



On the second day of the trip, we played at Delaplaine McDaniel School for a group of amazing kids. They were all so friendly and enthusiastic; it was personally one of my favourite parts of the trip. We then went to the Franklin Institute where we saw the *One Day in Pompeii* exhibit as well as others like a collection of photographs from National Geographic and a science exhibit. We then went on a *Centipede Tour* which was a two-hour tour of historic landmarks in Philadelphia, where we visited things like the Liberty Bell. After dinner, we saw a Mozart Celebration concert at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, which blew us all away.

On our last full day in Philadelphia, we performed at Arbor Terrace at Chestnut Hill, a senior citizen's home. We then went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Eastern State Penitentiary. Our last activity was a ComedySportz show, an improvised comedy act between two teams.

On behalf of the Honour Band, thank you to our amazing chaperones: Ms. Purdy, Mr. Pita, Mr. Bateman, Ms. Macleod, and Mrs. Koch!

## Marine Biology Trip (take 2)

By Ketna Patel

On April 29, fifty-one Royal West Academy Secondary IV students departed Montreal to begin their journey to Saint Andrews, New Brunswick for the annual Marine Biology Trip. The trip lasted five days and every single one of those days was an experienced-filled adventure. On the first evening that we got there, we had supper and then got to explore the beautiful town of Saint Andrews.



On the second day, our first full day there, we were divided into three groups and did three different activities. We went into the laboratory and explored different types of plankton under the microscope. We then embarked on a boat called the Fundy Spray that took us through the Bay of Fundy. This was by far the most memorable thing we did on the trip and everyone enjoyed it tremendously. We got to do and learn so many things on the boat. We measured the salinity of the water, the temperature of the water, and the light penetration in the water. After that, we got to throw a giant net in the water that dragged out a whole lot of





marine organisms. We had the opportunity to search through them and discuss them. We were able to observe them further at the laboratory. We also got to go visit the touch bowl, which is a little pond filled with marine organisms such as sea stars, crabs, sea cucumbers, and clams. We were able to touch and pick stuff up.



Later that evening, we did some labs that would prepare us for the big project we would be doing the next day, called zonation. We looked at different types of seaweed and different types of organisms that were found near the shore.

The next day was zonation day. This was the big project everyone was talking about earlier. We had to set foot onto the shore of the Bay of Fundy and measure the high and low tides. Then we had to count the types of organisms and different types of seaweed found along the shore. This project was truly an experience. Despite the extremely heavy rains and winds, it was one of the most memorable experiences on this trip. After all our data was collected, the teachers explained to us how we would have to display our data onto a presentation paper and would then have to present it to them. The rest of the night was spent working on this project.

The next day, our third full day, was a little bit more of a relaxing, yet still working, day for us. We were presented with another small little project that would be presented. The majority of the day was spent worm-digging! We once again set foot onto the shore of the Bay of Fundy with just a shovel and a bucket and began digging. There were all types of worms to look for. There were the typical earth worms, blood worms, ribbon worms, etc. That same day, we split up into three groups and began our hunt for the magnificent crabs. We looked for crabs and marked their shell with a little bit of nail polish and then marked down our data. Later that night, the students were given time to work on



their two projects which had to be presented the next day.

May 3 marked the last day at the Huntsman Marine Science Centre. The students woke up bright and early to present their projects to the teachers. Once everyone was done, we got free time up until lunch to go and explore the town of Saint Andrews, a beautiful little town with all the friendliest people. After lunch, we hopped into the bus to get ready for the ten-hour bus ride back to Montreal. By this point, all the students were exhausted and excited for their ten-hour nap. At the same time, they were all so sad that this amazing trip organized by the wonderful biology teachers was actually coming to an end.

## Eco Bike Trip

By Michael McDade

On May 17, a large group of Royal West Academy students departed the school at 7 AM to go on the annual Eco Bike Trip. The weather seemed bad, but luckily it cleared out by the time we arrived at our starting point and was sunny for the whole trip. The trip covered 250 kilometres, biked over roads and rail beds. We biked south from our starting point in Ayer's Cliff and dipped into the state of Vermont, visiting the town of Newport situated on the US side of Lake Memphremagog. After a day of biking we settled down into our campsite and had spaghetti with sauce for dinner.

On the second day, we returned from the USA, after having lunch in Enosburg Falls. We successfully crossed the border without a hitch, and went to our second campsite.



After a good night's rest we ate our breakfast and hit the road. We biked first to Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, and then continued to Chambly where we had lunch. After lunch in Chambly we went on our final stretch home. From Chambly to Brossard, and then onto Île Notre-Dame and Île Sainte-Hélène which together form Parc Jean-Drapeau. We crossed

the river and made our way back to Royal West Academy to be greeted by friends and family.

The trip took us through the amazing scenery of southern Quebec and northern Vermont. We got to see amazing forests and cycle through the famous Green Mountains. Although the trip was not without its own difficulties, it was an overall success and the conditions couldn't have been better. The weather was amazing with blue skies throughout. The cycling was amazing and eating vegetarian was an eye-opener. I would definitely recommend this trip to anyone with a bike!

The trip was absolutely amazing and I'm sure everyone who went on it enjoyed it immensely. I would like to give a big thank you to all the chaperones who helped make this trip a reality, including Mr. Dufault, Mr. Nemeth, Mr. Munroe, Mrs. Partington, Mrs. Zuccaro, Mrs. Suarez, and others.

Trips like these are what makes RWA great and I hope I can go again next year.

## Celebrate Our Children

By Ms. Freda Segal

I have always been amazed at the calibre of the students who attend our school, but this year was exceptional.

At the beginning of the year, the Arts teachers were asked to focus on the very important topic of bullying, which plagues most schools and can result in devastating consequences.

In accordance with the request, I attempted to inspire my students to create scenes about bullying. After a short period of time, one of my Secondary I students, Britny Slimovitch, showed me a ten-minute play she had written on the subject.

When I read it, I was absolutely astounded at the fact that a child this young could produce something so powerful and accurate on this subject. But this girl amazed me even more when she took on the task of directing her play, taking many hours to perfect it. As her teacher, I guided her and added a segment to make it even more effective. However, Britny did most of the work herself.

Once her play was ready, I showed it to my classes and their reaction convinced me that the production was too good to keep to ourselves and that many Ethics classes could profit from a discussion based on the play.

Thus, as a follow-up, I placed a notice in the bulletin, asking if there was a student in the school willing to film the piece. Expecting a senior student to respond, I was somewhat surprised when another Secondary I student, Chloe Ohana, offered to do the job. When I asked her what experience she had in filming, she replied that her parents had recently



bought her a very expensive camera, that she had read the entire manual, and that she had filmed many family events.

However, what really made me want to go with Chloe was the following: when I asked if she enjoyed reading the manual, Chloe responded that she hated every minute of it, but she did it to honour her parents. Hearing this response, I was hooked.

Chloe never let me down, spending hours on filming, refilming, editing, adding music, and burning DVDs. In the end, she produced a most professional film which I intend to donate to the school board so that Ethics teachers throughout the system will have access to a ten-minute film that can lead to many profitable discussions, so that children will have some idea regarding how to react to bullying.

And all of this occurred because of a small group of highly motivated Secondary I students.

Let us celebrate our children.

## ***An Interview With: Ms. Suarez***

By Claudia Cavaliere

Interviewing Ms. Suarez was really fun and a good way to get to know an amazing teacher.

*What is your favourite cartoon?*

When I was younger I loved Sailor Moon. I used to wake up at 6:30 am just to watch it

before going to school—I was in high school. Now I like to watch *The Simpsons*.

*What is your favourite type of music?*

I'm really into indie music.

*Who have you been listening to lately?*

I'm currently into St. Vincent, she's amazing.

*What makes her so amazing?*

She's poetic, her lyrics are really good. *Prince Johnny* was the song that I really like from her.

*Where was the best place that you traveled to, and when?*

When I was 20 I went to London, Paris, Madrid, and Lisbon. I backpacked to all those cities by myself.

*What made it the best?*

It was fun, it was a good way to meet people. Since I was alone, it was easier for me to approach people and for people to approach me to make new friends. I had

stayed in a hostel. I actually ended up staying in Madrid longer than planned because I met new people in the hostel I was staying at. It was definitely a good experience.

*If you can have a super power, what would it be?*

I would so fly.

*Why is that?*

Because it's a liberating power, to be able to take off whenever you want to be alone. Also, it'd be fascinating to see things from a bird's point of view, to look down and see the world. Imagine just going from rooftop to rooftop. That's why I enjoy swimming so much.

*What do you mean?*

When I swim in the deeper parts of the pool, it's the closest thing to flying.

*That's very fascinating!*

A big thank you to Ms. Suarez for letting me interview her. Knowing more about a teacher can make school more amusing.

## ***An Interview With: Mrs. Zuccaro***

By Siam Hossain

Do you ever feel that you never get to know your teachers well enough despite seeing them almost every day? You might think they are these machines that are only programmed to teach all year long, however some of our teachers are pretty interesting, once you actually speak about something other than school.

Therefore, just like CAPTCHA determines whether or not the user is human, I hope this interview with Mrs. Zuccaro proves that she is not an instructing robot but a real person.

*What are your hobbies?*

Cooking, baking, biking, reading (especially comics) ...

*What is your favorite movie?*

I don't think I have a favourite. At your age, I liked movies like *Almost Famous* because it was about 1960s and 1970s music of which I was very fond of as a teenager—and it's well done, a true story, good acting, etc. Nowadays I watch anything with a good story. I can't remember the last movie I really loved.

*What's the craziest thing you've ever done in your life?*

Surfing? It was crazy because I had no idea how to surf. I was in Santa Monica and the beach was very crowded. It wasn't so much that I thought I would drown, I was afraid that I'd hurt other people on the beach. I almost did.

*What would be your most cherished moment in life?*

I used to teach students with special needs and teaching them was sometimes amazing. Every small





accomplishment they made felt like a huge discovery to them and I enjoyed being a part of that.

*What are some things that scare you?*

Environmental disasters, nuclear war, dictators ...

*If someone made a movie about your life, who would you hope plays you?*

I don't really care. Any good actress...Meryl Streep?

In conclusion you can see that Mrs. Zuccaro passed the CAPTCHA test. She is a nice, caring, and thoughtful person who loves cooking, biking, and reading. She isn't afraid of doing wild things, however she is afraid of environmental disasters, nuclear war, and dictators.

This may sound cheesy, but next year in I encourage you all to get to know your teachers better.

## **An Interview With: Ms. Henriquez**

By Ryan Friend

I decided to do an interview with Ms. Henriquez, my visual arts teacher, who I find to be a very interesting, welcoming, and kind person.



*Hi Ms Henriquez, what are some of your favourite foods?*

I'm a foodie, so I like to try new things that I haven't before so there's a lot!

*Who are some of your biggest inspirations in art?*

My late uncle has influenced me a lot, so he's one, and Frida Kahlo.

*What are some of your favourite things to do on a weekend?*

Just to relax!

*What's the best thing about Royal West Academy?*

That the motivation the students have makes me want to be the best teacher that I can be.

*Where are some places you'd love to go on vacation?*

Somewhere where there can be beach, art, food, culture—so probably Barcelona!

*What's your favourite season of the year?*

Winter.

*What kind of music would you listen to?*

I like to listen to all kinds of unique and different artists to try new styles.

*If you were stranded on an island, what three things would you bring?*

My sketchbook and pencil, which can count as one, my husband, and my music device.

## **Halo Road Race: Training**

By Ajay Patel

It's that time of year again! The snow has completely melted and the weather is getting warmer. Spring is here, which means it's time for the annual GMAA Halo Road Race.



Every year, Royal West Academy, along with many other elementary and high schools, participates in this race, which takes place on Mount Royal. Similar age groups run together and races are from one to five kilometres long. You don't need to be an experienced athlete to partake—it is open to anyone who is interested.

This year, the race date was postponed to May 28 from April 30, giving everyone more time to practice. As a Secondary IV student, I would be running 5 km race.

Training sessions took place Tuesday mornings, Wednesdays after school, and Fridays at lunch. Each practice was organized by one of our gym teachers, Mrs. O'Neil. Each session consisted of a series of different stretches, some simple exercises, and of course, running. Training lasted an average of 45 minutes per session.

I consider myself a decent runner, but it had been awhile since the last time I had run for a long period of time. Consequently, the first couple of practices were tough and I sometimes found myself tired from the extensive running, but I always pushed myself to continue. This was to prepare students planning to participate in the race. The training exemplified the amount of running to be done during the race. Everyone performs better with a little practice!

Here are the RWA results from this year's Halo Road Race:

- Bantam Girls: Alison Looper, 1st place; Catherine Plawutsky, 5th place
- Bantam Boys: Peter Delis, 2nd place; Evan Allman, 3rd place, Raken Van Riel Barrett, 4th place

These are just the top five finishers—all the RWA students did amazing.

I will absolutely join Halo Road Race again next year. To all students who are interested, it is an enjoyable experience and also offers a sports credit. See you next Halo Race!

## **Spartan Race**

By Emma Davidson

On May 16, more than 30 Royal West Academy students participated in a 5 km Spartan Race on Mont Tremblant in support of the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation.



The Spartan Race is the world's leading obstacle race and is designed to test the limits of all competitors from gym



beasts to those just seeking a good time. A Spartan Race features obstacles ranging from a historical spear throw to climbing 21 ft. ropes to dragging yourself through mud.



Chris Chung, an RWA Secondary IV student, placed first. But, winning isn't all that matters in this kind of race. What matters most is that you challenge yourself and try something new. Some obstacles require teamwork which ensures that no one will be left behind. Almost everyone who competed finished the race and all who participated had a blast; it's not every day you get to climb a mountain caked in mud!

When competing in a Spartan Race, you never know what to expect other than to finish the race covered in dirt and with a grin on your face. As the Spartan slogan goes, "You'll know at the finish line."

## Midget Girls Tennis

By Alisia Agostinelli

In May, Royal West Academy's Midget Girls tennis team met up at the Club Sportif Côte de Liesse tennis club. The tennis team consisted of several Secondary III and IV students of different skill levels who have been playing and practicing as well as acquiring new skills in the sport for different periods of time.



The games were organized into two categories: singles and doubles games. The players of each category were chosen to play opponents of different skill levels as well as different school teams. The tournament matches were shortened to four games, and the winners would be chosen once they reached four wins.

The different opponents faced came from several schools such as Kuper Academy, Herzliah High School, Villa Maria High School, Lower Canada College, and Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School. The opponents faced in both categories were quite tough, but RWA's players proved that



they were on the ball and ready to play, almost beating LCC and ECS, who won both the Singles Tournament and Doubles Tournament.

The players on the team showed true sportsmanship while having fun with their friends from different schools, on and off the courts. As well, the team encouraged and cheered on their teammates on the courts, laughed off their losses off the courts, and showed that they were having a good time together.

Emily Gurman and Emma Fishman are Secondary III students who have both been members of the RWA tennis team since Secondary II and have been playing tennis since they were six years old. Both girls demonstrated skill and practice on the courts, but have remained on the team because they find it an opportunity for a fun sports credit as well as a way to enjoy a sport together. They are looking forward to next year's season.

## Girls Rugby

By Breanna Sherman

If the Girls' Rugby team learned one thing this year, it would be that it's not all about winning or losing, it's about how you play the game.



Led by our coaches Mr. Zigby and Jean-Louis, and our captains Shalee Walsh and Ali Byers, the Royal West Academy Wildcats ended the season with a record of 1-4-1. Starting off, we had almost 30 girls signed up for the rugby team, but with practices happening every week, and our games getting closer, it seemed we were dropping in numbers.

For our first game, we were 20 people, but as the season went on, we lost players due to loss of interest, injuries, etc. Playing any sport with close to no substitutions can be hard—if somebody needed to sit out for whatever reason, we'd have less players on the field than the other team.

Going into our final game with a record of 0-4-1, and missing two incredible players, Thalia Chow and





Ashley Halikas, due to concussions, I know that many of the Wildcats didn't feel like we could pull through. Winning the game with a score of 10–0 was a fantastic and well deserved way to end the season. Our hard work had finally paid off. Captain Ali Byers said, "I'm so proud of every single girl on the team. The progress made throughout the season is amazing considering it was most players' first seasons. Couldn't have asked for better people to play with."

I'd say that most girls were surprised by how much they enjoyed being on the team. We all bonded and we're going to miss everyone graduating next year. Overall, we had a great time this season and we'll try to come back stronger than ever next year. Go Wildcats!!

## Badminton

By Matteo Cattelan

This year's badminton season was very successful for the Royal West Academy badminton team in the bantam, midget, and juvenile age groups, in both singles and doubles. With the help of Mr. Dufault, who coached all the players throughout the season, they achieved many victories at the GMAA Championships at Pierrefonds Comprehensive High School on April 26.



For the boys, the Rasmussen–Wang doubles team won bronze medals in the bantam age group, and the Castonguay–Sossin team also won bronze in the midget age group. In midget singles, Isaac Lefebvre took home the gold and Paul Xie took the silver medal. In the juvenile age group, the Huang–Yu doubles team won a silver medal. The midget boys and midget girls teams took home gold medals as well.

Overall, the 2013–14 RWA badminton season had an excellent outcome, which led to two bantam players, two midget players, and three juvenile players making the GMAA Provincial Badminton team, which was also coached by Mr. Dufault.

## Boys Juvenile Rugby

By Jeremy Zwaig

This year, the Boys Juvenile Rugby team was as good as it has been in recent school history. With a perfect regular season record, the Wildcats are comprised of more than 30 fast, dedicated, and hardworking players on their roster.



There were some nail-biters throughout the season, such as a game against Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf. After ten minutes of holding Jean-de-Brébeuf out of the try zone, the Wildcats' forwards marched down the field. Once inside their red-zone, Jean-de-Brébeuf got a penalty allowing scrumhalf Justin Davies to make a penalty kick for the last play off the game. That put the team up by one point to win the game 8–7.

The whole season has been full of crazy games, including a stretch of 8 days with four games. With an immense amount of hard work, and players willing to switch in and





out of the rotation, the team came out of that stretch with four victories.

With playoffs in full swing, the team has been pushing themselves in practice and has been doing everything in their power to prepare for the physical and psychological rollercoaster that is to come. On May 28, the Wildcats met Heritage Regional High School in the semi-finals, winning 33-0 to ensure a spot in the finals, where they will meet Jean-de-Brébeuf.

It is certain that Jean-de-Brébeuf will be seeking to knock off the regular season's best team and get revenge for their season loss. Both teams are excited to play, in search for the banner, but the Wildcats will be ready and not plan on slowing down.

## The RWA Rugby Community

By Edward Khidirov

In May, Royal West Academy played its final two games of Juvenile Boys Rugby. This team of over 30 members went undefeated during their regular season thanks to their

determination and grit. They will have faced their rivals Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf in the final. Win or lose, the tight knit rugby community at Royal West Academy would like to thank all the supporters who came to watch and cheer for the team this past year.



RWA Wildcats rugby is an extraordinary community that welcomes any player, no matter the amount of experience they have. Personally, I found that despite the limited amount of rugby knowledge I had when I first joined this year, I was quickly accepted into the community. The team values determination and passion above all else, and this drive is what ultimately led them to the final.

I recently interviewed seasoned veteran Sunny Pal, who has been playing RWA rugby for the past four years:

*What first pushed you to join RWA rugby?*

I wanted to get into a contact sport but I didn't like football because of the concept of stopping the play every time the guy went down.

*What kept you in rugby all these years?*

The atmosphere. It's not just a sport, but it's a community. You have jokes with people all year long and you develop bonds that can't be recreated anywhere else. Not only that, I wanted to prove myself. When you join rugby, you can't just quit, it's addicting.

*You mention the rugby community, what is it that makes this community special?*

Rugby is a demanding sport. When you spend that much time with the same people, they tend to become

like your family. It creates an environment where anything can be shared—all jokes are just taken as jokes and no insults are taken personally.

*Some people call rugby a waste of time and too much work. What do you have to say to those people?*

I tell them that the feeling you get on the pitch, playing collectively working together with your team, is worth more than the time and effort. The feeling you get when you step off the pitch, whether you win or lose, makes you want to keep on going back for more.

*Finally, is there any advice that you have for RWA students looking to try rugby next year?*

It doesn't matter how good you are when you join. If you actually try your hardest and pour your heart into the game, you'll be better than most players on the pitch.

## My First Year In Honour Band

By Jonas Langer

Last year, in Secondary I, I was skeptical about joining the Royal West Academy Honour Band. I thought that I would not be good enough, that there was too much practice time, or that I simply would not fit in. Even with these things in mind, I decided to try out. Fortunately I made it in, marking the start of an exciting year.



I still remember the day that we received our first pieces of music and how intimidated I was. Looking at multiple pages of complicated rhythms, time signatures, and sixteenth notes, I immediately regretted my decision of joining, and was worried that I would not be able to play what was given to us. It was only after the first few band practices that I realized that most of the band was in the same boat as me, which was reassuring. As there were more and more practices, the band became better and better at not only playing individually, but together. Yet, there was something so special about playing music together with 50 other people.

Playing various different styles of music in a band with so many others was only one part of being in Honour Band. As the year went on, I found myself with many new friends. The people who were already my friends also became closer. Even though the evening practices on Thursday were long and tiring, they were rewarding, and the time I spent hanging around the neighbourhood before practice with my new friends made the day something to look forward to.

Looking back, I am glad that I ended up joining the Honour Band. Not only did I vastly improve my musical capabilities, but I met and became friends with many people that I am very close to now.