

RWA



News

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DECEMBER 2017–JANUARY 2018

A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Mr. Jeff Bateman, Vice-Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

Mr. Steven Manstavich, Vice-Principal



The Administration would like to start by wishing members of the Royal West Academy community a prosperous New Year. December and January has started out very busy. Our Penny Wars and Home Room Challenge fundraising to support Tyndale St-Georges, Holiday Toy collection to support Westmount Park Elementary School (thanks to Ms. G. Purdy and Ms. S. Macleod), and Food Drives to support families from John Grant High School (thanks to Ms. S. Di Pietro) kept everyone busy and providing items and funds for others less fortunate.

There are a number of recent additions to the RWA community. Ms. Natasha (Tash) Salmers is replacing Mr. J. Bateman in the gymnasium and classroom while he helps in the school office. Ms. Eva D'Adamo is replacing Ms. Helene Ibrahim, our school secretary, for the next little while. Ms. Jenna Labelle, an addiction councillor, is with us on Fridays, and Ms. Lindsay Faul, a social worker, is with us on Mondays. Joining our evening maintenance staff are Mr. Peter Malanos, Mr. Steven Wells, and Mr. Peter Alexiou.

The traditional Holiday Music Concert, lead by Ms. Purdy and Ms. Macleod, was once again a must-see. We heard from the A Cappella choir, RWA Winds, RWA Jazz Band, Vocal Fire, and of course our Honour Band. Renditions of old classics and new arrangements of not-so-often heard favourites filled the evening and set us on our way for the holiday season.

Our Tyndale Week raised \$10,361. This includes Penny Wars, Dress Down, and Home Room Challenge activities. Secondary V won the grade level challenge, winning the prize of an afternoon off that will be awarded on February 26, 2018. Homeroom 204, Mr. F. Girardin's Secondary I group also earned an afternoon off for raising \$507.50. Honourable mention goes to homeroom 215, Ms. A. Reddy's class, for raising \$370.35. A huge thank you to Ms. Salmers and the Leadership and Leisure Studies classes for their commitment to the Penny Wars grade-level challenge and to the homeroom teachers for organizing and helping to motivate the student body for this amazing local charity.

The school musical this year ran on December 18–21. *Pandora!* was written and directed by Mr. D. Floen. The original musical score was written by Chris Barillaro (class of 2004) and lyrics by Taylor Baruchel. This was the second production of the all-original musical. The original version was performed in 2008—several members of the original cast came back to see this year's production. It was wonderful to see and chat with a number of them and catch up on where they are and what they have been doing. This year's cast performed beautifully and need to be congratulated on their talent and dedication. Ms. E. Kuch and her team of volunteers, both parents and students, made the performance seamless and a pleasure to watch.





January started with assemblies and class visits for course selection for students in Secondary I–IV. Every student must complete and return a signed course selection form to be registered for the 2018–2019 school year. The office accepts changes to course selection later in the school year, but space can be an issue in some electives. If you want to make a change, just send in a signed letter indicating the change to Ms. C. Reece, our school organization technician. If your child is not graduating and is not returning to RWA next year, please send in a letter to the school indicating this.

Wow do we have talent! Our annual Variety Show took place on January 12 with over 20 acts, exposing us to a “variety” of songs, music, dance, and stand-up. The proceeds from the event went to Doctors Without Borders and the Royal West Academy Foundation. If you missed it, learn from your mistake and go next year! A huge thank you to all the Execs and SLA for organizing the event, and to Ms. A. Dillon, Mr. J. Zigby, and Ms. Macleod for their leadership and guidance.

The Secondary I and II students were treated to a unique science experience on January 16–17. Each science class visited the planetarium dome that was set up in the Memorial Gym. Lots of “oohs” and “aahs” were heard as they were led through the cosmos by Mr. Mario Rolle.

The Music department and their classes treated us all to a pair of wonderful concerts on January 17 (matinée)

and January 18 (evening). As usual the display of talent was amazing, leaving all that attended (a full house with standing room only) culturally satisfied and proud of the accomplishments of our students and children.

In the sports arena, our teams continue to perform and compete. It is ill-advised to report on the success of a season before its completion, so we will leave it at that until our next RWA News publication.

We were all very pleased to hear that an RWA alumnus, Maxim Noreau, was named to Team Canada’s hockey roster and will represent us at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. Maxim is no stranger to the international hockey scene. He currently plays in the Swiss National League A with SC Bern. He played for and captained Canada’s entry in the Spengler Cup tournament, winning gold. Maxim has had affiliations with the Minnesota Wild, New Jersey Devils, and Colorado Avalanche of the NHL. Go Max Go! We are all looking forward to seeing you shine in Pyeongchang.

In other hockey news, RWA alumnus Lewis Zerber Gossage (class of 2012) was recently named Player of the Week in ECAC hockey. Well done, Lewis! Lewis plays for Harvard University in this eastern USA NCAA hockey league.

The School would also like to acknowledge the accomplishment of Sari Warshawsky in winning the First Page student writing challenge (Secondary I–III category). Sari’s story, *Nameless*, explores how the

pressure of perfection in the digital era has transformed the world in the year 2167. Sari will receive a one-year subscription to OwlCrate which delivers a fresh box of young adult books to readers on a monthly basis. In addition, RWA will receive 50 free books for the library. Way to go, Sari!

Our Winter Carnival day, organized by SLA, was a huge success even though we had to move the date due to inclement weather and the eventual cancellation of school. With students having the opportunity to ski, snowboard, tube, snowshoe, play hockey, visit a maple sugar farm, or just take part in activities at the school, there was something for everyone. It is a wonderful change of pace for the students and staff just prior to mid-year exams. The administration wants to thank Mr. Zigby, SLA, and all the teachers for their help in making this activity possible.

Note that due to the cancellation of school on January 23, the tentative pedagogical day scheduled on April 16, 2018, will now be a regular school day to make up for that lost day—Day 5, as published.

This is true all year, but we need to be especially careful in the winter months with snow and ice on the roads, snowbanks on the sidewalks and hoods and hats impeding sight lines. When you are driving near the school, especially on Ainsley Avenue, please reduce your speed to prevent any unfortunate accidents. A reminder also to parents and all those dropping students off at RWA: Ainsley Avenue is a “no stopping” zone—tickets have been handed out for stopping and unloading. Students are to be dropped off on Easton Avenue only. This is not new—please adhere to the laws and help make our community safer for all.

Royal West Academy is always a busy place! You can stay current by visiting our website at following us on Twitter, and checking the calendar and your child's Schoology account.

Science Fair

By Ms. Jennifer Pevec,
Science Fair Coordinator



Ever wonder how many species of bacteria can be found in your home? Or how music affects your mood?

Maybe you've heard that chewing gum can increase your concentration levels—but is it true?

Royal West Academy students will be answering these and many other interesting questions at the 29th annual Science Fair, happening on February 15, 2018.

In the morning, almost 400 students Secondary II–V will present their projects to judges from both the academic and professional worlds. Afterwards, the Science Fair will be open to the public at 11:30 AM–12:30 PM. The public will once again be invited to attend that evening at 7 PM–8 PM. Students look forward to presenting their projects during these public viewing times as the pressure of official judging will be over.

The day will end with the awards ceremony. Science Fair participants, family, friends, and judges are all welcome to attend. Hope to see you there!

For more information, contact Ms. Jennifer Pevec at rwasciencefaircoordinator@gmail.com.

McGill Science Libraries

By Ms. Stephanie Germain,
Librarian



Last November, McGill University librarians hosted Royal West Academy for a science-themed visit. A lucky group of RWA students were given the opportunity to connect with McGill's amazing research materials from the past and present.

In the Osler Library of the History of Medicine, students explored the history of dissection, body snatching, and

the use of medical cadavers. Students had the chance to handle rare books and primary source material, some published as early as the 1500s.





In the afternoon students suited up to enter the Nanotools Microfab lab, which supports research in Physics, Medicine, and Photonics, and also boasts being one of the cleanest research labs in all of Canada.



To end the day, students visited the Marvin Duchow Music Library to learn about the history of recorded sound. Students listened to some of the earliest versions of sound recording, including music etched onto an Edison phonograph cylinder.

The day was a big success and it is hoped that McGill Libraries will offer Royal West Academy similar activities and tours again in the future.

Taiwan Exchange Program

By Michelle Levy

Exactly one year ago, 25 Secondary III students got the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to travel the world,

experience new cultures, meet new people, and learn about the world's diversity and different lifestyles. Thanks to the exchange program that is offered every year to students at Royal West Academy, I got the chance to travel to Taiwan and Hong Kong.

In Secondary I, the school organizes an exchange program for RWA students and schools from around the world. In the past, RWA students have had the chance to travel to India, Germany, and many other amazing countries. Last year, my grade got the opportunity to travel to Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and then a side trip to Hong Kong. Parents and teachers in both schools worked hand in hand to properly pair up students in both schools that they believed would get along well and share common interests.

Once we were paired up, we exchanged email addresses and started communicating and connecting with our billets. Six months later, the Taiwanese students travelled to Montreal for two weeks. We met them at a restaurant with our families, took them back to our homes, and then showed them our city. Over the next two weeks, our school organized activities such as tree climbing at Arbraska, visiting the Olympic Stadium, and Old Montreal as well as Quebec City and much more. After they returned to Taiwan, we all kept in touch with them throughout the year and could not wait to experience their lifestyle and see their country.

Throughout this next year of waiting to see them again, we did many fundraising events. We helped out at school plays, bagged at a grocery store, and sold chocolates. This fundraising helped financially to make this incredible trip possible and realistic.

When the time finally came, the 25 RWA students along with four teachers took a flight from Montreal to Toronto, followed by an 18-hour flight to Hong Kong, and then a 2-hour flight from Hong Kong to Taiwan, where we reconnected with our billets and met their families. For the next week, we stayed at their homes, experienced their culture and their different lifestyles. We saw the city and took part in many activities such as going to the beach, snorkeling, visiting museums, and experiencing a whole day in their school.





William Mendelson, a RWA student who took part in this exchange program, states, "One weekend, my billet took me to a Taiwanese resort. We stayed in a hotel where there were amazing and cultural activities. I got to experience their culture, try new foods, and be a part of their family. It was very special to have that opportunity and get to hang out with a kid my age and his family that I would've never met if it weren't for this amazing program."

Much like William's experience, many of the Taiwanese families generously surprised the RWA students. This helped make the students feel as if they were a part of their family.

Knowing that it would be a while before we would get the chance to ever see our billets again, our goodbyes were very difficult and sad. We left for Hong Kong where the second part of our amazing trip would leave us with more unforgettable memories. We stayed in a beautiful hotel with our friends, while partaking in more outstanding activities such as going to Disneyland, an amusement park, and walking around the country.

William shared his experience as follows, "I think that the major differences were school and just the everyday life. It was very strange how during the day at their

school they have 'nap time' since everyone is always so tired from all of their schoolwork. At the end of each school day, most of the Taiwanese students go home and do more homework and even go to cram school (a special place where they have short condensed lessons). Another thing that I found very interesting was how normal it is for all the kids to ride on mopeds when commuting."

The annual exchange program offers all students an amazing chance to bring our education to life while making unforgettable memories and lifelong friends.

Wildcats' Wild Hearts

By Eric Huang & Kristina del Paggio

Royal West Academy students are known to strive for their academics. There is, however, one sport that RWA particularly excels at: the girls volleyball program, led by Mr. J. Mateus. This program alone accounts for many of the school's sports banners. One of the three girls volleyball teams had an astounding season this year in the GMAA, going undefeated through all 12 of their games. To add to their long list of accomplishments, the Midget Girls finished off the season with a thrilling playoff win against Villa Maria high school.



After their big win, I asked the captain of the volleyball team, Kristina Del Paggio, what the biggest difference was between this year and last year, when they didn't win the banner. Kristina responded, "I think that what helped us a lot to win was our work ethic and chemistry. Over the past year, our team spent hours training together so that we understand one another. But the thing that really made us stand out was our mentality. It gave us the edge we needed. We were determined to bring home the banner this year and to overcome last year's devastating loss."

As a matter of fact, a big part of these girls' success was their heart. Their love of the game was unmatched by any other team. Every week since the beginning of school, they have spent hours mastering their craft. The way they pour their heart into every game is what makes them a winning team. As a result, this championship team is now headed to the provincials where they will get the chance to show their raw passion for the game and compete for a provincial championship.

Dance Show: A Cultural And A Community ECA

By Emma Rothstein

Royal West Academy offers many extracurricular activities that target so many people with different

interests. Dance Show is an extracurricular activity that is held every year to exhibit our school's best dancers.

This activity begins with tryouts in September, and gets carried all the way through the year until the big show in March. Tryouts are held for dancers as well as choreographers. Practices start and they go on for six months. The dancers and choreographers put in a lot of hard work and dedication into this show for them to be ready for two shows in March.

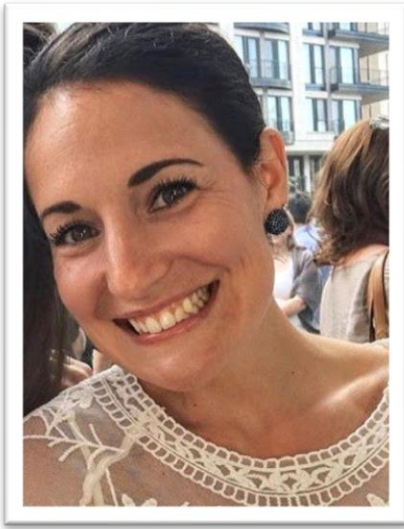
Something unique about this event is that for the show, there are always videos included between each scene that follow a storyline—most school dance shows have a theme, but this one has a story. What's also so special about RWA Dance Show is that it is mainly student-run. The students in charge are the ones that make all the calls and the decisions necessary for the production of Dance Show—they are called execs. Every year, the Dance Show fundraises and donates the proceeds to an organization called Dans la rue, a charity that helps homeless teenagers that are in need.

There is a lot that goes into Dance Show that not a lot of people know of. To be able to do justice to the amount of effort and time put into the show I interviewed the execs as well as a teacher that is in charge of the whole show. Senior exec Alex Harboun expressed that the execs' role in Dance Show is organizing the entire production. The execs experience a lot of stress as they are planning the whole show and have to make sure everything gets done. Although there is stress, it results in a satisfying and worthwhile production that many people enjoy and have an unforgettable experience partaking in.

Alex says, "Something I find especially rewarding is seeing the younger students join Dance Show and watching them make new friends through the show and seeing them improve as the year goes on. It's such a good feeling knowing that it's the beginning of their Dance Show career, I remember being so excited to get to be a part of something so amazing."

After interviewing a student in charge of the show, I decided to incorporate an interview from one of the teachers that produces the show to add more information. Ms. J.-A. Cayer has been producing the show for many years. Unlike the execs that take care of





the creation of the show, she takes care of the students and does a lot of behind-the-scenes action for the actual show in March. The teachers are really there to let the execs take charge of the creative process by coming up with a theme and videos for the

show, and the teachers just oversee them.

An important part of the teachers' responsibility is choosing the execs. During this process, they interview Secondary III students who hope to become an exec the following year. There are certain qualities that you need possess to put on a show like this. Says Ms. Cayer, "One of the main things we look for is leadership. It needs to be kids that we can count on that know how to take initiative and that are motivated, passionate, organized, and how you solve issues."

Dance, Dance, Dance!

By Alois Orozco

Dance Show is an extracurricular activity organized by students from Royal West Academy. Once a year, they perform their dance routines and show us all their amazing talent. This year, Dance Show will take place on March 23, 2018. The cost for one ticket is \$15, and all profits will be donated to Dans la rue, a charity for homeless people.

I interviewed one of the six executives of Dance Show, Jillian Rodin. She is just in Secondary IV and has already taken on many responsibilities—a big one being this club.

I first asked her about her history with dancing. She informed me that she began dancing ballet when she was four. After, when she turned seven, she started tap dancing until she was eleven. When she arrived at RWA, she immediately joined Dance Show. Dancing, to Jillian,

was a passion. As her years in high school went on, she became a choreographer for Junior Girls, one of the many scenes of Dance Show. Now, she is an exec in charge of choreographing and organizing Dance Show, planning out the themes for scenes, collecting sponsor forms, and much more.

The number of people involved in this show is quite jaw-dropping. "Roughly 150 people help set up Dance Show," Jillian told me. She also said that there were 21 scenes to be performed on March 23. They include various styles of dancing such as ballet, salsa, hip hop, etc.

Jillian let me know that she choreographed Secondary IV Boys. "It's challenging because there are 12 guys and only two execs. The guys are crazy but we're friends with them so it's really fun. They can be very hyper and they get distracted but it shows that they are excited about performing," she said. As a guy who is friends with many of the Secondary IV Boys members, I can tell you that these guys are indeed very hyper and crazy at times, but they are also willing to learn. "You can tell that they want to learn about dancing even though they might not catch on as fast as the girls," Jillian told me. "Dance Show is going to be amazing this year."

Hopefully, this article has built your eagerness for Dance Show. You should go check it out on March 23, for the price of only \$15. Your money won't be wasted—it will support homeless people in the hopes of helping them get off the streets.

Samosas: A Delicious Treat For A Good Cause

By Catherine Pepin

For many years, people have been eating a traditional Indian delicacy called samosas. This potato and spice filled pastry is also enjoyed here at Royal West Academy. Once a cycle, RWA students gather to buy these delicious treats from the Social Justice Club. Ms. A. Holloway, a teacher and head of the Social Justice Club, says, "They just tend to be a favourite. They are easy to take and go, they're also delicious, and they are a little bit different than something that students would take from home."





The Social Justice Club sells samosas to raise money as well as awareness for various fundraisers. In the past years, they sent the proceeds to organizations helping Syrian refugees and the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal. This year they decided to send their profits

from the samosas sales to an organization called 60 millions de filles. This organization helps young girls in Tanzania go to school. The Social Justice Club also decided to continue donating to the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal who work to provide a safe and supportive space for aboriginal woman and children.

Last year, the Social Justice Club raised \$5000 and they hope to do the same, if not better, this year. Next time you enjoy one of these tasty treats, reflect on those in the world who are not as privileged as you are and the good that you can do by buying a samosa.

SLA Dance

By Jasmine Puterman-Salzman

Royal West Academy's Student Life Association held an outstanding dance on October 13, called *Sporty Soirée*. Students and their guests showed off their sports attire and it was a night to be a part of. It was the first dance of the year with a great turnout of approximately 300 kids in attendance.





There were delicious treats as always, music to make everyone dance and boogie away, and a photobooth to make great new memories. The evening was a big success! The profits made from the dance went to a Puerto Rican hurricane relief foundation. Thanks so much to all who attended and the chaperones who helped out.

USED UNIFORMS ACCEPTED ALL YEAR!

Home & School accepts used uniforms all year long. If you have used uniforms to donate to the Used Uniform Sale in June, you or your child can drop items off at the school store on all regular school days during the lunch hour, or at the main office during regular school hours.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan 29–Feb 2	Mid-year exams
February 5	Pedagogical Day
February 6–9	Sec II trip: Stoneham QC
Feb 6–9	Sec V trip: New York NY
February 12	Pedagogical Day (afternoon)
February 12	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
February 13	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
February 14	Salon des inventions
February 16	Pedagogical Day
Feb 19–23	Mind POP French
Feb 19–23	Staff Appreciation Week
February 22	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
Feb 22–23	Senior Robotics Competition
February 28	Anti-Bullying Pink Shirt Day
Feb 28–Mar 10	Art trip: Italy
Feb 28–Mar 10	Iceland trip
March 1–7	Computer Science trip: San Francisco CA

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!

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. Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at rwanews@gmail.com.





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