

# RWA



# News

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SEPTEMBER 2014

### A Word From The Administration



It has been a great start to the school year at Royal West Academy. We would like to offer a warm welcome to our newest additions, Secondary I, and upper graders who are new to the RWA family.

We would also like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our new staff members and to those who are returning from leaves of absence:

- Ms. M. Pisto (Secretary)
- Ms. K. Rivas (Librarian)
- Ms. S. Symianick (Science Lab Technician)
- Ms. L. Burke (School Nurse)
- Mr. C. Plessas (Computer Technician)
- Mr. M. Stewart (Histoire, Géographie, and ERC)
- Mr. V. Thomasson (Math and Science)
- Ms. A. Abraham (Math)

As you may know, Mme N. Cheff has returned to her teaching duties after a year as Interim Vice-Principal. Replacing her is Ms. C. Juhasz who has, until recently, been a Math and Science teacher at Westmount High School. Like Mme Cheff, Ms. Juhasz is responsible for students whose family names begin with the letters A–L. Ms. L. Heckersbruch continues to be responsible for students whose family names begin with the letters M–Z. Ms. Heckersbruch will be on leave until early

October but our trusted Mr. J. Bateman (Physical Education and Leadership) has agreed to fill in for the time being. Please feel free to call either administrator if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child, or require information on the programs offered at Royal West Academy.

This school year got off to an enthusiastic start, with the Student Life Association welcoming the Secondary I students at our annual Orientation Day. After a great day participating in a variety of activities, students were treated to taste of BeaverTails pastries, compliments of Mr. Marcovecchio and his BeaverTails Food Truck. On behalf of all the students, we thank Mr. Marcovecchio for his generosity!

The SLA then kicked off what promises to be a great year with a supremely well-organized Welcome Back BBQ. Students enjoyed some great hot dogs, fruit, corn, and a little homemade entertainment that included a dunk tank and a giant inflatable game. Among the victims of the dunk tank were Mr. Pita, Mr. Bateman, Mr. Girardin, Mr. Aiken, Mr. Mateus, and Mr. Ohayon!

Once again, during the first week of school, staff members were visible in their orange vests, directing the student pedestrian traffic from the Montreal West train station. Secondary I students were also treated to a question and answer session with AMT Security Inspectors during our traditional Opening Year Assembly. Please discuss the issue of traffic safety with your child. Note that there are three sets of commuter trains running through the Montreal West train station—assume that there may be more than one train coming through at a time. Remember to look both ways, cross the roads only at the crosswalks specified for students, stay alert, do not wear headphones, and practice safety first!

In addition, there are large numbers of students boarding the STM buses after school. It is important to



line up and board the bus in an orderly fashion, so that no one gets hurt. Also, parent drivers are reminded that the drop-off and pick-up of students takes place on **Easton Avenue ONLY!** Easton Avenue is the only safe drop-off area for students. Ainslie Street is now a No Stopping Zone. If you drop off your child on Ainslie, you risk receiving an \$85 ticket.

Our Secondary I Meet the Teacher evening was held on September 10. Parents were given short presentations by teachers from all subject domains. They also had an opportunity to hear from the administration, the Secondary I homeroom teachers, and our school

guidance counsellor, Mr. Mateus, who discussed the sometimes difficult transition to high school, the pressure some students may feel at RWA, and the necessity for students to have some relaxing downtime! Parents were also encouraged to ensure that their child not have a cell phone or computer available during times of rest. Cell phones should not be used as alarm clocks. The distractions far outweigh the benefits.

Members of our three major parent organizations, the RWA Home & School Association, the RWA Foundation, and the RWA Governing Board also gave presentations and welcomed parents to RWA. For more information

## SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Ms. Jasmin Uhthoff

### Record number of donations!

School started barely a month ago but the Royal West Academy Foundation has been busy! By now you've probably heard that the first-ever Start of the Year Celebration was a huge success (*see page 4*).

Just as noteworthy is the response we received from parents to our annual capital campaign since the beginning of the school year! Over 100 donations have been made, a record to date, totaling just over \$19,000!!! Thank you for your generosity! We know we cannot count on parents alone to help us reach our financial goal, and will focus this year in particular on soliciting private foundations and corporations. It is our intent to purchase an air conditioning unit (along with all the supporting mechanical and ductwork required) and new chairs with the monies raised this year.

The Foundation held its first board meeting of the year along with its annual general meeting on September 7, where two new members were elected to the board: Dan Marcus and Julien Feldman. Paul Broomberg was appointed president. Two long-standing directors, Debby O'Sullivan and Ron Wigdor, stepped down and we thank them for their dedication and valued support over the years.

### Are you a lawyer or an accountant? You can play a part!

Upon reviewing the composition of Foundation's board of directors, we realized there is a need to have people with both legal and accounting skills around the table. If you have these qualifications, please consider joining the Foundation either as a member or a director. Our next meeting will be held on October 6, 2014 at 7 PM in the school staff room—ALL parents are welcome to attend (we have free snacks!).

And of course, we are always looking for volunteers to join the RWA Foundation. No matter your experience or time available, everyone can play a role. If you have any questions or fundraising ideas, contact Jasmin Uhthoff, Vice-President, at [rwafoundation@gmail.com](mailto:rwafoundation@gmail.com) or visit us at <http://rwaf.ca>.

Make a donation! Just go to our website at <http://rwaf.ca> and give what you can. Every donation takes us closer to transforming our 80-year-old auditorium into a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre for our children.



on upcoming events and opportunities to get involved at RWA, please consult their respective websites that can all be accessed through [www.royalwestacademy.com](http://www.royalwestacademy.com).

On September 15, Royal West Academy opened its doors to several hundred visitors at our annual Open House. Special thanks to the Prefects, SLA members, and the volunteer students and parents who were great ambassadors for RWA. Qualifying exams were written on September 27–28.

At the Annual General Meeting on September 22, the following parents were elected to two-year terms as parent representatives on the Governing Board: Mr. K. Kelly, Mr. R. Ortiz, Ms. L. Rinaldi, and Mr. N. Dahdah. The General Assembly also elected Mr. P. Rennison for a one year term, replacing Mr. J. Raskin whose son graduated this past June. These five new members join second year members Mr. M. Mendelson, Mr. M. Delis, and Ms. D. Dimock. Mr. Dahdah was also re-elected as the Regional Delegate for Royal West Academy. A Parent Advisory Committee consisting of six members was also established with Ms. K. Cawthorn elected as their Chair.

The first meeting of the RWA Governing Board will be held on October 16, 2014, at 7 PM in the school library. Meetings are open to public and a question period is always part of the monthly agenda.

The RWA Foundation organized the Start of Year Celebration (*see page 4*). Volunteers dedicated hundreds of hours toward the organization of this first-time event. Students, parents, staff, and community members were treated to performances by Honour Band and presentations by our science and 3D Design students. The evening proved to be a huge success with proceeds going to the RWA Auditorium Renovation Project. Special thanks to Mr. Kelly for his leadership in organizing this memorable event!

RWA Home & School Association's next meeting will take place on October 21, 2014, at 7:30 PM. The Home & School provides much needed funds for pedagogical materials, special events, and building improvements. With your help, the Home & School will undoubtedly be in a position to make many more contributions that will enhance your child's educational experience at RWA. All our parents are encouraged to get involved!

Most students have already begun participating in our extra-curricular activities program. Many sports teams have already had tryouts (even their first games), and those involved in other categories of activity have had initial meetings and signup campaigns to get things underway. The list of ECAs is available at [www.royalwestacademy.com](http://www.royalwestacademy.com). We encourage parents to help plan their children's participation in this program. Students are required to complete three ECAs in the categories of their choice: community service, environment, culture, and sports. Students are not permitted to skip the same ECA category over two consecutive years. Please contact Ms. S. Di Pietro by phone or at [sdiptietro@emsb.qc.ca](mailto:sdiptietro@emsb.qc.ca) should any questions arise. We recommend that parents purchase health insurance for their child at the beginning of every school year. Royal West Academy, the English Montreal School Board, and the GMAA do not cover any medical costs or transport by ambulance. Play it safe—get insurance!

If your child requires tutoring at any time this year, Royal West Academy has an excellent Peer-Tutoring program at minimal cost. Any questions or concerns in this area should also be directed to Ms. Di Pietro, our School-Community Animator (ECA Coordinator), at [sdiptietro@emsb.qc.ca](mailto:sdiptietro@emsb.qc.ca).

We continue to make improvements to our facility. Thanks to the Home & School, 314 new lockers were installed in the West Wing of the school. Over 50 years of rust and deterioration were replaced by beautiful and functional lockers that meet our students' needs. This \$50,000 investment was made possible through the generosity of our Home & School and the EMSB. Special thanks to our Deputy Director General, Ms. P. Miniaci, for her continued support of Royal West Academy.

Royal West Academy was also awarded a \$10,000 grant under the School Yard Beautification Program of the ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir, et du Sport. The Ministry and the EMSB both matched \$5,000 investments made by RWA toward the landscaping of our Park N' Lot project. The announcement was made at the Start of Year Celebration by Ms. Kathleen Weil, MNA and Minister of Immigration, Diversity, and Inclusiveness. The Park N' Lot project is in its third year and continues to be a great example of school and community cooperation. Keep your eyes and ears open for this year's Harvest Party—coming soon to a garden near you!





The Royal West Academy staff would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Goldstein for their generous donation of furniture for the school's staff lounge. On many evenings the staff lounge also doubles as a conference room for many parent groups including the RWA Home & School, RWA Foundation, and the Bardolator Parents Association. The new and improved look and comfort is appreciated by everyone.

The annual RWA CEGEP/University night will take place on October 21, 2014, at 7 PM. Representatives from CEGEPs (English and French) and universities representing Montreal, Ontario, and the US are slated to be present at the school. Secondary V students and parents are expected to attend—Secondary IV students are also encouraged to attend.

The administration and staff wish all our students and parents a successful and enjoyable year!

## Start Of The Year Celebration

By Mr. Kirk Kelly

A first-ever success!

What has over 200 hands, 1600 feet, and can eat 35 extra large pizzas?

Royal West Academy's first-ever Start of the Year celebration that boasted over 100 volunteers, 800 guests, and an unlimited appetite for pizza, hot dogs, cotton candy, and popcorn!

The event, held on September 19 on the school's front field and in the auditorium, brought together students and parents from Royal West Academy as well as families from the Montreal West community to share food, fun, and conversation. The stars of the show were six amazing inflatables, the longest of which almost

filled the field front to back and measured in at 120 feet long. Even the initially cynical Secondary IV and V students could be seen romping on them by the party's end.

The town of Montreal West helped out with signage, a monster barbecue, garbage collection, and picnic tables. Samantha Mitra, athletics program manager, and Paula Cordeau, recreation services, were invaluable in making the event work.

On hand were Montreal West mayor Beny Masella, MNA for NDG Kathleen Weil, and MNA for D'Arcy-McGee David Birnbaum as well as Montreal West's school commissioner Joe Lalla.

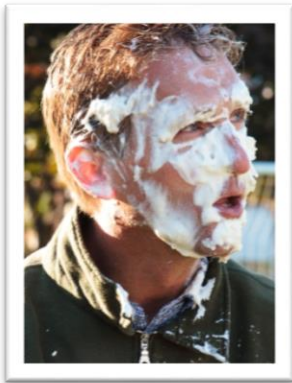
Ms. Weil took the stage briefly to announce a grant of over \$4700 towards the work of the school's Environment Committee for its community garden, the Park N' Lot, built on the site of an old asphalted parking area.

The Honour Band played a short concert, science fair students Lia Loebenberg and Abhishek Chakraborty spoke about their winning projects, and the 3D printer worked away on a new T-Rex figure.

The day would not have been possible without the help and support of so many people: all the parents, SLA members, and Prefects for volunteering to staff the event; parents on the RWA Foundation and Governing Board who put in major investments of time and effort to get things going; and the teachers, staff, and administrators of the school. Extra recognition goes out to the RWA's new president Paul Broomberg, treasurer Mitch White, communications duo Sarah Goblot and Ken Elman, volunteer coordinator Lindsay McLeod, and governing board parent, Lori Rinaldi.



Generous thanks are also due to our very generous sponsors: Aramark, Maple Leaf Foods, Canada Bread Company, Pizza Pizza, Starbucks, McAuslan Brewing,



Domaine Pinnacle ciders, and JG Rive Sud apple orchards.

It will all happen again next year. Hopefully, there will soon come a time when parents and students can't remember a school year that didn't begin with a Start of the Year Celebration at Royal West Academy.

## Germany Exchange

By Mr. Andre Vamvakas



Royal West Academy just wrapped up its latest International Student Exchange. Along with present faculty member Mr. A. Vamvakas, and retired faculty members Mrs. S. Westlake, Mr. D. Floen, and Mr. A. Scrivener, 22 Secondary III students traveled to the Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Baden-Württemberg, and Bavaria regions of Germany with stops in France, Austria, and Switzerland interspersed along the way, from September 5 to 21.

In the process the students and staff experienced, among others; hiking in the Alps above the clouds (Oberstdorf), visiting King Ludwig II's fairy tale castles at Neuschwanstein Castle and Linderhof Palace, medieval cities such as Strasbourg (France), Heidelberg, Riquewihr, Oberammergau and Regensburg, visiting a 600-year-old functioning salt

mine near Salzburg (Austria), and taking in the sites of this picturesque city and its fortified palace, and a night watchman tour of Munich as well as biking through the English Garden in Munich, the spectacular Deutsches Museum and two river cruises along the Rhine and Danube Rivers.

The students and staff stayed with German families of students and staff who had visited Canada a year ago, in Fürstfeldbruck, Bavaria, for nine days, and experienced German and Bavarian life firsthand. The town is approximately 30 km from Munich, one of Germany's most exciting and vibrant cities.

The entire Canadian entourage was received with a rousing heartfelt reception when they arrived, attended by all the German families and dignitaries from the region and school.

Over the next few days some of the students even took in a FC Bayern München game against VfB Stuttgart while others enjoyed hockey games, museum visits, visiting the Olympiastadion, the BMW Museum and BMW World.

Not all of the trip was solely for entertainment and fun. The visit to the Dachau Concentration Camp was a solemn and moving tour of a site so sacred to human history. Several of the students and staff were overcome with emotions, as four hours were spent walking the paths of those who had been imprisoned, suffered, and died during those dreadful times so long ago. It must be noted that the German state preserved the camp to reflect its wartime condition, so that present and future generations of visitors can have a poignant experience.



Another day was taken up by a visit to the Max Wimmer Bäckerei und Konditorei, where the students enjoyed a lesson in the German/Bavarian art of pretzel making. The students and staff made mounds and mounds of pretzels, which they later had delivered to them to enjoy with their host families.



The culmination of the exchange was visiting the start of the Oktoberfest in Munich, an annual event that attracts over 6.5 million visitors to the city.

As the students and staff bid farewell on the last day, many tears were shed for the great friendships forged with our German hosts and their families from the Graf-Rasso-Gymnasium Fürstenfeldbruck, with the promise that we would meet again “wiedersehen.”

## Our Trip To Germany

By Elizabeth Kinnear & Anna Reiter



When we first heard at the beginning of Secondary I about the possibility of going to on a two-week long exchange to Germany, we were curious and excited about the idea of taking part. When the exchange first began two years ago, we were very different people than we are today.

Last year, our German billets came here and we got to show them around Montreal and teach them about our culture. For us, getting to know them and showing them our city was fun, but in the back of our mind we were greatly anticipating the time when we would be able to go visit them. On September 6, after almost two years of bagging groceries, bake sales, and dinner theatres, it was finally time to get on a plane and fly across the ocean. For some of us, it was our first time travelling so far away, and for most of us it was our first major trip without our parents.

We began our voyage with an eight-day tour around Germany. We started in Frankfurt, and then toured around Germany and made visits to France, Switzerland, and Austria. We hiked, visited castles, shopped, and got to know the beautiful German countryside. My favourite part of the trip was at night, though. We always ate dinner as a group and spent time in each other's hotel rooms. It was during this time that we really bonded as a group.

On the last day of the side trip, we went to the beautiful Neuschwanstein castle. After that, we went on a final bus ride with our tour guide Almar and driver Bronco to Fürstenfeldbruck, where we would meet our German billets.

We met the German families for the first time late Friday evening. We had very little time to settle into

their homes before heading out to the welcome dinner. There, we were given many gifts and had some musical entertainment. The weekend was left for family activities. Many of us went to the BMW World, Allianz Arena, Olympia Tower, or did other activities.



The first day of group activities was on Monday. We went to the Berchtesgaden Salt Mines. There we had fun on the rollercoaster and slides. That afternoon we went to the surprise water garden where many of us got wet. The next stop was the Hellabrunn castle where we had a tour, then free time.

On Tuesday, the Canadian students visited the Dachau concentration camp. This was an emotional outing that really made us understand the Second World War. One of the highlights of the trip happened that afternoon with Mike's Bike Tours, where we had to venture out on rented bikes across Munich.

Wednesday morning we baked pretzels at a Bäckerei (bakery). Later, we attended our billets' class which was very different for many of us. The evening was spent again in Munich, but this time for a night tour.

Thursday was spent in Regensburg, where we had a guided tour and then later a boat ride through the Danube Gorge.

Friday morning was spent at the Deutsches Museum. This tour was not only educational but also interesting. We had a little bit of free time for shopping and buying lunch before we went to our homes. That evening we had a youth party at a beach house—sadly it was raining so we couldn't go outside but it was still fun.

Saturday was the first day of Oktoberfest, so everyone went. Oktoberfest was so much fun. That evening there was a get together at one of the Germans' houses. It was a shame that not everyone was there.

The next day was the last day of our trip. Many of us were sad. When it came time to say goodbye, there were many hugs and tears, knowing that we'd most likely never see each other again. The departure was the saddest part of our trip.

Our trip to Germany was not only a vacation, it was a life-changing adventure that altered all of us.

## Germany Exchange

By Audrey Baillargé



Mrs. Westlake was right when she said travelling to Germany would be a life-changing experience. I loved all of it and miss all of it too!

I miss visiting all those cathedrals everyone laughed at, I miss ordering croissants and cinnamon buns in die Bäckerei, I miss sharing sundaes on the long boat rides, and I miss driving back and forth between the four countries in less than a week.

The castles were all so different and unique! Every king had his own special taste and love for money.



I loved eating pretzels every day for breakfast and having a different traditional Bavarian meal every dinner. I loved the Mercedes bus rides with our not-so-secret crushes and watching German movies every night. I loved playing beach soccer and volleyball at the same party where we roasted marshmallows and rolled bread dough, and loved going on crazy rides with Amelie at Oktoberfest! Thank-you so much for the Dirndl (I'm planning on wearing it for Halloween)!

It was an unforgettable experience and I can't wait to go back some day to see my new friends once more! I have songs to remember every moment spent and I learned a bit of German too!

In conclusion, the answer to "Which way down?" is "Bing Bong!"



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct 6	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
Oct 13	Thanksgiving Day
Oct 14	Secondary III vaccinations
Oct 16	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
Oct 17	Pedagogical Day (afternoon only)
Oct 20–24	Waste Reduction Week
Oct 21	CEGEP/University night @ 7 PM
Oct 21	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
Oct 24	Pedagogical Day
Oct 31	Halloween: Free Dress Day

For more information about our activities, visit  
[WWW.ROYALWESTACADEMY.COM](http://WWW.ROYALWESTACADEMY.COM)



## CALL FOR NEWS ARTICLES

We are now accepting articles for the  
October 2014 edition of the RWA News!

Send your submissions to [rwaneews@gmail.com](mailto:rwaneews@gmail.com)

Deadline date: **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2014**

Thank you for your contribution!

**RWA**



**News**

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Sophie Sun (Secondary V student)  
TBA (Secondary IV student)  
Tony Pita (Principal)

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