

# Game: Expos Fest Gala raised money for a great cause and brought back passion for Nos Amours

## Game and Grub

MIKE COHEN



The Expos, aka Nos Amours, left Montreal after the 2004 season. Twenty-two years later Perry Gee and his Expos Fest keep the franchise memories alive with a wide array of events. The annual gala, which raises funds for the Kat Demes Pavillion at the Montreal Children's Hospital, is the definite highlight. I finally made it the most recent April 25 edition and the memories from that evening will stay with me for a long time.

What organizer Perry Gee has accomplished, in my opinion, merits an Order of Canada. Not only has he kept us connected to the Expos, but more importantly he left an indelible legacy for his late niece Kat, who passed away at the age of five from Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), an inoperable brain tumour. Since 2023 Expos Fest has focused its attention on the pavillion, which houses families with sick children in long term care at the hospital. This is the first of its kind in Quebec because it's absolutely free for the parents. At the gala there was a touching testimonial from a family that has benefited from the facility.

I grew up as a major Expos fan, eventually making my way into the press box to cover the team for many years. There were 1,000 people at the sold-out gala. Throughout the day at the Embassy Plaza in Laval, there were autograph sessions with the former Expos on hand. Canadiens legend Larry Robinson was also among those invited. Perry went all out in terms of the Expos alumni. Among those on hand were: Steve Rogers, Pedro Martinez, Marquis Grissom, Moises Alou, Felipe Alou, Mike Fitzgerald, Rondell White, Bill Stoneman, Elias Sosa, Denis Boucher, Bill Stoneman, Cliff Floyd, Javier Vasquez and the biggest draw of the night, The Big Unit, Hall of Famer Randy Johnson.



One of the many delicious cotton candy options at Sugar Fluffs



Perry Gee is the mastermind behind Expos Fest

Almost \$3 million has been raised for the pavillion thus far. The gala included an electric player introduction ceremony, a tribute to the late broadcaster Rodger Brulotte and a series of auctions throughout the evening that raised countless thousands of dollars extra. Attendees were able to circulate throughout the room, get photos taken and for folks like me, some invaluable Instagram content. What a bucket list item it was for me to sit down with the likes of Grissom, Stoneman, Robinson and others to do some interviews. It is clear that more than two decades after the Expos' departure, the passion for them remains. I feel so privileged to have been in attendance and I thank Perry from the bottom of my heart for including me. I truly believe that had he been an active supporter of the team before they became property of Major League Baseball and sold to interests in Washington, he would have been able to find a way to keep them in that city. His gala was a masterpiece!

### Grub: Sugar Fluffs hits the sweet spot

Have you been to Sugar Fluffs yet?

With locations at Royalmount, CF Fairview Pointe-Claire, CF Carrefour Laval, and Promenades St-Bruno, this whimsical concept is a treat for all ages. Many of the products are even certified kosher.

It may sound cliché, but I truly felt like a kid in a candy store. Founders Ken and Liz Bernard have turned a childhood love of cotton candy into a creative and visually stunning experience. Drawing on their backgrounds as professional pastry chefs, they've elevated spun sugar into edible art.

Their cotton candy artists handcraft everything—from animals to popular characters—using real sugar



Mike Kirakossian gets ready to prep a pizza add a few words?



Randy Johnson (left), aka the Big Unit, was a surprise special guest at the gala

and fondant. The treats are nut-free, gluten-free, dairy-free, kosher, and halal, and with more than 25 flavours available, they make memorable gifts or party centrepieces.

And then there's the showstopper: a multi-coloured cotton candy cake that you slice like a traditional dessert.

Beyond the cotton candy, the shop is packed with just about every kind of candy imaginable. At the Royalmount location, manager Fatima treated me to a sampling that included cotton candy creations, cake, slush, and a variety of chocolate bars. They even sell LEGO sets.

Visit [sugarfluffs.com](http://sugarfluffs.com) for more information.

### Georges Sous-Marins and Pizza in Laval-des-Rapides

For months, a woman named Sher had been messaging me on Instagram, inviting me to visit her family's restaurant in Laval-des-Rapides. Recently, I finally took her up on the offer—and I'm glad I did.

Georges Sous-Marins et Pizza has been a fixture at 255 Boulevard de la Concorde Ouest for 36 years. The Kirakossian family took over about a dozen years ago, though their roots in the food business go back even further. Patriarch Mike Kirakossian got his start working for his father, who owned several Mr. Donut locations, before later running a nearby bar while raising five children with Sher.

Today, Georges remains a true neighbourhood staple—and on the night I visited, it was buzzing. The place had the energy of a beehive, and the family presence was unmistakable. Daughter Brittany and son Aaron (now an electrician) were working alongside Mike, joined by cousin Stephanie. While the other children weren't there that evening, their presence is clearly part of the restaurant's DNA.

As for the food, it delivered. I sampled a smoked meat and mushroom pizza, a chicken sub, and a slice of apple pie—all delicious. Mike even packed up leftovers for me to take home.

If you're heading to Place Bell, this spot is just a three-minute drive away, with plenty of free parking. The menu is extensive, featuring pizzas, subs, salads, calzones, pasta, brochettes, gyros, burgers, poutine, fish and chips, and more—plus solid lunch specials and in-store deals.

Visit [vincentsoumarines.com](http://vincentsoumarines.com) or call 450-629-8000.

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