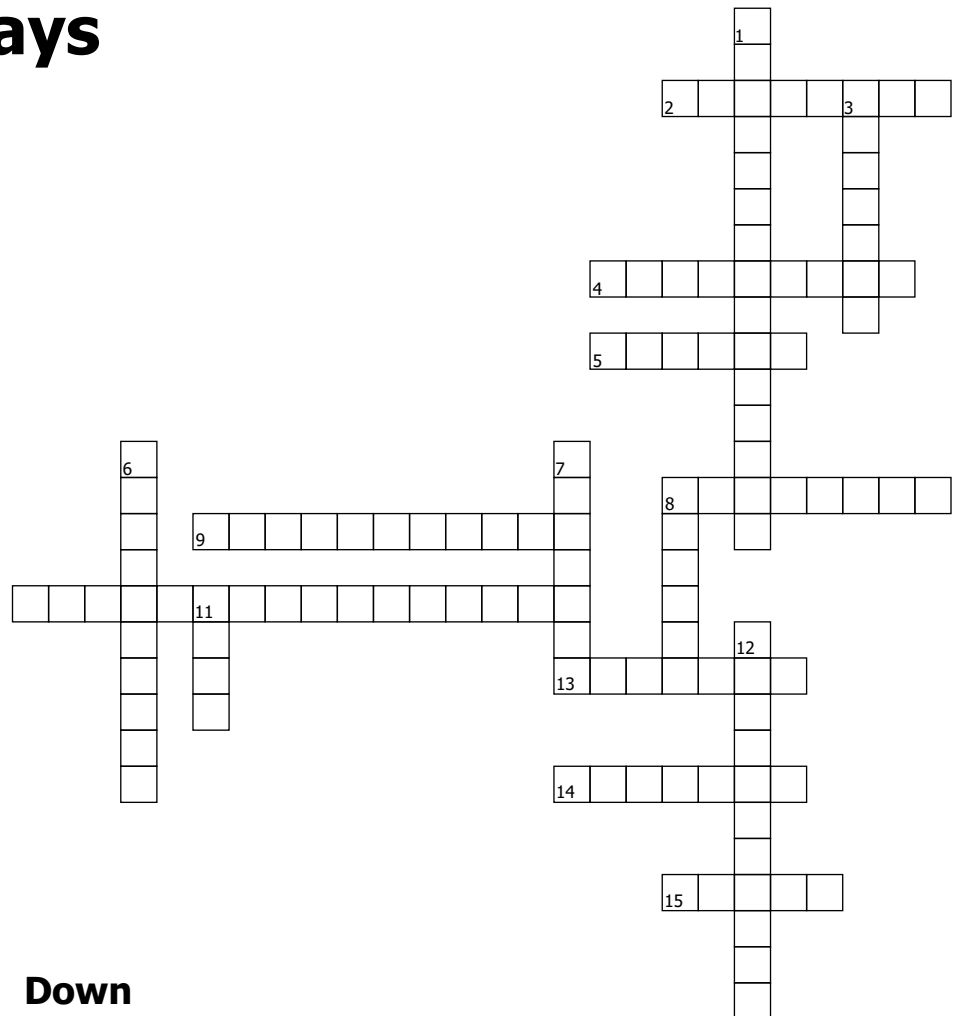
December 2019



## The Holidays

### Across

2. A Jewish holiday that is celebrated for eight days and nights
4. The holiday that is celebrated on December 25th
5. A group of people many of us spend the holidays with
8. Nearly all of these holidays take place in the month of...
9. A joyful event, often involving special decorations and food
10. This holiday is celebrated for 15 days, beginning on the first day of the lunar new year
13. A break from day-to-day life, often for religious reasons
14. The name of a reindeer famous for his red nose
15. A huge meal shared with many people



### Down

1. A Pagan winter holiday that falls on December 21st
3. A 7-day holiday that celebrates African heritage
6. Name of the day after December 25th
7. A nine branched candelabrum lit during the eight-day holiday
8. A 5-day long Hindu holiday celebrating life and the victory of good over evil
11. In cold weather, this white stuff falling from the sky
12. A holiday celebrated from December 16th through the 24th by some Hispanic families in the US



