

# THE CORONA CHRONICLES

## TIPS AND GIGGLES

AUGUST, 2020

Social distancing does not mean social isolation. Now, more than ever, we need to find creative ways to stay connected. We hope to put a smile on your face and keep you up to date on what's happening at Villa Beaurepaire.



**We encourage you to go outside and enjoy some fresh air.**

Wear a mask and keep 2 metres away from others.

Visitors inside the building are still prohibited, but you may visit outside at a distance.



## Happy Birthday!



to Beverley - August 6th

to Marcia - August 16th

to Monika - August 21st

and to Olive- August 26th

One minute you're young and fun. And the next, you're turning down the stereo in your car to see better.

## MARY'S SALON PRICE LIST:

Shampoo	3.00
Women's cut	30.00
Men's cut	25.00
Cut/Blowdry	50.00
Colour	50.00
Perm	100.00
Streaks (full)	110.00
Streaks (half)	65.00
Streaks/paper	5.00
Blowdry/set short	30.00
Blowdry/set long	40.00

Open once per week as of August 12



We would like to give a warm welcome to our **new tenant Gloria Morgan**, who just moved in last month from Pointe-Claire.

## NOTICES

.....  
**Grocery service will continue**, however you are permitted to go and do your own shopping.

.....  
**Alex** will be on vacation for the first two weeks of August, and **Margo** will be away until the second week of August.

.....  
Please use the cleaner left outside to **wipe the chairs in the North Courtyard** before and after you use them. Please wear a mask when with other people outside.

.....  
**Mary's Salon** will be open for business as of August 12th. Please book through the office for an appointment with Celine.

**Beau Market**  
Fridays 3-6PM,  
in front of La Palette



**Dining room service**  
Monday -Thursday  
11:30am OR 12:30pm  
Friday  
9:00am OR 10:00am

# August

Did you know?

August was named in honor of Augustus Caesar. It has 31 days because Augustus wanted just as many days as Julius Caesar's month of July. Previously named Sextilis in Latin, August was the sixth month of the Roman calendar. The extra day was taken from February.

## August's Birthstone PERIDOT



"Summer declines and roses have grown rare, But cottage crofts are gay with hollyhocks, And in old garden walks you breathe an air Fragrant of pinks and August-smelling stocks."

JOHN TODHUNTER (1839-1916)

## August Flower: Glaiolus



Susan Polis Schutz

## One World, One Heart

Submission by Beverly Maisonneuve

### We Must Learn to Understand One Another

**C**onflicts always occur  
It is in the resolution of conflicts  
that human beings stand out  
Every conflict can and should be calmed  
by talking about and understanding  
one another's needs  
and by acting with compassion  
to solve the differences  
This is how all people should get along  
This is how we must get along



All Mothers Are Sisters,  
All Fathers Are Brothers  
and All Children Are One

**W**hen you interact with children  
you must always keep in mind  
that everything you do and say  
has an enormous impact on their lives  
If you treat children  
with love and respect  
it will be easier for them  
to love and respect themselves and others  
If you treat children  
with freedom and honesty  
it will be easier for them  
to develop confidence in their  
abilities to make decisions  
If you treat children  
with intelligence and sensitivity  
it will be easier for them  
to understand the world  
If you treat children  
with happiness, kindness and gentleness  
it will be easier for them  
to develop into adults capable  
of enjoying all the beautiful things  
in life

## Super Easy Lemon Bars

YIELD: 36 COOKIE BARS



### Instructions

To make the pastry base  
Using a pastry cutter or in a food processor blend together the butter sugar and flour.  
Press evenly into the bottom of a greased and parchment paper lined 9x13 inch baking pan.  
Bake for 20 to minutes at 350 degrees F ( 325 degrees F if you are using glass bake-ware)  
The bottom should just be beginning to brown slightly at the top edges.

### For the lemon topping

Simply whisk together the sugar flour, eggs, zest and lemon juice until the sugar is dissolved.  
Allow the topping to sit for about 10 minutes before whisking together well again and pouring over the baked shortbread base.

Bake at 350 degrees F for about another 20- 25 minutes or until the top is slightly browned and the custard appears to be set. Cool completely.  
Sprinkle with icing sugar when cool or try adding a meringue topping.

### Ingredients

For the pastry base

- 1 cup cold butter, cut in small pieces
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 cups flour

### For the lemon layer

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup flour
- 4 eggs
- zest of two lemons, very finely chopped
- juice of 2 lemons, about 2/3 to 3/4 cup juice



## BBQ

Outdoor BBQ hosted by  
Laura, Alex and Andre  
with help from Kate



## Villa Activities

A RECAP OF JULY

## Jewelry Making with Alex

Some of the beautiful pieces  
created by our residents.



# The Simpsons

The house at 45 Russell Hill Road, just south of St. Clair Avenue, is tucked behind a short stone wall and a copse of birches. Built in 1910, the brick mansion backs onto a sloping garden, and a few years ago, it sold for at \$3.6 million, a typical price for a home on one of the wealthiest blocks in the country.

In the 1970s and '80s, the house was filled with dozens of children, from tiny preschoolers to gangly teenagers. The woman in charge was **Sandra Simpson, a tall blonde Anglophone from Montreal's West Island**. Along with her husband, Lloyd—a dependable presence who supported his wife over the course of their marriage—**Sandra spent decades adopting children from around the world** (Vietnam, India, South Korea, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ecuador & Canada). With bottomless energy and sheer tenacity, she carved out avenues for international adoption that had never existed before. **The Simpsons were likely Canada's largest family**, though kids came and went with such frequency that no one could pin down their exact numbers. Were there 28 kids? Thirty-two? It was impossible for anyone to say with any certainty.

Talk to the Simpsons today and they'll say they were just like any other family. Over the course of 20 years in the big house on Russell Hill Road, they played on soccer teams and got into fistfights, snuck around with boyfriends and delivered newspapers. They experienced joy as well as tragedy—troubles with the law, illness and disability.

Now, 40 years later, the Simpson kids have grown into chefs, business owners, athletes, hospitality workers and parents with kids of their own. And they've had time to reflect on the singularity of their childhood and of their mother's vision, and on the peculiar moment in time that allowed their family to flourish. Sandra pushed the limits of adoption so far that her motivations still seem alien, even to her own children. "To tell you the truth, she's not normal," her daughter Kathryn told me. "I don't think anyone could really explain her." She had a unique brand of stubborn, no-nonsense altruism that persevered in the face of bigoted NIMBYism. What happened on Russell Hill Road is not just the story of an extraordinary woman, but of a radical experiment in child rearing. Sandra Simpson didn't keep the suffering of the world at a distance. She invited it into her home and made it family.

Sandra was born in 1937 in Barranquilla, Colombia, where her father worked installing telephone lines. A few years later, the family moved back to their hometown of Pointe-Claire, raising five children in unremarkable comfort. Sandra married a military man after high school, and the couple had a daughter, Kimberley. That marriage ended, and in 1967, Sandra remarried, this time to Lloyd Simpson, who came from the same tight-knit West Island community. He was kind and easygoing, with a solid middle-class job as a construction estimator.

Sandra had always wanted to adopt, and with Lloyd she found a willing partner. Shortly after they were married, the couple adopted four kids who had been through Canadian foster homes—Michael, David, Samantha and John. David was Black and Samantha was mixed-race, and the adoptions raised eyebrows among Sandra's neighbours in Pointe-Claire. "They weren't too crazy about the Black kids," Sandra says bluntly. "But I didn't really care what people thought." In the midst of this flurry of adoptions, Sandra gave birth to a daughter, Melanie.

As the Vietnam War entered its second decade, Canadian newspapers were filled with heart-wrenching descriptions of the orphans left behind. But Canada's immigration laws made adopting a child from overseas nearly impossible. To Sandra, that was unconscionable. She wrote to every official she could think of, asking them how she could adopt a Vietnamese child. When that didn't work, she connected with an Australian nurse in Vietnam named Rosemary Taylor, a kindred spirit who had spent years battering the Vietnamese bureaucracy with pleas to allow orphans to be sent abroad. Through Taylor, Sandra finally arranged to adopt an infant girl. On Christmas Eve in 1969, eight-month-old Mai arrived in Montreal, one of the first Vietnamese orphans allowed into Canada.

The methods Sandra used to adopt Mai—refusing to take no for an answer, badgering functionaries in high places, invoking her authority as a mother—came to be her *modus operandi*. She was fearless and meddlesome, scornful of authorities who dragged their feet when children's lives were on the line. Along with two other Montreal mothers, she formed an organization, Families For Children, or FFC, to help prospective parents navigate foreign bureaucracies. As the Khmer Rouge advanced in Cambodia, FFC took over part of the crumbling government's child welfare program. When war began in Bangladesh, Sandra travelled to Dhaka to help arrange adoptions for orphaned children.



**PHOTO:** Sandra & Lloyd with their ever-expanding family - circa 1977

More adopted children arrived quickly after Mai. As the Vietnam War spilled into Cambodia, Sandra and Lloyd adopted Damienne, an 18-month-old girl who had survived tuberculosis. Phillippe was a mixed-race kid from Quebec who came through the foster system. And Kesooni from South Korea arrived in the winter of 1971, during Montreal's worst snowstorm in a century.

Between adoptions, Lloyd and Sandra had two more biological children, Nicholas and Kathryn. Even as their home grew crowded, the same moral conundrum kept presenting itself: kids needed homes. Another mouth to feed would hardly bankrupt them; Sandra could always make a larger pot of pasta, cram another kid into the house, get more wear out of the hand-me-down clothes. For the child, it could mean life or death. And so the family kept growing. With so many kids coming through the house, Lloyd would bide his time before introducing himself to a new face at the dinner table. If the kid was still there a few days later, it meant he probably had a new child.

By the mid-'70s, more than 20 Simpson kids were cramped in the Pointe-Claire house, and it was clear to Sandra that something needed to change. The election of the Parti Québécois had created an anxious atmosphere for Anglophones like the Simpsons. Lloyd's work depended on new buildings, and construction was dwindling. Most of all, Sandra was worried about what would happen to the kids. New language laws meant that many Simpson children, some of whom had learning disabilities or were just learning English, would be forced to attend French schools across the city. That's when the Gundy family stepped in.

Charles Gundy and his wife, Antoinette, were Toronto aristocracy, friends of finance ministers and a governor general. Charles was the chairman of Wood Gundy, the investment bank co-founded by his father, James H. Gundy, in 1905. It was Canada's largest brokerage and securities firm. The Gundys lived in a massive home on Russell Hill Road and owned several other properties on the same block. In 1978, one of Gundy's homes—a 22-room brick mansion at 45 Russell Hill Road—was sitting empty. When Charles learned of the Simpsons' predicament, he made an extraordinary offer: move into the empty house, stay as long as you want. Sandra didn't care for Toronto, but she was nothing if not pragmatic. And so, that autumn, they moved in.

The locals were alarmed by the Simpsons' arrival. "The neighbourhood hated us," says Kesooni. Their local school, Brown, had only ever had a handful of students who weren't White, and now suddenly there were whole classrooms filled with Simpson kids from every continent on earth. At one point, neighbours called the local city councillor to complain that the Simpsons were running some kind of illegal group home. Melanie remembers a flaming bag of dog poop left on their stoop. "They were horrible racists," says Sandra.

Because much of her work with FFC took place in Asia, Sandra usually woke at 3:30 a.m. By then, her fax machine would have been buzzing for hours with business from the orphanages, and she spent the hours before sunrise hammering out responses on her electric typewriter. A few hours later, the kids would get up. Each child was assigned to either the dinner crew or the breakfast crew. In the mornings, the breakfast kids would get into the kitchen and begin cooking—pancakes on the enormous griddle served with "maple syrup" (made by boiling down water and brown sugar), or the family's signature scrambled egg on toast.

Throughout it all, Sandra remained at the centre of everything. But in the mid-'90s, her voice began to waver. After a few months, she finally went to the doctor, who took one look at her and told her right there in the room that it was throat cancer. In 1998, they removed her larynx, and Sandra never spoke above the faintest whisper again. That summer, the family drove down to Pointe-Claire like they did every year. But when the kids returned to their lives in Toronto, Sandra and Lloyd stayed behind. Toronto had never felt like home. The rich families of Forest Hill weren't their people. The noise, the endless hustle—they had endured that for the children, but they'd never been comfortable. The remaining kids, most in their early 20s, moved back to Toronto. There were only eight or so left, and the house seemed too large. A few years later, when Antoinette Gundy died, her family decided to sell it.

In early May, as the pandemic entered its third month, I texted Sandra to see how she was doing. "Fine!" she answered, characteristically curt. Since lockdown began, she'd been on her own in the Pointe-Claire house she's always considered home. Lloyd died of lung cancer in 2017, and her trips back to Toronto had become even less frequent.

At 83, Sandra is still the head of FFC and still wakes up well before sunrise to correspond with the orphanages in India and Bangladesh, using her iPad to send countless messages to the staff there, who call her "Mummy" and relay what the children ate last night, what cash donations have come in and how they're being spent. She drinks her hot cocoa. She defrosts the meals her kids bring her when they visit. She doesn't venture out. Neighbours sometimes bring over groceries, but she keeps her distance. After decades of being at the centre of a maelstrom of kids, she is now living completely alone.

**BY NICHOLAS HUNE-BROWN | JULY 27, 2020** (reduced to fit)

**Full article can be found at :** <https://torontolife.com/city/life/the-forest-hill-couple-who-adopted-30-kids/>

# Word Scramble: Sports Edition

Instructions: Unscramble each word in order to get the correct spelling.



- |               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. LFOG       | 11. HOCEYK        |
| 2. ELKBAATBLS | 12. SCROASEL      |
| 3. OCSERC     | 13. RKTATC        |
| 4. NNTSIE     | 14. LBFSLTOA      |
| 5. BALSABLE   | 15. GWIMNSIM      |
| 6. TEARK      | 16. SROCS UROYCTN |
| 7. GBRYU      | 17. XOINBG        |
| 8. BOTAFOLL   | 18. LQUTLRECBAA   |
| 9. RWATE OOPL | 19. IVGNID        |
| 10. IGSNRWETL | 20. NGNECIF       |

# GAMES!

- 20) fencing
- 19) diving
- 18) racquetball
- 17) boxing
- 16) cross country
- 15) swimming
- 14) softball
- 13) track
- 12) lacrosse
- 11) hockey
- 10) wrestling
- 9) water polo
- 8) football
- 7) rugby
- 6) karate
- 5) baseball
- 4) tennis
- 3) soccer
- 2) basketball
- 1) golf

ANSWERS

## Spot the differences



HINT: There are 8 differences

Answers in next month's newsletter