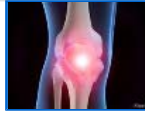




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Ex-Montrealer murdered in Mexico 'touched everyone'

Popular blogger gave up career as financial adviser to live on coastal isle

Paul Cherry, Gazette Crime Reporter: Saturday, September 19, 2009



The body of ex-Montrealer Renée Wathelet, 60, was found Thursday in her apartment on Isla Mujeres, east of Cancun, Mexico.

Photo Credit: Flickr, The Gazette

MONTREAL – Renée Wathelet touched many lives, be they in Outremont, the small island in Mexico she fell in love with, or on the blogosphere.

The former financial consultant, a 60-year-old grandmother, was found dead in her apartment on Isla Mujeres, the island near Cancun where she was living.

Her throat had been cut and she had been stabbed several times when police found her body Thursday morning. According to news agencies, the police arrested a 24-year-old man from Monterrey, Mexico, as a suspect in the slaying.

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Yesterday, the Mexican news agency EFE, quoting a member of the Mexican police investigating the killing, said the suspect went to the apartment with the intention of robbing Wathelet. The man might have known the victim, the agency also reported.

Reaction to the death could be found on blogs based in Montreal and in Isla Mujeres shortly after her violent death was reported.

Wathelet had walked away from a career in financial consulting to enjoy the island but continued to write and post material on two blogs.

She called one of her blogs En direct des Îles because she originally posted on it from two islands, said Michelle Blanc, a close friend who lives in Montreal.

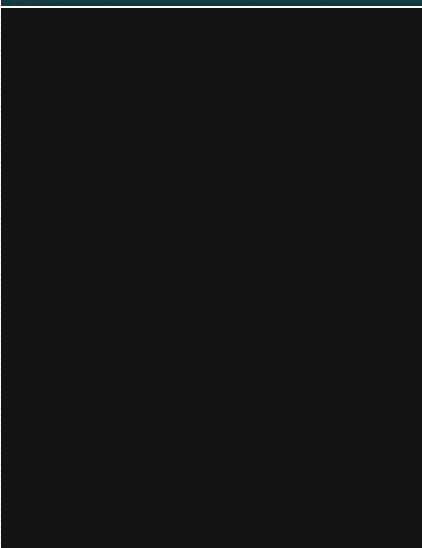
When Wathelet started the blog, she was splitting time between her apartment in Outremont, on the island of Montreal, and Isla Mujeres, where she was killed. Before moving to Isla Mujeres permanently in March, she alternated between the two every two months.

"I can't believe it," Blanc said. "This is the last person you would imagine hearing was murdered."

Blanc said she met Wathelet through Yulbiz, a Montreal-based online network that gathers people interested in business affairs. Wathelet quickly become a favourite among the group, said Blanc, the network's president.

"She was our spiritual mother," Blanc said. She raised money for a veterinary hospital in Isla Mujeres that takes care of abandoned cats.

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