



A Word From The Administration



It's hard to believe but another great school year has come and almost gone! Royal West Academy students, parents, and staff have all contributed to making the 2013–14 school year a truly memorable experience.

Students and staff are hard at work preparing for end-of-year exams. Parents should review the exam schedule carefully with their child. As per Ministry regulations, anyone who arrives more than 30 minutes late for an exam will not be permitted to write the exam—thus receiving an unjustified absence. Parents are reminded that students are required to be in full uniform, including shoes, until June 5, 2014. After that date, students may choose to wear their Physical Education uniform for exams. Grad apparel is permitted after May 20.

During the period of June 3–5, 2014, there will be regular classes in the morning (until 11:31 AM) and exams or remediation in the afternoon, beginning at 12:30 PM. Students who do not have exams or remediation scheduled are free to leave the school or remain in the library. Students are expected to empty their lockers by June 4, 2014, at which time locks must be returned to your child's homeroom teacher. Any unreturned locks will incur a cost of \$8.50 which must be paid prior to receiving June report cards. Please note that the cafeteria will close on May 30, 2014. The regular exam schedule begins on June 9, 2014, and runs through June 18, 2014. Students need only report to school if an exam is scheduled.

Parents are reminded that May 30, 2014, is now a regular

school day. The Pedagogical Day originally scheduled for that day has been moved to June 6, 2014, as a result of the change in date of our graduation ceremonies.

In early May, the administration distributed transportation allowance cheques to students. Only students that live in the territory of the EMSB and are at least 2.4 km from Royal West Academy are eligible for this subsidy. If you qualify, please ensure that your child delivers your cheque to you.

Many students and groups have distinguished themselves in and out of the classroom in recent weeks. We would like to recognize some of those accomplishments:

- On May 9, students from Secondary I to Secondary IV elected Royal West Academy's new Student Life Association for the 2014–15 school year. Congratulations to the entire slate listed below:
 - Co-Presidents: Rachel Copnick & Mikaela Mailly
 - Treasurer: Max Taylor
 - Secretary: Jeremy Sabelli
 - Secondary V Representative: Manisha Patel
 - Secondary IV Representative: Samantha Fernie
 - Secondary III Representative: Ioannis Stroumbakis
 - Secondary II Representative: Stephanos Koziris
- The Environment Committee was recently awarded the Maple Grant from the EMSB Green Committee (*see page 4 for details*). The \$1600 grant will be used to improve the appliances used for RWA's Green Bean Café located in Room 104. Congratulations to Ms. Suarez and the Environment Committee.
- Congratulations to the members of the Robotics Club for capturing the bronze medal in the *Beatles* category at the provincial competition. Members of the Beatles Team were known as the "Flaming Pandas 2.0". The "Terminators" and the "N.E.R.D.S.com", also members of the RWA team, captured the silver medal in the *Search & Rescue* and *Dance* categories respectfully. Congratulations to all those who participated and special thanks to Mr. Nemeth and Mr. Munro for their leadership.





- Congratulations to Abhishek Chakraborty, a Secondary IV student, who recently represented Royal West Academy at the Canada-Wide Science Fair. Abhishek's project, entitled *Effects Of Folic Acid On Cells*, was awarded a gold medal at this prestigious event. Abhishek also came away with a \$4000 scholarship from the University of Western Ontario. The staff and students of RWA are extremely proud of you!
- Another young scientist, Logan Stack, was recently honoured by the Canadian Psychological Association for his entry in their competition at the high school level. Logan submitted his project, entitled *Voting: More Than Meets The Eye?*, originally presented at the RWA Science

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Mr. Kirk Kelly, RWA Governing Board Chair & RWA Foundation Director

Another great year draws to an end ... And a new one begins with a party!

I remember my surprise when my son, who had just started at Royal West Academy, told me the "Welcome Back BBQ" marked on the school calendar would be at noon. "But how can parents go if they're working?" I asked. When he explained that the event was just for students, I have to say I was very disappointed.

I think every school needs a party at the start of the year for the whole school community—parents, teachers, students, administrators, alumni, and the people who live around the school. We need to meet and greet, share our pride in our kids and our stories from the summer, introduce the new families to the RWA culture, and generally have a good time. At Royal West Academy, with families from West Island, South Shore, and Laval as well as the cities of Montreal, Montreal West, Westmount, Hampstead, Côte Saint-Luc, and Town of Mount Royal, it's even more important that we make the effort to get together at least once a year.

Well, it has taken four years of raising the idea and getting people on board. And now we're ready to do it. Best yet, a parent, Ms. Sarah Goblot, has agreed to head it up.

On September 19, 2014, there will be a "Start of the Year" party for the entire RWA community. We'll have hot dogs


and drinks, entertainment, information tables, sports competitions, a silent auction, and fun. It's a chance to meet other families and get a sense, if you need it, of just what a great school RWA is.

Royal West Academy already has lots of communities—there are families who support the sports teams, the Honour Band, Jazz Band, choir, and the whole music program, Bardolators and the musicals, robotics, the exchanges, Environment Committee, and on and on.

The Start of the Year party will bring all those communities together to make one Royal West Academy community.

So please mark your calendars. September 19, 2014, rain or shine. The first annual Royal West Academy Start of the Year Party. And look for details of the event in information packages this summer and on the school and RWA Foundation websites.

Now there are three ways you can donate!

- **By credit card:** go to www.rwaf.ca and click on 
- **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 capital campaign brochure 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 RWAF 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 at <http://rwaf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/RWA-PAC-Case-for-Support.pdf>.

Fair. His runner up prize included a \$500 monetary prize and an opportunity to present his project at the 75th annual CPA Convention in Vancouver, BC. Logan also received a \$1000 prize from Scotiabank for his work. Congratulations Logan!

- Congratulations to Ashley Halikas from Royal West Academy for her third place prize in the IDI Responsible Citizen Contest. Ashley's entry, entitled *What Does It Mean To Be A Responsible Citizen?*, was submitted in the Art and Writing contest. Ashley and her family have been invited to the 10th Annual Friendship Dinner. Congratulations Ashley.
- Once again this month, we are very proud to announce that one of our graduating students, Kayla O'Sullivan-Steben, has received a Academic Award sponsored by the Marianopolis Millennium Foundation in the amount of \$500. This award is given to students in recognition of outstanding achievement at the high school level. They are awarded to students attending a Quebec high school who achieve the highest academic averages among newly admitted candidates. Congratulations Kayla and good luck in CEGEP!

Some of our recent alumni have also continued to distinguish themselves:

- Congratulations to Steven Dahdah (Class of 2012) for receiving the Hydro Québec/McGill Entrance Scholarship. The scholarship is valued at \$5,000 per annum, up to a \$15,000 total. Steven receives the scholarship from the Faculty of Science and Engineering for his upcoming undergraduate degree. We are extremely proud of you Steven!
- Congratulations to Nivatha Balendra (Class of 2012) for her discovery of particular strain of *Pseudomonas fluorescens* bacteria. The bacteria is used in biocontrol methods to control oil spills. The discovery is taking Nivatha to Los Angeles, CA this month, where she is a finalist at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Nivatha and her mother were recently interviewed on CBC Daybreak with Shawn Apel. We wish Nivatha the best of luck in Los Angeles and her pursuit of her dream to become a doctor and researcher.

Finally, I would like to thank the many volunteers that help RWA provide an enriching educational experience for our students. In particular, I would like to thank Mr. Ronald Pau, volunteer editor of RWA News, for his efforts in producing a wonderful newsletter that keeps the RWA community informed and showcases the amazing accomplishments and talents of our students and staff. Special thanks to Mr. Pau's trusted assistant, Benjamin Vigny-Pau (Secondary II), for his

efforts in advertising and soliciting articles for RWA News on a monthly basis, and to our two student newsletter editors, Tanya Chen (Secondary V) and Sophie Sun (Secondary IV). On behalf of the entire RWA community, thank you all for a great publication!

To our graduating parents, we wish to congratulate you as well as your children and we hope that you will continue to support RWA in the years to come. We have enjoyed working with you to make Royal West Academy a cherished part of your child's life. We hope that RWA has contributed to the fulfilment of your child's future dreams and we wish everyone the very best. Good luck and be safe!

Spring Concert

By Christina Dahdah

Yet another school year is coming to a close and the Royal West Academy Music Department definitely likes to end on a good note. On May 8, the annual Spring Concert was held, featuring the talents of over 180 blossoming musicians.



The evening opened with a spectacular performance by the Secondary II band. This ensemble is composed of all Secondary II music students, many first-year musicians on their respective instruments. Through the performance of a variety of musical styles, the Secondary II band demonstrated their emerging talent, keeping the audience thoroughly entertained. From Renaissance-era pieces to more lyrical selections, the Secondary III ensemble performed with such precision and style, showcasing their ever-growing musicality. The performances by both grade ensembles blew the audience away, setting the bar high for the rest of the evening.

Up next was the Secondary I A Capella Choir, singing a variety of musical styles ranging from old English folk songs and traditional African hymns to songs from today's top hits. Though this ensemble is small, together their voices are mighty. They impressed everyone watching with their complex arrangements and vocal talents, raising the bar once again.





Ending the first half of the concert, Jazz Band took the stage and, as always, the crowd was soul-ed. Playing a variety of jazz styles, this ensemble definitely let their colours show. Their performance was remarkable and they truly demonstrated their talent both as individuals and as an ensemble.

Upon returning from intermission, the audience was welcomed back with an alto sax duet performed by Jonas Langer and Eric Liu. These two young men wowed the audience with their stage presence and musical talents, showcasing some of the individual talent that can be found within the Music Department.

It was then time for RWA Winds to take the stage. This ensemble, composed mainly of first- and second-year musicians, amazed the crowd with both upbeat and lyrical selections.

Last, but certainly not least, the Honour Band took their turn in the spotlight. They began with a technical challenge that left the audience breathless. They then followed with a lyrical piece that demonstrated the band's musicality as a unit. It was then time for the annual solo feature piece: this year, Kajaanan Mahendrarajah performed beautifully on solo tuba, showcasing both his musical sense and the impact that the Music Department can have on an individual. The band then performed highlights from the Disney movie *Frozen*, leaving the audience shivering with excitement.

As per tradition, before the final piece was performed, some thanks were in order. The Honour Band president and student executive prepared a speech and gifts for Ms. Purdy as a token of their appreciation, and the annual director's

award was presented to Christina Dahdah and Julia Warren. The evening was then brought to a close with one final performance by the 2013–14 Honour Band.



On behalf of all those who participated in the concert, a huge thank you goes out to everyone who made this evening possible. Special thanks go to Ms. Purdy and Ms. Macleod for the spectacular evening and for the even more incredible school year. Without all of your hard work and dedication, none of us would be where we are today. To all the performers, congratulations on a job well done! You have all made the RWA Music Department very proud; this evening definitely hit all the right notes.

Maple Award

By Ms. Christine Suarez

The Environment Committee has once again been awarded a green grant from the EMSB School Board.



The Maple Award, one of three offered by the school board, was granted to improve the Green Bean Cuisine and Café space in Room 104. The Green Bean Café has been a long established tradition at Royal West Academy, where students and teachers can find healthy vegetarian home-cooked meals. With this year's addition of the Green Bean Cuisine, students were able to participate in learning how to prepare delicious and simple vegetarian meals as an after-school extracurricular activity.

This Maple Award will enable the Environment Committee to not only enhance the Green Bean experience but to also further pursue their goals in raising awareness about the importance of living a sustainable and environmentally conscious life.

Spring Cleaning

By Kelty Trimbilas & Omar Valdez

After a long-awaited end to the cold, rainy, and unpleasant weather of "spring", it's finally time to stop postponing Spring Cleaning 2014! Spring Cleaning had been delayed due to bad weather, but now students were able to at last go out and enjoy the spring weather whilst helping their school environment.

This extracurricular activity's purpose is to clean up the environment of the Montreal West area surrounding Royal West Academy. Not only does this help portray the green image of our school to people with a vague idea of our

involvement with the environment, but also the image of the Montreal West area. This brings the community members and students closer together, creating a sense of familiarity amongst them. This in turn makes neighbours and citizens more at ease around our high school. Many high school students aren't always responsible, portrayed by actions towards the environment. The average high school student litters more than the average adult.

Spring Cleaning gives students the opportunity to work hands-on in helping keep a clean surrounding environment in which every student is familiar as well as when people are in the Montreal West area and are able to see how much students care about the environment. Seeing students cleaning parks in Montreal West sets an example to others who see us, encouraging a clean and respectable environment as well as demonstrating students' determination to devote some time to cleaning up our community.

We interviewed Mr. Diacoumacos, teacher responsible for Spring Cleaning 2014:

This isn't the first year that Spring Cleaning is being organized. How long has it been offered at RWA?

This is our 17th year that we're organizing the Spring Cleaning at RWA.

What credits are offered for participating in this ECA?

Initially it was a community credit, but we've begun



offering an environmental credit in the past five to six years. So environmental and/or community.

What's your favourite part of doing spring cleaning?

The acknowledgements that we get from neighbours when the kids clean up and show that they are good citizens of the Montreal West area.

Have you received any feedback from the administration/community on this ECA?

Well, from the community, yes. The administration has always been happy that we offer this program. Maybe next year we'll even make it an Autumn and Spring Cleaning, having it twice a year instead of once.

We also interviewed Ajay Patel, a Spring Cleaning Secondary IV student:

Why did you choose to do the spring cleaning ECA this year?

I needed an environmental credit this year and I liked the idea of Spring Cleaning. I love the environment, it's an important part of our everyday lives. We should be doing our best to protect it.

Have you done this ECA before? Will you do it next year?

This is my first year doing Spring Cleaning. I was curious and had heard about it, so I decided to sign up. As of now, I'll surely sign up next year as well.

Montreal West is the environment in which RWA students spend most of their high school days. Montreal West is full of parks, where many students spend their free time. During Spring Cleaning, it is the perfect opportunity to clean up our second-home environment, and is also a great chance to meet new people. Secondary I to Secondary V students are welcome and highly encouraged to participate in this ECA. While some join with friends, others attend the event solo. To many people's interest, Spring Cleaning is a double-advantage ECA! Approximately 40 people have signed up this year and the more people who drop by, the greater increase in opportunities to socialize with other students like yourself while helping maintain and set an

example for a cleaner and healthier environment.

Either sticking to socializing with familiar faces from your own grade or possibly stepping out of your comfort zone and mingling with individuals from various other grades, Spring Cleaning is the place to be! Hope to see you next year!

Experimental Theatre

By Ms. Freda Segal

This year, my junior drama classes worked on improvisation, skits, scripts, and apartment characters wherein each child would become a different character for a period of six weeks.

The exercise is designed to get the students to understand character development.



Because the groups put in so much effort, I decided to turn their work into a stage performance called Experimental Theatre. It was in fact experimental since, due to the fact that the skits and scripts would be introduced by several of the unpredictable apartment characters, we really had no idea what would happen.

Because so many activities take place in our school, my students were unable to use the auditorium for practice until the day of the show. This, I was sure, would lead to many problems since it was impossible to practice transitions between scenes without the use of the auditorium space.

When the day of the performance arrived, I was somewhat unnerved because, though I knew the acting of the play would be good, I had no idea how my students would handle the transitions. All I was able to do was to tell them to allow for no pauses in between scenes.

There was no need to worry. They did this brilliantly, running around the auditorium pushing tables and chairs, and chasing for props—all the while adlibbing so that the audience would not be aware of the fact that we had had not practiced in the theatre space.

Kudos to our children.

Spring Bike-In

By Sean Hennegan

On the April 25, Royal West Academy students biked in to school from all around the city for the annual Spring Bike-In. This event, which is part of Environment Committee's Earth Week, happens twice a year in order to show students how easy it can be to minimize car usage. Small groups of participating students bike together on planned routes and eventually meet at Trenholme Park on Sherbrooke Street West, where they take pictures and perform a bike lift.



The students and teachers travelled together from the park in a single pack with decorated bikes and ringing bells, making sure that they were both seen and heard. Other students joined the group along the way and did the same. When they successfully arrived at the school, the students did a second bike lift and walked into school with their helmets in hand and a sense of accomplishment. Whether they lived in Montreal West or off the island entirely, they had completed the Spring Bike-In together and promoted cycling.

Whenever it's possible, biking to school is a great option. It's better for the environment than driving a car, it can be good exercise, and the satisfaction alone is worth the effort. Most of the time it is possible, so make a habit of biking to school every day. You'll have to try it yourself to know how great biking in to school can be, so make sure to sign up for both Bike-Ins next year!

Marine Biology Trip (take 1)

By Amrit Kabo

During the last week of April, a select amount of Secondary V students from Royal West Academy's enriched biology course had the opportunity to go on a bio trip in Saint Andrews, New Brunswick.



Students were given the chance to explore, in person, many things learnt in class, such as different types of marine animals. The trip consisted of a boat ride where students collected a wide range of bottom-dwelling marine animals straight from the Bay of Fundy to study. There were multiple labs involving marine creatures, such as sea stars, sea urchins, and sea cucumbers, where these animals were

studied under the microscope. Lastly, there were two main projects: the study of zonation at Holey Point, and animal behavioural experiments.

Zonation was a project that consisted of students grouped into fours, counting the amount of marine animals such as perrywinkles, dogwinkles, green crabs, barnacles, and side swimmers as well as the amount of different types of seaweed found in one quartile (around one square meter in size). Each group would count around 30 quartiles along Holey Point.

The second major project was the "Marine Animal Behaviour Experiment". In this project, groups of two would conduct an experiment on either sea urchins, barnacles, or crabs. For both projects, students had to make up posters showing their results and were presented on the last day of the trip.

The students and teachers left Saint Andrews on May 3, and were all given a great life experience.

Honour Band @ Philadelphia

By Ella Farkas

This year, Honour Band travelled to the beautiful city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for a four-day performance tour on April 24–27.



The trip began with a ten-hour bus ride that consisted mainly of watching movies and Ms. Purdy threatening to sing *Do You Want to Build a Snowman?* Upon arrival, we went to Dave and Buster's, where we ate quesadillas while watching the hockey game. We then played arcade games—the claw machine was a big hit.

