

# 12 faces of Montreal Christmas: Gift wrapper



MORGAN LOWRIE, SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE

More from Morgan Lowrie, Special to Montreal Gazette ([HTTP://MONTREALGAZETTE.COM/AUTHOR/MORGAN-LOWRIE-SPECIAL-TO-MONTREAL-GAZETTE](http://montrealgazette.com/author/morgan-lowrie-special-to-montreal-gazette))

Published on: December 11, 2014 | Last Updated: December 22, 2014 9:56 AM EST



Heather Holmes, director of the Lakeshore General Hospital Foundation, wraps Christmas presents at Fairview Centre Pointe-Claire mall. JOHN MAHONEY / MONTREAL GAZETTE

*Each holiday season has its predictable sights and sounds, but some are uniquely “Montreal.” Starting today and until Dec. 24, we explore the 12 faces of Montreal Christmas (<http://montrealgazette.com/tag/12-faces-of-montreal-christmas>), looking at some of the people who play a role in making the holidays special in our city.*

## Heather Holmes’s fingers fly over brightly coloured red and blue paper, cutting just the right amount. Behind her, an assistant feeds her tape, ribbon and bows.

Holmes is the managing director of the Lakeshore General Hospital Foundation. She’s also one of the hard-working people that shoppers at Fairview Pointe-Claire will see wrapping gifts in a booth as part of the hospital’s annual fundraising drive.

“It’s a great chance to interact with customers, have fun and share the Christmas spirit,” Holmes says.

It’s also for a good cause. Since Fairview Cadillac donates the booth space and all those bolts of coloured paper, every penny the gift wrappers receive goes directly to the Lakeshore General Hospital Foundation.

The foundation has two gift-wrapping booths in the mall. (<http://www.fairviewpointeclaire.ca/en/centreinfo/Pages/Gift.aspx>) one on each floor.

The fundraising goal is \$50,000 this year, which will go toward general-use hospital equipment. This year, the hospital is a little short of the amount needed to buy a fetal monitoring system.

## RELATED

12 faces of Montreal Christmas (<http://montrealgazette.com/tag/12-faces-of-montreal-christmas>)

Since the suggested donations for gift wrapping range from \$3 to \$10, these nimble-fingered volunteers wrap a lot of gifts — thousands every year, Holmes says.

It takes a lot of organization — and a total of about 500 volunteers — to keep the booth running smoothly. Work at the booth is divided into three shifts per day, seven days a week, for five weeks straight.

“It’s a really big undertaking,” Holmes says. “Like anything successful, it’s a team effort.”

The volunteers span all ages and walks of life, from veteran wrapper Kathy Tucker, a retired administrative assistant who loves soaking up the Christmas atmosphere, to ninth-graders Kayla Orsat-Parker and Naomie Curis-Friedman, recruited from Felix Leclerc High School in Pointe-Claire.

Although previous experience is ideal, it isn’t necessary, Holmes says. New volunteers are directed to YouTube videos for some training, then paired with a more experience gift wrapper.

Timelapse: Christmas wrapping



The busiest day of the year is, of course, Dec. 24, when the booth is fully staffed and the tape and ribbons are flying.

“You have people lining up two and three deep on Christmas Eve,” Holmes says.

The wrappers in the booth have many wrapping tips: cut the right amount of paper, keep the scraps for bows and tags, use a box because it’s easier.

But it’s Orsat-Parker, the teen in her second year of volunteering, who chimes in: “It’s mostly just practice.”

## Montreal Flyers



## Comments

We encourage all readers to share their views on our articles and blog posts. We are committed to maintaining a lively but civil forum for discussion, so we ask you to avoid personal attacks, and please keep your comments relevant and respectful. If you encounter a comment that is abusive, click the “X” in the upper right corner of the comment box to report spam or abuse. We are using Facebook commenting. Visit our [FAQ page \(http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/story.html?id=7195492\)](http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/story.html?id=7195492) for more information.

0 Comments

Sort by



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin