

# MONTREAL

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## Friends do let friends drive drunk

### DRINKING SURVEY

More work needed, safety group says

AARON DERFEL  
GAZETTE HEALTH REPORTER

A new survey showing most Quebecers don't warn their friends not to drive after several glasses of alcohol shows much more needs to be done to raise awareness about the perils of drinking and driving, says the head of a provincial

task force on road safety.

The survey, commissioned by the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec, found only 25 per cent of those who had consumed more than five glasses of alcohol on one occasion had been told by friends not to drive.

Yet of those who had been warned by friends, 94 per cent did take the advice and did not drive, according to the Léger Marketing poll conducted last July.

The survey also found one out of 10 respondents admitted to drinking at least two glasses of alcohol within an hour of driving. Depending

on the weight of the person, after two drinks alcohol can begin to alter one's judgment and coordination.

"In Quebec, we've done a lot of publicity emphasizing the point that driving a car is an individual responsibility," said Jean-Marie De Koninck, president of the Table québécoise de la sécurité routière.

"But in terms of impaired driving, it is a collective responsibility."

In Quebec, about 200 people die each year as a result of impaired driving. That's down from 350 deaths a decade ago.

"The more drinks you have, the more risks you take and

the more confident you become, and as soon as you get behind the wheel, you take chances that you wouldn't have taken otherwise," De Koninck said.

Three or four drinks in an hour can be enough to raise one's blood-alcohol level above the driving limit of 80 milligrams per 100 millilitres of blood. More commonly, the limit is known as .08 per cent.

Again, depending on the weight of the individual, about 15 mg of alcohol per 100 ml is cleared from one's body per hour after one stops drinking. By that measure, one should drive only five

hours after drinking four or five glasses of alcohol.

And Quebec might soon give police the power to suspend a motorist's license for 24 hours if caught driving with a blood-alcohol level of .05 per cent.

De Koninck did see some positive results in the survey, however.

"Twenty years ago, nobody would have dared tell someone not to drive. So the fact the 25 per cent of people were told is a little gain. That's really encouraging."

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## Freezing rain to fall for bargain shoppers

'If you need to go out, go early'

JASON MAGDER  
THE GAZETTE

On this Boxing Day, prices may not be the only things falling – pedestrians also could go tumbling as freezing rain hits the region.

Environment Canada issued a warning for the Montreal region, as we're expected to receive between two and seven millimetres of either freezing rain or ice pellets starting about the same time stores open today.

"Anything more than two millimetres is enough to have complications on the road," said Jean Brassard, an Environment Canada meteorologist. "If you need to go out on the roads, you should go early."

The system is part of a major storm that passed through the western U.S. from Texas, right up to the Canadian border over the last two days. Some areas received as much as 60 centimetres of snow, and the storm is being blamed for at least 23 deaths in the U.S. Areas of southern Manitoba were expected to be hit with 25 centimetres of snow between yesterday and today.

Montreal's weather will be less extreme. Brassard said although there had been snow in the forecast, it will be warmer than expected. Instead, most of western Quebec will get wet and slippery conditions. Freezing rain is forecast from the U.S. border all the way north to Abitibi.

For those driving to or from Toronto or Ottawa, it will be slippery in much of eastern Ontario, with freezing rain forecast from the Quebec border all the way west to Belleville, including Ottawa and Kingston.

Freezing rain in Montreal and the Eastern Townships will change to straight rain tonight as the mercury climbs. In Montreal, the high tomorrow will be 5C.

Skiers take heart: there will be some snow in the Laurentians, but only after a day's worth of freezing rain. About 10 centimetres of snow are expected up north tonight. And if you don't mind travelling, Saguenay, Quebec City and areas farther east are expecting between 15 and 25 centimetres of snow tomorrow.

Montreal will get a dusting of snow on Monday and then plunge into a deep freeze. It will be minus 10C Monday night. The highs for Tuesday and Wednesday are predicted to reach only minus 12C, according to the Weather Network.

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### In the NEWS

#### SHIA MUSLIMS MARCH TO MARK DAY OF ASHURA

About 75 Shia Muslims marched behind a white flag in mid-town yesterday to mark the day of Ashura, which this year is celebrated twice according to the standard Gregorian calendar. The first was last January and the second starts tonight. Ashura marks the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, who was killed together with his companions and family members in Karbala, 100 kilometres southwest of Baghdad, in AD 680. One placard in the march read: "Every day is Ashura. Every place is Karbala." Young men distributed bottled water at the corner of Peel and Ste. Catherine Sts. in memory of Imam Hussain, "who was deprived of water for three days before being brutally and viciously murdered." The message for humanity is peace, justice and human rights for all, the label said.

#### 'TIDAL WAVE OF GENEROSITY' HITS SUN YOUTH

Sun Youth co-founder and executive director Sid Stevens said his organization received a "tidal wave of generosity not seen since the Ice Storm of 1998." In the last seven hours of its annual Christmas donation campaign, Sun Youth received donations from 125 companies, and many individuals to allow the organization to deliver 5,700 baskets to families in need between Dec. 18 and 24. Stevens said that's 700 more families than last year. He blamed the ailing economy for the increased demand, but said Montrealers stepped up and showed tremendous generosity during this difficult time.

### BOOZE-FREE LOUNGE means a night out includes 'real conversations'

## Fun without bar buzz

JEAN-SÉBASTIEN MARIER  
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Jean-Claude Télémaque may have kicked the bottle 20 years ago, but it did not prevent him from becoming a club owner.

But Lounge L'Anonyme is slightly different from other bars – it is alcohol-free.

"I really want people who quit drinking," Télémaque said of his target clientele.

The 50-year-old DJ opened his 5,000-square-foot lounge in May 2006.

"It's not the first (alcohol-free club) in Montreal," Télémaque said. "I worked in one in the 1990s." The location closed about 14 years ago.

The concept is not unique to Montreal, either. Alcohol-free bars exist elsewhere in Canada and abroad. An Islamic pub for those who abstain for religious reasons opened in England last year.

Each Saturday, between 150 to 200 clubbers mingle at Lounge L'Anonyme to follow the rhythm of the night, relax in the comfy couches or challenge one another at one of the three pool tables.

But the lack of alcohol does not mean clients drink only soft drinks and water.

The lounge offers a selection of mocktails and energy drinks, explained bartender Kathy McNicoll.

"We have the virgin Caesars, which everyone knows, just without vodka. I can do juice blends."

McNicoll quit drinking cold turkey a year ago. The 25-year-old said her part-time job at L'Anonyme "is not work, it's fun."

Fun without the pressure to drink is what brings many clients here.

Daniel Paquette has been sober for three years. "I don't drink. So I can play pool and dance," he said, adding he likes to attend L'Anonyme



L'Anonyme owner Jean-Claude Télémaque says his lounge allows customers to follow the rhythm of the night or play pool in an alcohol-free and safer environment.

once a while as a way to recover.

Kitty Harris, director of the Centre for the Study of Addiction and Recovery at Texas Tech University, agrees.

"People will say, you know, 'why don't we go have a drink' or 'why don't we go meet at the bar after work,' or what ever. And one of the things that happens in recovery is that you lose that opportunity oftentimes to socialize if you're choosing not to frequent places that serve alcohol," Harris said.

"(A place like L'Anonyme) is a great way to access socialization."

An alcohol-free bar also means a safer environment, said Martin Vallé, Télémaque's business partner of three years. It eliminates many behavioural risks nor-

mally caused by alcohol consumption, he explained.

Vallé observed "there are more and more people who don't want to drink" when going out.

But the lack of alcohol does not mean that partygoers are shy, McNicoll said.

*"No one vomits in the ground in the corner."*

BARTENDER KATHY MCNICOLL

"On the contrary. No one vomits on the ground in the corner. The women or people that you meet, it's not illusory. They are real conversations."

However, serving only non-alcoholic drinks deprives owners from a major

source of revenue. Other alcohol-free lounges have closed for this reason.

To address this, Télémaque found alternative uses for his space.

"The original idea wasn't that, but for it to be financially sustainable, I had to do that," he said.

A salsa group uses the venue several nights a week and hockey games are shown on the bar's large screen. Private groups also can rent the dance floor on Fridays.

Lounge L'Anonyme is hosting a party New Year's Eve.

Of course, no alcohol will be served. But as McNicoll puts it, there will be a lot of fun on the menu.

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## Many businesses, government offices taking long holiday break

Because Boxing Day falls on a Saturday this year, many businesses and government offices will be shut tomorrow – Christmas Day – and on Monday.

Here is a partial list of what's open and what's closed for the holidays:

- Banks are shut tomorrow and Monday.
- Federal government offices, including unemployment centres, are closed tomorrow and Monday.
- Provincial government offices, including immigration centres, are shut tomorrow and Monday.
- Access Montreal offices and many borough and city halls will be closed throughout the holiday

week, with varying schedules. Many city services will operate, however, but on different schedules. For schedules of services by borough, call 311 or log onto www.ville.montreal.qc.ca.

The 311 service remains in operation.

■ Garbage, curbside recycling and large-item pickups vary by boroughs; call 311 or go to www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/info-collectes. Many boroughs are changing permanent pickup schedules this week and next.

■ Ecocentres are shut today until Monday and from Dec. 31 to Jan. 4.

■ Most retail stores will be open on Saturday.

■ Société des alcools du Québec

stores are closed tomorrow, but open on Saturday at 1 p.m.

■ Montreal Municipal Court, 775 Gosford St., is open Tuesday and Wednesday, then is closed through to Jan. 5. Counter service will be offered Tuesday and Wednesday at 1433 Van Horne Ave. in Outremont, 500 St. Jean Baptiste Blvd. in Pointe aux Trembles, 401 St. John's Blvd. in Pointe Claire, 8380 Lacordaire Blvd. in St. Léonard, 1405 de l'Église St. in St. Laurent and 4555 Verdun Ave. in Verdun.

■ The Biodôme, Botanical Garden and Insectarium are shut today and tomorrow. The Planetarium and Pointe à Callière museum of archeology are open today.

■ Bonsecours Market (350 St.

Paul St. E.) is closed tomorrow at 5 p.m., but open on Saturday at 1 p.m. The Atwater, Jean Talon and Maisonneuve public markets close tomorrow and Saturday.

■ Montreal arenas, swimming pools, sports centres, libraries and cultural venues will operate according to schedules set by the boroughs. For information, go to www.ville.montreal.qc.ca

■ Laval municipal offices are shut till Jan. 4, but some services are operating on different schedules. For details, go to www.ville.laval.qc.ca or call 311 (from inside Laval) or 450-978-8000.

■ Société de transport de Montréal buses and métro trains will run on a holiday schedule tomorrow. For detailed route informa-

tion, call 514-288-6287, or consult www.stm.info

■ The Agence métropolitaine de transport will offer reduced service on its train lines over Christmas. There is no service on the Blainville-St. Jérôme, Mont St. Hilaire and Delson-Candiac lines tomorrow and Saturday. It will provide Sunday service on the Dorion-Rigaud line tomorrow and Saturday. For the Deux Montagnes line, it will provide Sunday service tomorrow and Saturday service on Boxing Day. Call 514-287-8726 or visit www.amt.qc.ca for information.

■ Laval Transit Corp. buses will run on Saturday timetable today, on a reduced Sunday service tomorrow and on regular Saturday

service on Boxing Day. For information, call 450-688-6520.

■ Longueuil buses will offer free service today and New Year's Eve. Buses will run on a holiday schedule on those days, however. Buses will run on a Sunday timetable on Christmas Day, and on a regular Saturday schedule on Boxing Day. Call 450-463-0131 or go to www.rtl-longueuil.qc.ca

■ Parking meters in Montreal will remain in operation. All restrictions remain in force over the holidays. Call 311 for information.

■ There will be no collection or delivery of mail tomorrow. Canada Post offices will be closed.

■ The Montreal Exchange closes at 1 p.m. today and remains shut tomorrow and Monday.