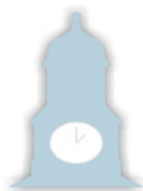


RWA



News

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OCTOBER 2013

A Word From The Administration



The first of our grade level trips has come and gone.

Secondary I students visited Quebec City and its regions on September 25–27. The trip allowed students to explore Quebec culture and nature while developing relationships with peers and teachers. By all accounts, students and staff had a great time and, most importantly, everyone returned home safely! Special thanks to our trip organizers Mme N. Dupaul and Mme L. Bourdeau as well as the many staff supervisors.

Royal West Academy kicked off its **Waste Reduction Week** with a presentation from the Jellyfish Project on October 15. The Jellyfish Project consists of a “high energy rock show followed by a dynamic presentation which touches on topics such as plastic pollution, overfishing, and man-made global warming”. This presentation by the British Columbia band, Mindil Beach Markets, has been presented to over 28,000 students. Special thanks to the Environment Committee and Ms. C. Almeida for organizing this engaging event.

As most of you can remember, October brings with it the sometimes difficult and stressful admissions process to Royal West Academy. To date, we have received over 690 applications. We are presently in the process of interviewing over 320 applicants and have offered approximately 90 families an early acceptance based on their qualifying test results. We expect to fill the 175 spaces in Secondary I by December 2013. Congratulations to those families that have chosen to join the RWA family! Special thanks to all the staff that has been committed to this process, including Ms. P. Taylor who makes all our visitors feel welcome and Mr. J. Mateus, Ms. M. Wineberg, and Ms. S. Di Pietro for administering the qualifying exams.

Congratulations to Secondary V students Nitesh Agarwal, Tanya Chen, Noah Cohen, Nicholas Koziris, Karina Paliotti, and Adam Wiltzer. The **Hospital Opportunity Program for Students** provides an opportunity for students to observe and assist medical personnel within a large hospital setting. The Auxiliary of the Jewish General Hospital has arranged for these students to spend half a day per week for two 5-week periods in various departments of the hospital.

Once again this year, the **Secondary II students** embarked on a fundraising campaign for the Terry Fox Foundation. Students worked tirelessly to raise \$10,399. Congratulations to the Secondary II class and thank you to Mrs. M.-C. O’Neil, Mr. J. Monachino, and Mr. F. Martin.

In sports news, we would like to congratulate the **Bantam Boys Cross Country Team** for their impressive showing this year. The boys brought home the GMAA championship from their competition on October 3 at Mount Royal Park. RWA athletes beat out athletes from 15 other schools to capture the gold!

The cold days of fall seem to have arrived. Parents and students are reminded that students must come to school and leave school in uniform. Students may only wear their Physical Education jogging pants if needed. Students may not wear jeans or any other pants with their skirts or over their school pants.

In an effort to improve **safety and security**, Royal West Academy will be having a lockdown drill in the coming weeks. Parents should not be alarmed by this drill. This exercise is completed at least once every year.

Enjoy the beautiful colours of fall and be safe on Halloween!

ECA Fair

By Noa Billick

Every year, Royal West Academy designates a certain time in the month of September—this year being on the 11th—to hold a fair for the new students. The fair, called the ECA fair, is to inform the Secondary I students of the various extracurricular activities (ECAs) held throughout the school year.



ECAs are what the students partake in to receive three of their four credits: environment, sports, cultural, and community. These activities include participating in sports teams or various shows, helping out with the Park n' Lot, joining a club, and more.

When someone first walks through the doors of RWA as a new student, there is so much to take in that participating in activities throughout the year is not the first thought on their mind; in fact, that original thought is probably how to get around our seemingly large school. That's why the ECA

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

A great end to the hockey raffle and gala

Parents, students, teachers, and staff managed to sell 1611 tickets for the hockey raffle, raising \$63,320 in revenues and generating over \$41,000 in profits. It is the largest single fundraiser that the Royal West Academy Foundation has ever held.

The 30th anniversary gala was also a success, attracting over 200 parents. The Bardolators, Honour Band, Jazz Band, and actors from the annual musical all performed to everyone's delight. Alyssia Baynes-Barnes, anchor of the late night news on Global TV and an RWA grad, was the special host of the gala—and she did a really great job.

The evening raised over \$4000 and produced \$2000 in profits toward the renovation of the auditorium. Foundation members and volunteer parents (Ginger Swift, Lindsay McLeod, Erica Brown, and Jasmin Uhthoff) coordinated all the work. More than one parent was heard saying that the gala volunteers had actually made the auditorium look attractive for once, a stark contrast to the worn out and sad appearance we're all so used to.

The funds raised, together with donations from parents and receipts from events held last year, are enough to begin the renovation of the auditorium. First up are new sound and lighting systems.

The Foundation's building and architecture committee (parent volunteers and seasoned construction veterans Paul Broomberg and Emilio Travisano) worked with parent John Davis (Stage Manager at Oscar Peterson Hall for the last 20 years) to set the specifications for new lights, speakers, and a mixing board. At the beginning of the school year, they went out for tender with the specifications and the Foundation has received five bids, all from highly qualified companies.

Once the EMSB, the project architects, and the structural engineers have approved the new equipment and the auditorium's ability to support it, a winning bid will be chosen and a contract signed.


The desperately-needed new systems will cost around \$80,000 plus taxes and include 10 or more new speakers over the stage, sub-woofers on or in front of the stage, over 30 completely adjustable professional theatre lights, and a new mixing board capable of handling two to three dozen inputs simultaneously.

According to Davis, the equipment at RWA will be state-of-the-art and as good as what is available at Oscar Peterson Hall.

Ginette Purdy, Honour Band director and RWA music teacher, is very excited by the news. Her biggest pleasure comes from learning that for the first time since she has worked at RWA, the students in Honour Band will actually be able to clearly see the scores they are playing when they are on stage.

The Foundation is now planning a new fundraising campaign, probably for the spring, to keep the momentum going for the renovations. While the new light and sound systems are a big step forward, there is a tremendous amount of work still to do to improve our auditorium.

Now there are three ways you can donate!

- **By credit card:** go to www.royalwestacademy.com/foundation and click on the  button.
- **By cheque:** make it out to the order of Royal West Academy Foundation and drop it off at the school office or mail it to RWA Foundation at the school's address.
- **Make a pledge:** complete the card inside the campaign brochure sent home with your child and drop it off at the school office or mail it to RWA Foundation at the school's address.

If you would like to receive an RWA Capital Campaign information package, please email your mailing address to rwafoundation@gmail.com and we will gladly send you one; or you can check out the PDF version by going to www.royalwestacademy.com/foundation and clicking on "RWA Solicitation".

fair is so important: with older students encouraging the new students to join different teams and clubs, the Secondary I students suddenly realize that these activities can help them make friends with other students of the school—their age or older—and to realize that high school isn't only about schoolwork, it's about getting involved!

This year's fair was filled with students as they walked around the different booths in the auditorium, asking questions about each opportunity to get involved with the school. Hopefully, each student left our fair with an open mind about the different teams and clubs RWA as to offer!

Welcome Back BBQ

By Karley McIlwaine

Over the course of each year, Royal West Academy's Student Life Association (SLA) has numerous events that take place. One of these events is the annual Welcome Back BBQ. This event celebrates the beginning of a new school year. Students were dismissed from class at 12 noon on September 13, when they came out to the back field to bask in the happy environment and spend quality time with their friends.

The Welcome Back BBQ had great food and a variety of different activities including face-painting, tattoos, fortune telling, a marriage booth, and RWA Idol. This year, SLA decided to bring in some new attractions: a dunk tank and a bouncy castle! These brought in a huge crowd as teachers

were the ones getting dunked and the bouncy castle let the high school students release their child spirit inside. These new additions were a big hit and will definitely be brought back in future events!

All in all, this event was and is a fantastic way to catch up with friends and kick off the new school year!

The Jellyfish Project

By Annie Plotkin

On October 15, the Secondary III and IV students of Royal West Academy were lucky enough to experience a concert presentation by the band Mindil Beach Markets as an introduction to Waste Reduction Week.



The band founded the campaign called the Jellyfish Project, which is an educational movement focused on creating awareness amongst youth about the declining health of our world's environment at large.

The event began with a high-energy rock show, followed by a dynamic presentation, which mentioned topics such as plastic pollution, overfishing, and global warming. The members of Mindil Beach Markets spoke to the Secondary III and IV students about environmental issues in a way that made them want to get involved in saving our planet. They showed videos about overfishing so that the audience could really see the impact it has on our world today. The band



also displayed pictures of the effects that plastic in the ocean has on birds, and all the things we, as individuals, can do to contribute to the bettering of our planet.

This presentation was a huge change of pace in comparison to the other presentations students were used to. The music aspect of the show was more relatable for students, as opposed to simply listening to a person speak about the environmental concerns in the world. "I thought the presentation was really inspiring," said Secondary IV student Maia Mintzberg. "We got to have fun while listening to the music part of their show, but we also learned a lot of important things about the environment from the PowerPoint they presented afterwards."

After the presentation finished, the members of Mindil Beach Markets were kind enough to stay behind and engage with the students, answering their questions, signing autographs, and taking pictures with them.



The point of the show was to get a message across, and the band did an excellent job of making that message clear to the RWA student body in a fun, creative way.

Orientation Day

By Jennifer Lynch

Starting high school can be intimidating, especially when you might not know anybody. On August 27, Royal West Academy held an Orientation Day to welcome the new students to our school. The Student Life Association (SLA) organized a day for the new Secondary I students to bond, learn about the school, and have fun.



The students arrived early in the morning and were separated into groups. They participated in many activities such as water games, ice breakers, and banner-painting. The representatives of the Environment Committee helped out as well by organizing other activities. SLA members also gave school tours and answered many questions.

The day was a total success. At the beginning everyone was shy and kept to themselves, but by the end they were sitting together, laughing, and talking. Good luck to all the new students!

Terry Fox Run

By Mrs. Marie-Claire O'Neil

Secondary II students started the school year working hard on their fitness in preparation for our annual Royal West Academy Terry Fox Run. We were fortunate to have Fred Fox, Terry's brother, visit our school on September 6 to speak to all of the Secondary II students. Students enjoyed listening to stories about the late Terry Fox from a close family member. They heard how Terry went from a determined fun-loving teenager to a young man who inspired a nation.



The Secondary II students raised an impressive total of \$10,399 for cancer research. The two students who raised the most funds were Alexandra Belitsky and Jonah Fried. They will be accompanying Mr. J. Monacchino to the Terry Fox office to deliver the cheque.

Congratulations to all the students who worked so hard during the fundraising and training period.

Leadership Activities

By Maddy Lawler

The Leadership students kick-started this year with a bang! We were lucky enough to have some pretty cool animators help start up our unit this fall.

Dynamix visited the school on September 20, and we had an action-packed day: picking up marbles solely with tubes, and dropping eggs protected only by tape and several straws on cement—these were just a couple of examples of the activities.



The following day we visited Dynamix at Otterburn Park and took it to a whole new level: we dangled from ropes and hoisted fellow team members over a 15-foot wall! The various lessons we learned, such as the importance of communication, organization, positivity, listening to others, and patience, will always stick with us. The most important thing we learned, however, is that anything is possible!



September 26, we boarded the bus and headed out to Arbraska, an obstacle course in the trees. Every student had something different to take out of it. Some of us had to conquer a fear of heights, others had to learn the discipline of patience. As the day went on, the courses got harder, posing a physical challenge for some.



We were able to socialize and make friends with other groups that were there. All in all, it was a fantastic but exhausting trip, and we didn't want to leave!

Cross Country Run

By Justin Savoy-Davies

On October 3, the annual cross country run took place at Mount Royal Park. The cross country race is the biggest event that the GMAA hosts. Royal West Academy participated in every age category from Bantam to Juvenile.

The chosen day was fortunate enough to have marvellous weather. The sun was shining, there was a slight breeze—it was a delight. Runners competing from 2 km to 5 km all enjoyed the shade as they entered the forest. Up and down they went as they followed the trail. The RWA Bantam boys drank some well-earned water following their incredible race. The students were able to score just a few points behind their rival school, Loyola High School.

This was a very successful year for RWA at the cross country run! Following the competition, some of the participants from RWA were offered the opportunity to compete at the provincial championships.

All the students had a blast, as did the teachers. This event is open to all so sign up; we hope to have an even larger team next year!

Germany Exchange Highlights

By Audrey Baillargé

September 19, 2013: the day when all the bagging, chocolate bar sales, play practices, and serving at the Bardolators' dinner theatre finally paid off! Cheering "Wilkommen!" and wearing the t-shirts designed by contest winner Jeremy Sabelli, we greeted the German guests at Trudeau Airport with a giant banner. It was an exciting moment to match

