

Johnny Azzue's degree from the school of hard knocks



**MAGAZINE
CONFIDENTIAL**

By **MIKE COHEN**

When Johnny Azzue was 11 years old, growing up in the city's Mile End district, he had a rude awakening. He was in Grade 5 at the time and due an intolerable situation at home involving his father, he quit school and got a job to support his family.

"The first thing I did was throw my father out of the house," Azzue said over bagels and eggs at his St. Viateur Bagel and Café establishment in NDG. "There were serious problems and he had to go. I went to a local locksmith, told him I had no money and explained the situation. He came and changed the locks, blocking my dad from returning. A month later I paid him back."

Azzue enrolled in the school of hard knocks, working at a café. He did so for many years, eventually moving on to a company where he served coffee at trade shows. His first foray into the restaurant business was in 2000 on St. Laurent Blvd. It was a loss financially, but the experience he gained opened up the eyes of Joe and Nick Morena. Azzue lived right near their original St. Viateur Bagel Shop and the Morenas offered him the chance to become a partner in a new



Johnny Azzue in front of his Bagelmobile.



Azzue completes the Barcelona International Marathon.

café concept. He accepted the challenge and never looked back. In June he launched the first St. Viateur Bagel and Café mobile food truck. St. Viateur also has a location on Sources Blvd. in Dollard des Ormeaux.

Married to lawyer Rosalia Giarratona, the couple live in St. Leonard with their two children aged 10 and 12. Azzue is usually at work by 5 a.m. each day, but here is where things get interesting. Around the time the St. Viateur Bagel and Café opened up, Azzue took up running. At one point Nick Morena suggested he consider a marathon. Taking the cue, Azzue signed up for the 2001 Montreal International Marathon and completed the course. This turned out to be the beginning of a new obsession and for the past 11 years he has religiously participated in about two marathons a year, and has travelled to Florida, France,

Italy and Spain. He'll be back at the Montreal event in September and has London, England in his sights for next spring.

"Each day when I leave the office in mid afternoon I go home and run," he says. "When I get in at 5 a.m. I have some Vector cereal with bananas. I try to eat healthy and the running keeps me in shape. I owe it all to Nick. Not only did he push me to do this, but he bought a book and he used that to train me."

STREET MAGNETS

"One of my favourite things in life is to grab my camera and wander," says 41-year-old documentary filmmaker and street photographer Ezra Soiferman. "Whether it's here in my native Montreal or off in another city, little thrills me more than walking the streets photographing people, places and objects that

catch me by surprise."

Some of Soiferman's favourite street shots from journeys over the past five years, taken in Montreal, Amsterdam, Brooklyn, Halifax, Manhattan, Toronto, and Woodstock are on display at Victoria Park (376 Victoria Ave.) in Westmount until Sept. 16. All photos are offered as signed, limited edition prints from a series of 10 prints per size. For more information, contact Jessica Yaffe at 514-947-1211.

GREEK GODDESS

There is another great exhibition through Sept. 30 at Le Meriden Versailles (1808 Sherbrooke St. West) called Demeter (meaning Greek Goddess) by Demetrios Papakostas. The Montreal native studied commercial art and launched his own graphics company in 1995. In his current exhibition, he has used layers of form and colour to create magnificent oil paintings. He says that in his work there is an element of what he perceives to be nature's spiritual presence and enduring message of hope and serenity. Each piece is a journey, according to the artist. He says he is always trying to peek behind the veil of reality to catch a glimpse of that elusive spirit present in nature and in all things. His work is included in several corporate and private collections.

Have you got something to share? Email mcohen@thesuburban.com or call 514-484-9203, ext. 307. Follow me on Twitter @mikecohencsl and at <http://blog.thesuburban.com>.



From street photographer Ezra Soiferman.



A painting from the Demeter exhibition.

A GREAT SMILE MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Better Self-Image & Increased Self-Confidence
Improved Dental Health & Facial Appearance

FOR ADULTS & CHILDREN
Your Choice of Clear or Metal Braces
Reasonable Fees & Payment Plans

Christos Sideris, D.M.D., M.Sc., F.R.C.D. (C)
Ezra Kleinman, D.D.S., M.S.D.
Over 25 years of Experience & University Professor

ORTHODONTISTS

(514) 684-5522
3400 du Marché, #205
(near Marché de l'Ouest)
Dollard-des-Ormeaux

FREE CONSULTATION

8 • THE SUBURBAN SPECIAL MAGAZINE ISSUE, WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2013

CONTACT US Letters: editor@thesuburban.com | Entertainment: entertainment@thesuburban.com | Features: anthony@thesuburban.com | Sports: sports@thesuburban.com | Community Events: calendar@thesuburban.com | Advertising material: production@thesuburban.com

7575 Trans-Canada Highway, Suite 105, St. Laurent, QC H4T 1V6
(514) 484-1107 (Fax) 484-9616
suburban@thesuburban.com www.thesuburban.com



Publisher's liability for error: The publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.

Entire Contents Copyright Michael Publishing Co. Inc., Wednesday, July 31, 2013

The Suburban
QUEBEC'S LARGEST ENGLISH WEEKLY NEWSPAPER
ESTABLISHED 1963 • VOL. L, NO. XXXI

Publisher Michael Sochaczewski
Associate Publisher Sari Medicoff
Sales Director Amanda Lavigne
VP Natl. Sales & Mktg David Broadman
Pre-Press & Production Manager Karen Cross
Credit Manager Carol Balinsky
Classified Manager Charmaine Worrell

Asst. Classified Manager Susan Einder
Editor-in-chief Beryl Wajsman
Associate Editor Anthony Bonaparte
Sports Editor Mark Lidbetter
Editorial Staff Joel Goldenberg, Joel Ceausu, P.A. Sévigny, Kevin Woodhouse, Walter J. Lyng, Samantha St. Jules, Tracey Arial, Robert Frank

Editorial Contributors Marie I. Anelli, Judie Amyot, Jennifer Cox, Mike Cohen, Mitch Gallo, Mike Hickey, David Lisbona, Bernard Mendelman, Linda Zlatkin, Genevieve Waller, Photographers Andrew Soong, Rob Taussig, Rob Amyot, Owen Harris