

RWA



News

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OCTOBER 2014



## A Word From The Administration

By Mr. Tony Pita, Principal,  
Ms. Lindsay Heckersbruch, Vice-Principal  
Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

The first of our grade level trips has come and gone. Secondary I students visited Quebec and its regions on September 17–19. The trip allows 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 Mmes Dupaul and Bourdeau as well as the many staff supervisors.

On October 21, Royal West Academy hosted its annual RWA CEGEP/University Information Evening. Representatives from both English and French CEGEPs as well as universities located in Montreal and Ontario were in attendance. After a general overview of the CEGEP and university admissions process, students and parents were able to visit representatives from two CEGEPs or universities of their choice for 25-minute presentations on the programs offered in those institutions. A third session, over 30 minutes, allowed students and parents to ask individual questions of all the CEGEPs and universities present. Over 275 students and parents were in attendance.

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 722 applications. We are presently in the process of interviewing over 400 applicants and have offered approximately 70 families an early acceptance based on their qualifying test results and their report cards. We expect to fill the 175 Secondary I spaces by December 2014. Congratulations to those that have chosen to join the RWA family! Special thanks to all the staff that has been committed to this process, including Ms. Taylor and Ms. Spirolias who make all our visitors feel welcome, and Mr. Mateus, Ms. Wineberg, and Ms. Di Pietro for administering the qualifying exams.

Congratulations to Secondary V students Matthew Oppenheim, Alexandra Katz, Zachary Brookman, Jeremy Zwaig, Sabrina Elkins, and Sophie Sun, for being selected for the Hospital Opportunity Program for Students. The HOPS program provides an opportunity for students from a variety of high schools to observe and assist medical personnel within a large hospital setting. The Auxiliary of the Jewish General Hospital arranges for students to spend a half-day per week for two five-week periods in various departments of the hospital. Special thanks to Ms. Di Pietro and Ms. Wineberg for their work in preparing students for the selection process.

Once again this year, the Secondary II students embarked on a fundraising campaign for the Terry Fox Foundation. Students worked tirelessly to raise \$11,000. Congratulations to the Secondary II class and thank you to Ms. O'Neil, Mr. Monachino, and Mr. Aiken for their leadership.

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 not wear jeans or any other pants with their skirts or over



their school pants. Students may only wear their Physical Education jogging pants if necessary.

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 carried out at least once every year.

Finally, the RWA Governing Board has elected Mr. Kirk Kelly as Chair and Mr. Michael Delis as Vice-Chair for the 2014–2015 school year. We congratulate both gentlemen, and we look forward to working with all the members of the Governing Board to improve educational services and school life for students and parents at RWA (*see page 5 for details*). The RWA Governing Board will be meeting at 7 PM in the school library on the following dates:

- November 5, 2014
- December 3, 2014 (tentative)
- January 14, 2015
- February 11, 2015
- March 11, 2015
- April 8, 2015
- May 25, 2015
- June 3, 2015 (Volunteer Appreciation Reception)

Meetings are open to the public. A complete list of all members and their contact information as well as minutes of past meetings, can be found by visiting the RWA website and clicking on “Governing Board”.

Enjoy the beautiful colours of autumn!

## SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Ms. Jasmin Uhthoff, Vice-President, RWA Foundation

### Raffle to start in November

Back by popular demand, the RWA Foundation will once again hold a raffle—a bigger and better raffle! In addition to being able to win a pair of Habs 2015–2016 season tickets (1st prize is a pair of tickets to watch 20 games, 10 games for 2nd prize, and 5 games each for 3rd, 4th, and 5th prizes), we’ve added 6th, 7th, and 8th prizes! Lucky winners could walk away with a 52” HDTV, a pair of Giant Simple Single bicycles, or two 3-day passes to Osheaga 2015.

Tickets go on sale in November. The early bird draw for the Osheaga passes will be held in May 2015, and the final draw in September 2015, to coincide with the Start of Year celebration. Tickets are \$40 each.

We are counting on parents to help sell all 4500 tickets—selling all the tickets would net us over \$150,000, giving us the funds needed to move ahead with phase 2 of the renovations (air conditioning and new chairs). We are asking ***all*** Royal West Academy families ***to sell at least five tickets each.***

Four new parents attended the Foundation’s October meeting, and came away as elected board directors. We are thrilled to welcome Kim Reid, Louis Boissonneault, Romesh Vadivel, and Patrick Marcovecchio to the board!

### You can play a part!

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.





## India Exchange

By Romy Shoam & Clara Stewart



This summer, the 2014–2016 India Exchange received our correspondents from India. After nearly a year of preparation, fundraising, and planning, only the experience of hosting our billets was left. All the Royal West Academy students were filled with anticipation and excitement for their guests to arrive. It was difficult to get to know them only by electronic correspondence, but we finally got to meet them face-to-face when they arrived in Montreal on August 21. What was to come was a week of cultural discovery; they got to learn our customs and traditions while they told us about theirs.

The first evening was spent at a local restaurant. We became familiar with not only each other, but with the billets of our classmates as well. It was a little awkward at first because we did not know what to talk about with our billets. Following that initial evening, we were then separated from everyone else for the weekend, which was used to get to know our billets personally.

That first weekend drew to a close and soon enough we were on our way to Ottawa, our first planned trip, where we visited a few museums and walked through the ByWard Market.

The next day was spent in Old Montreal. In the morning, we had a scavenger hunt, leading us to different landmarks of the Old Port. This activity was very precisely planned and was indeed quite fun. In the evening, we boarded a disco cruise touring around the Saint Lawrence River. This activity helped us relate to each other. Everyone was dancing, Canadian and Indian, and having a great time—Bollywood songs and popular Canadian songs were played. We learned several Bollywood dances, and we showed them dances to songs like the Macarena.

The next day we visited Quebec City and learned about the Natives' culture at the Huron Village. We had a lunch of traditional food, like sunflower soup and cranberry tea.

The following day we visited the Olympic Tower where we took the elevator and experienced the stunning view of our city. We also visited the Montreal Biodome. We

had dinner at Sucrerie de la Montagne in Rigaud, which consisted mostly of maple syrup and other traditional food. The Indian group then gave us a show of traditional Bollywood dancing.

Friday was spent jet boating across the Lachine Rapids, which was very exhilarating.

When it was time for our billets to leave on September 1, we could not believe how quickly the time had passed. We certainly did not want it to come to an end. We were already making plans of what we were going to do in India, even though we realized that was going to be a very long year and a half away. We had bonded not only with our billets, but also with the other Indian students on the exchange. We waved as the bus our billets were taking to the airport pulled away, hardly believing that the people we had shared our lives with for the past week and a half were not going to be with us anymore. When we got back into our cars, we felt empty and strange without our billets sitting next to us. It was an amazing experience we would cherish for a long time, maybe for the rest of our lives. All we can say is that we can't wait to go to India in 2016!

## Light The Night Walk

By Taylor Morganstein



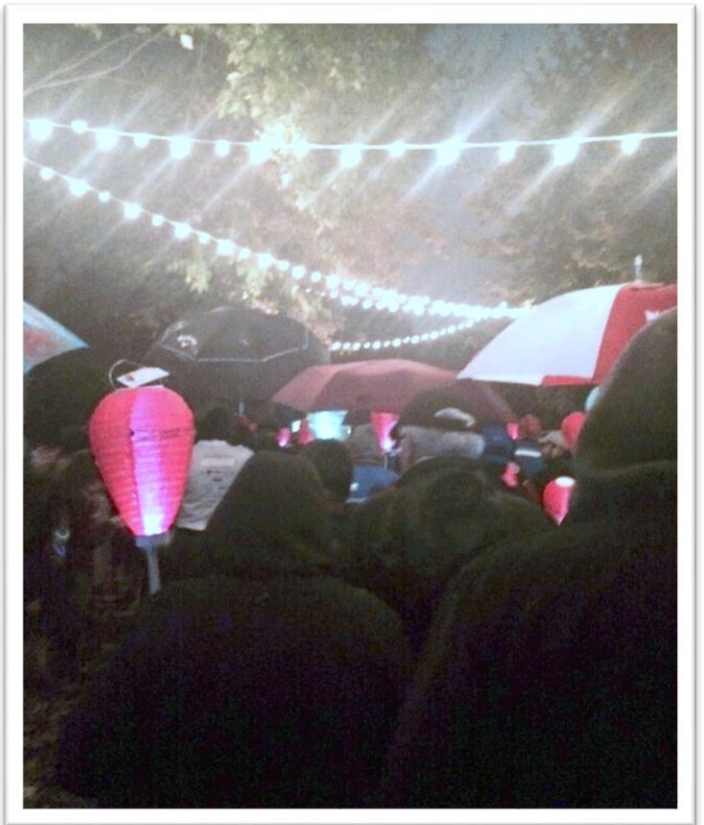
Although October 18 was a cold and rainy night, the hearts of everyone at Parc Jean-Drapeau taking part in the Light the Night Walk were definitely warm.

Light the Night Walk is an annual walk taking place in October to raise money for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada ([www.lightthenight.ca](http://www.lightthenight.ca)). Organized by Ms. Liscio, this walk is offered as a sport or community credit at Royal West Academy. This year alone, the students raised \$2000! Money raised goes towards funds for blood cancer research, free educational materials for patients and their families, local counselling programs, and education sessions for healthcare professionals. The walk takes place all across Canada, and we're lucky enough to have one right here on the beautiful island of Parc Jean-Drapeau!

Walking into the main gathering point before the walk, you're greeted with the sound of enthusiastic performers on stage. Then, as you start to look around, you'll notice that many people are holding balloon shaped lanterns. These lanterns, donated to the walk,

light up the whole park and give off a very heartwarming vibe. The majority are holding red lanterns which represent those walking in support of the cure. Then there are white lanterns which represent those walking in memory of a loved one lost. Finally there are the gold lanterns, held by those who are survivors or who are currently battling the disease.

In their other hands, most people are holding a McDonald's coffee, courtesy of their food truck, which is one of many free options for food. Once they're settled in, most groups congregate around the set up tents, which are usually assigned to the larger "teams" of people that walk. This year, there were young kids on stage, talking about how much this walk had helped their treatment and how much it meant to them to have us there. Once they were done, a group of kids conducted a quick and fun zumba session on stage to warm everyone up, and then the walk started!



Not even the umbrellas overhead could stop the excited buzz and talk of the people as we started our walk. Looking up and only seeing lights always gives me chills. As the walk progresses, the trail goes along the water, leaving you with a beautiful view of the city lights and buildings. Many stop for pictures and admire how lucky



we are for such a great city. Through different zones, different music can be heard, ranging from live acoustic covers to a live band to Virgin Radio animators dancing in their tent encouraging participants. Closer towards the end, there is a silent kilometre. This is meant to be a reflection period to think about all the lives lost to the terrible disease. On the ground on the sides are posters showing hundreds who lost their lives. Although this is extremely sad, it always motivates me to want to help even more! After what doesn't seem like very long, you're back at the opening gates.

Lanterns in hand, everyone takes their final pictures of their "team", says their goodbyes and heads into their cars to make their way back home.

I recommend this credit option to anyone who enjoys helping towards a cause while gaining a beautiful memory!

## Waste Reduction Week

By David Gerchicoff

During the third week of October, Waste Reduction Week is celebrated across Canada. Since its inception in the mid-1980s, it has been helping Canadians to take action and adopt a more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

At Royal West Academy, Waste Reduction Week is organized by the school's Environment Committee. We organize a variety of activities to help students reduce waste in their day-to-day lives.

The kick-off event was a workshop on how to make a waste-free lunch. Some of the activities offered this year included: making granola, making detergent, how to compost, and a clothing exchange. These activities were realized thanks to Mme Dupaul and Ms. Suarez.

Around fifteen students participated in each activity and received an environmental credit after completing three activities and packing waste-free lunches throughout the week. The week concluded with a party for the Park 'n' Lot, a community garden project. There was food and music, and it was a blast! It featured RWA alumni and former EC leader/teacher, M. Désilets, who came and joined us all the way from Switzerland!



Gabrielle Goldman, fellow EC member and co-leader of Waste Reduction Week, holds this issue close to her heart. When asked about it, she responded, "to me, raising awareness about how to create a waste-free lifestyle is important to maintaining and improving the environment. As the Environment Committee, we strive to promote sustainability, which encompasses the reduction of our waste as individual students and as an entire school community."

The EC is proud to announce another successful Waste Reduction Week and encourages you to join us for Earth Week this coming spring!

## The Governing Board Report

By Mr. Kirk Kelly, Chair, Governing Board

People have funny ideas about governing boards. Some think they are all powerful and others think they are a waste of time. Like all things Canadian, the truth lies somewhere in the middle.

Governing boards came into existence with the creation of the linguistic boards as part of the 1998 education reform. At Royal West Academy, it is composed of the principal, parents, teachers, representatives of both the non-teaching professionals and support staff, students, and community representatives, all of whom are supposed to work in partnership to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning opportunities. The powers of a governing board are not unlimited. They really touch on four areas:

### 1. "General" Issues

- Analyzes the school's situation and, based on the analysis and the school board's strategic

plan, adopts the educational project and oversees its implementation and periodic evaluation

- Approves the school's Management & Educational Success Agreement (MESA), rules of conduct and safety measures
- Approve the anti-bullying and anti-violence plan
- Informs the community of the services provided by the school, makes public the educational project, the success plan and the MESA of the school, and reports on the evaluation of the implementation of the MESA

## 2. Educational Services

- Approves the approach for enriching and adapting Ministry programs and the development of local programs
- Approves the time allocation for each subject, ensures that the compulsory objectives of the programs of studies will be achieved, and that the rules governed by the certification of studies are complied with
- Approves the schedule of educational activities which changes the students' regular schedule
- Approves the approach to implementing student and special education services

## 3. Community Services

- May organize educational services (outside teaching periods), social, cultural, or sports activities
- May, in the name of the school board, contract with persons or organizations for goods and services
- May require a financial contribution from users of these goods and services

## 4. Physical and Financial Resources

- Approves the use of school premises and enters into agreements regarding their use
- May, in the name of the school board, solicit and receive voluntary contributions from persons or organizations to support school activities
- Adopts the school's annual budget and submits it to the school board for approval
- Is consulted by the principal regarding the school's needs for goods, services, and repair/improvement of the premises

An election was held on September 22 to select five parent members of the governing board—there is a total of eight parent members at any time—seven candidates were in the running. Two new parent members, Ryan Ortiz and Phillip Rennison, were elected (both have children in Secondary I). Re-elected were Lori Rinaldi, Kirk Kelly, and Nijad Dahdah. Nijad was also elected as Royal West Academy's parent representative to the Regional Parents Council.

The governing board held its first regular meeting on October 16. First order of business was the election of the board executive. Kirk Kelly was acclaimed as chair, Michael Delis as vice-chair, and Michael Mendelson as treasurer. There were no candidates for secretary, so the decision on this position was postponed to the next meeting to give the board time to consider alternative ways to select someone for this position.

The board voted to request that both Dr. Mahesh Sharma and Dr. John Simms be invited to be the board's community representatives. Dr. Sharma, a Concordia professor of logistics in the John Molson School of Business, has a long history of involvement in the community and at Royal West Academy, having served for many years on our governing board. Dr. Simms is one of the founders of Royal West Academy and has held various positions including chair of the English Montreal School Board and mayor of Montreal West.

A key order of business is the review of the board's internal rules of operation that set out the composition of the board and how it is to operate. The internal rules cover many situations but they are not exhaustive. When something arises that is not covered by RWA's internal rules, we defer to the board rules as set out in the EMSB's Governing Board Manual. The internal rules can be found on the RWA website under "Governing Board". The Governing Board Manual can be found on the EMSB website under "Parent Info".

The remainder of the meeting was spent with reports from various committees and organizations in the school.

The next Governing Board meeting will be held November 5, 2014, at 7 PM in the school library. Parents are welcome to attend but can only speak during the question period.





## LOST AND FOUND POLICY

Please be advised that the Lost and Found boxes are cleaned out on the 15th of each month. While labeled items are returned to their owners, several bags of unclaimed unlabeled items are removed and donated to charity every month. So if you are looking for lost items, make sure to look for them before the 15th!

The Lost and Found bins are located in three areas at Royal West Academy:

- outside the new gym
- outside the guidance office
- in the main office under the teachers' mailboxes

In the meantime, please label all your belongings!! (e.g., uniforms, shoes, outerwear, lunchboxes, books, etc.)



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov 3	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
Nov 5	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
Nov 7–9	Honour Band retreat
Nov 10	Remembrance Day ceremony
Nov 11	Remembrance Day
Nov 17–20	Bullying Awareness Week
Nov 21	Pedagogical Day
Nov 26	Secondary III vaccinations
Nov 26	Parent-Teacher interviews @ 2:30 PM–5:15 PM and 7 PM–9 PM
Nov 27	Pedagogical 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  
**November 2014 edition of the RWA News!**

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

**Deadline date: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2014**

Thank you for your contribution!

# RWA



# News

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**RWA News** is published during the academic year (from September to May) on the Royal West Academy website at [www.royalwestacademy.com](http://www.royalwestacademy.com). Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at [rwanews@gmail.com](mailto:rwanews@gmail.com).

