

RWA



News

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MAY 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



Welcome to the final edition of RWA NEWS for the 2017–2018 school year. Within you will find many interesting stories of the accomplishments and undertakings of our students and community. All are worthy of your time as they will reflect the dedication of our students, staff, and parents that make this community what it is. Interestingly enough, most are not about academics, but that is what May certainly is.

On June 6, 2018, classes will end and the SLA will hold its farewell BBQ, the first major activity for the new SLA slate, elected on May 4. Remember that cafeteria service ends on June 4, 2018, with June 5 being a pedagogical day.

The exam schedule and student procedures for exams are posted on the school website and should be referred to regularly to ensure every student knows when they need to be at school and what is expected of them during the examination period. As per Ministry regulations, anyone arriving 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 1. After that date, students may choose to wear their Physical Education uniform for exams. Grad apparel for Secondary V students is also permitted.

The annual Book Fair on May 2 was its usual success, an opportunity for students to purchase their summer reading books or pick up a book for pleasure.

The Spanish classes helped Royal West Academy celebrate Cinco de Mayo on May 7, filling the auditorium and school with so much more than food, music, and games (*see page 17 for details*). A fantastic cultural experience coordinated by Ms. Almeida, Ms. C. Holloway, and their students.

Spring music concerts and drama presentations filled the month with more cultural exposure, showcasing the talents of our students. Rugby, football, track & field, and Halo made up our busy GMAA spring calendar—some completed and others just entering their playoffs at the time of this writing. Our students practice/rehearse and perform/compete hard to represent us well in these activities. Your coaches, directors, and teachers work equally hard to offer support to these students so they can experience success both in the playing/performing arena and in the classroom. We applaud their dedication to the school mission and their profession.

While we had terrific success from both our boys and girls track teams once again this year, we feel it is important to mention the ongoing success of one group in particular: the Juvenile Girls Outdoor Track Team capturing the 2018 GMAA banner. This is the fifth outdoor banner that this group of girls, some additions and some subtractions, have won in their RWA track & field careers. This is an amazing legacy for others to aspire to. Thank you to Ms. Di Pietro for her



coaching commitment this year. Ms. O'Neil must be congratulated not only for her success as a coach, but also her ongoing dedication to the sport of track & field here at RWA.

There have been a couple of returning and new members to our staff this month. We would like to welcome back Ms. Marika Bateman as our exam clerk, rejoining the team for her third term—she will also be offering some tutoring and exam transition support for Secondary I students. Ms. Alexandra Dimas joins our staff, helping with payroll in the office while Ms. Spiroulas is away—please help us make Ms. Dimas feel welcome.

Royal West Academy is very proud to announce that Mme Christy Tannous will be joining the administrative team next school year. Due to the growing population of the school, RWA has been granted a permanent third vice principal.



Mme Tannous comes to us from Pierre de Coubertin Elementary School in Saint-Léonard, where she was the vice principal for the last four years. Formally she was a French teacher at Laurier Macdonald High School and did a practice teaching term here at RWA with Mme Cheff. Welcome aboard Mme Tannous!

Alison Engo (Secondary III) continued her success at the Canada Wide Science Fair in Ottawa on May 19–21, receiving her fourth goal medal of the spring (*see page 6 for details*).

Congratulations to Kevisha Williams (Secondary V) on being awarded a Persévérance bursary from Fonds 1804. She will receive her award on June 3 at Plaza Centre-Ville.

We will be saying goodbye to all our Secondary V students, but in some cases to families that have been members of our community for over a decade. This could be sad, but as we walk the hallways, covered with murals and mosaics, the old mixed with the new, we

can see and feel their legacy and influence all around us. Thank you for all your contributions to our school community.

Yours sincerely,

The 2018 RWA Administration

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Mr. Mitch White

Thank you students!

It is always heartwarming when students give back to the school and support the new auditorium campaign. I would like to thank the students whose amazing performance at the sweetest concert of the year—the Dessert Concert—brought in \$3834 in donations. Additionally, Ms. Koyounian's Secondary II drama students raised \$1360. Thank you!

The auditorium, for which we are raising funds, is for the students. The students of today already benefit from the sound and light system that the Foundation installed, supported by generous donations from families, many of whom are no longer at this school. The students of tomorrow (and some from today) will benefit from the air conditioning, chairs, and all-round improved auditorium, which will be supported by the families who are at the school now. Students will also benefit when they return for their class reunions.

So I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the parents who have donated their support, be it financial and/or time, to the auditorium campaign.

I know that we all have other important things going on in our lives, and helping out our school may not always be a top priority. But think about the message that we are giving our children by not being a part of this beautiful pay-it-forward initiative that the Foundation is

knee-deep in: the execution phase of the auditorium renovations.

Being at Royal West Academy, you, as parents, committed in your registration contract to be a part of the culture at RWA and to help and support the school. Now I know many of you help out at many levels of the school—and for that we are both thankful and grateful as nothing could get done without the generous support of those parent volunteers.

Unfortunately, that is just a minor part of the parent body, and it always seems to be the same dedicated parents that help out. Just imagine how lucky your children are to receive a private school quality education at a public high school for a fraction of the cost. So how can you support? Donations are always appreciated and you can donate at <https://rwaf.ca>.

You can play a part!

More importantly, we need volunteers. Come to the first Foundation meeting in September 2018. We need help in all areas from architecture planning, to communication, to special events. Experience is not required—just enthusiasm.

Experience with WordPress? We are looking for a web guru. What do we need from you? RWA **back-end website maintenance**, layout, and features of website back-end to. Help with **maintenance and additions to the website**. Work with other RWA members for keeping the site up to date and prioritizing needs, among other tasks. And thank you to Ken Elman, who “graduates” from the Foundation this year as his daughter graduates from RWA. You will be missed.

For any questions, suggestions, or to let me know you’d like to keep up to date about our meetings, email me, Mitch White, at info@rwaf.ca.

Now there are three ways you can donate!

- **By credit card:** go to <https://rwaf.ca> and click on “Donate Today!” at the top of the page.
- **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 RWA Capital Campaign information package, please email your mailing address to info@rwaf.ca and we will gladly send you one; or you can check out the online version at <http://rwaf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/RWA-PAC-Case-for-Support.pdf>

Sec IV Trip: Boston

By Rylee Wolch

The week of April 9, many of my Secondary IV classmates and I got the opportunity to go on their annual grade trip to Boston MA. The trip took place over four incredibly busy and amusing days. Kyla Janhevich, a student that had the opportunity to go on the trip, said, “I found the trip was well organized! The activities that we did and the places we visited interested me and I had a lot of fun!” The teachers did their part in helping to make the trip very fun and relaxing for everyone by having everything planned out perfectly. The students were able to witness just how much planning went into the trip because of how organized every activity was. We did many activities per day, resulting in the trip never having a dull moment.

We first arrived in Boston around 2 PM and the teachers already had us experiencing Boston’s Museum of Science. Our second night in Boston was really entertaining. Since dinner took place at the Fire+Ice restaurant, we had the unique experience of creating our own meals by picking from a selection of fresh foods from what the restaurant calls “The Market.”



Later that evening, students got to enjoy Boston's longest running non-musical play, *Shear Madness*. This murder mystery twisted with comedy is an interactive play where the audience gets to take part in the story by choosing who they think the murderer is.

The highlight of the trip for most people was visiting Harvard University, where students got a guided tour led by Harvard's very own students. Says Kyla, "Harvard was my favourite part of the trip. It was really cool to see the university because it has such cool stories and an interesting history! Also the tour guide made it so interesting and fun." Having a guided student-led tour allowed everyone to gain an understanding of what it is like to attend such a prestigious school as well as learning about many untold secrets. For this reason, every student was engaged in the tour and was left wanting to see more of the university and hear more of Harvard's tales.

Most of the dinners and lunches were spent at Quincy Market, one of Boston's most famous tourist attractions, which gave the students an opportunity to experience what it is like to be a tourist in such an amazing city.

Everyone was sad to see the trip end because of the amazing time that they had, but also glad that they now have all these fun stories and memories to share with their families and friends.

Leadership Trip

By Manny Bizogias & Nino Lombardi

When it was first announced that the Leadership students would be participating in an overnight sleepover excursion at our school, we were not quite sure what to expect. This activity was completely new to Royal West Academy, therefore no one could have been informed by an older sibling or friend about what was to come. We were genuinely delighted to have an opportunity to have fun and sleep in a place we usually associate with stress and hard work. However, at the same time we were a little concerned as to what we could possibly do in a gym for almost an entire day that would keep us amused and involved.

When we first arrived at school, while we waited for the animators to arrive, we all played the sport of our

choice in the gym. One half of the gym was occupied by a basketball game taking place, while on the other side some people choose to throw around a football or a volleyball. This was a great time to connect with friends and was a sign of things to come.

When the animators arrived, the first thing they did was split us up into four teams, chosen randomly. These would be the teams for the entire weekend. Our first task was to create a team name and come up with a team cheer. As simple as a task as it may seem, it ended up having a considerable degree of difficulty. It's not easy by any means to come up with a name that everyone can agree on, let alone a team cheer! This taught us how to make sacrifices for the better of the team and how to collaborate with others. Aside from that, some of the team names were hilarious and some team cheers were a sight to see.

We were then presented with a series of challenging activities referred to as the "icebreaker" games. The first game we participated in was the Pipeline game. The task at hand was to transport a ball from one side of the gym to the other and place it into a cup, without ever letting it fall. The challenging aspect of this was that we had to use a chain of pipes to allow the movement of the ball, and we couldn't move our feet when in possession of it.

The next game my group took part in was the Tarp game. The goal of this game was to flip over the tarp we were standing on. Seems like a simple task right? However, the one constraint was that our feet could never touch the ground; they had to remain on the tarp or suspended in the air at all times.

Next, we played the Ladders game. This consisted of one member of the group trying to move forward by crawling on pieces of wood being held up by their teammates. It was essential for the person crawling to take the time necessary to ensure their safety and well-being.

Finally, we tackled the Across The Ocean challenge. For this game we were given a predetermined number of small pieces of plastic and with those only, we had to get from point A to point B, without touching the floor.





All of these games may sound drastically different, but they are very similar in many ways. Firstly, all of them presented very new and challenging obstacles that required teamwork and good cooperation to overcome. If we would have all tried to do it by ourselves, we would not have achieved a level of success even remotely close to our triumphs. Moreover, all of the games gave a new person an opportunity to step up and be a leader. Everyone has different knowledge and has had different experiences, so they can offer different solutions in given situations. I even noticed some people step up and be vocal leaders, when you would have struggled to hear a single word from them anywhere else!

After the activities we all hopped on a bus and went to a local bowling alley. We had a great time bowling for a couple hours with our friends.

We arrived back at RWA at around 11:30 that night. The students had free time to do what they wanted in the new gym. Some people were playing basketball or football together while others stayed on the sides and chatted with their friends.

At around midnight, Mr. Bateman and Ms. Salmers gathered all the leadership students together, sitting in a big circle. Mr. Bateman had a teddy bear in his hands and explained that it was a positivity bear. He told us to pass the bear around and spread the positivity by saying one thing that each one of us was thankful for. One by one, each student took their turn and shared it with everyone. Students were not forced however to say anything; it was their choice. The positive vibes were

really felt in the gym during this activity and radiated throughout the rest of the trip.

Then came the best part for some students: midnight pizza! All the students gathered together in the gymnasium and ate slices of pizza.

After that, we were all ready for bed. We were completely drained from the day's activities and knew we could use all the sleep we could get for the next day and the exciting games we had in store. The girls went to sleep in the new gym and the boys slept in the boys gym.

The next morning, the students gathered in the gymnasium again for breakfast. This provided us with some much-needed energy for the activities that the animators had in store for us. There were four activities, so we were split into the same four groups.

The first activity was a catapult game. Teams would make pyramids and another team would try to destroy it by putting beanbags in the catapult and launching them. This game required strategy and listening to everyone's ideas.

The second activity was more of a brain game. We were given cards and had to connect all the words together so that if you read each word one after another new words would be formed until it brought you back to the first word. For example, if you had the word "field" and you added the word "goal", that would make the word "field goal"—and if you added the word "post" after "goal", that would make the word "goalpost", and so on. This game really tested our communication as a

team since everyone had different ideas so we each had to communicate them to determine which one was the best.

The third activity consisted of fun games like darts with sticky balls, human pool, and frisbee throwing. The goal with the sticky balls was to get them as close as possible to the bullseye. The human pool was like a regular game of pool except we were on the table and would kick soccer balls in to the holes. Lastly, the frisbee throwing tested your accuracy since you had to try and knock a bottle down by throwing it.

The fourth and last activity was the most popular. It was an obstacle course race between two people on a big bouncy castle which was set up in the new gym. The students were all smiling and you could feel the joy and excitement when you walked into the gym.

The leadership students were exhausted after these activities, but we weren't quite done yet. The animators told us that to finish off we would do an amazing race between the four groups. The race would consist of a bunch of activities that we had already done either that morning or the day before. This race really put all the skills that we learned as a team to the test. Some teams finished way before others, but every team still gave it their all. What was fun to watch was the effort each team put, even if they saw that other teams had already finished before them. This activity really ended the trip on a high note and left all the students leaving with a smile on their faces.

These activities brought us all together, allowing us the opportunity to build new friendships and strengthen those that were already established. "I thought the trip not only allowed, but forced us to bond with people that we never had the chance to get to know in the past. We had to work together to complete certain activities and this resulted in the development of new relationships," said Grace Conway, a leadership student on the trip.

This leadership trip certainly wasn't your usual trip, but it was definitely a lot of fun. All the activities really helped all the leadership students bond as one big family. Hopefully, it is a trip that will be seen again in the years to come.

Science Fair Updates

By Ms. Jessica Fogel

Allison Engo and Niraj Dayanandan attended the Canada Wide Science Fair in Ottawa ON on May 12–19. "I have never seen so many cool inventions and innovative projects under the same roof," said Allison. Allison was interviewed on CBC Radio and was awarded with her 4th gold medal for her project "How Fly are Antioxidants?" where Allison studied the effects of dietary antioxidants on fruit fly longevity and fertility.



Niraj presented his project titled "How Do Plants Cope with Dry Days" where he discovered a hormone that almost all plants produce and then tested to see if this hormone reduced the impact of drought. Niraj was offered the opportunity to do an internship in Ottawa over the summer.

Athavan Thambimuthu attended the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair at the same time in Pittsburgh PA, where he presented his project "Green Switch." He was a finalist in the category of Embedded Systems. "It was a great experience," said Athavan. "I learned something new in every stage of my journey."

Congratulations to our students on their outstanding achievements.

Spring Concert

By Bhuvan Manojh

On May 10, Royal West Academy held its annual Spring Concert, which featured the Secondary III and Secondary IV level bands, Honour





Band, Jazz Band, RWA Winds, and the A Capella Choir.

The preparations started early before the concert. The Honour Band setup crew stayed after school and set up the auditorium in advance. A member of the setup crew, Lorne McLeod said, "Well, we were missing the equipment manager, but we still managed to get everything going pretty smoothly." An hour before the concert, the bake sale and ticket crew were ready to start selling. Already at 6:30 PM, a line started to emerge within the RWA Foyer. Once entry was allowed at 7 PM, more than 75% of all the seats were already full, which was not a rare sight to be seen in my three years at RWA.

Of course, on top of these preparations for the audience, the performers also had to be ready to go. Tuning, which is slightly adjusting the pitch of your instrument so that it is not below or above the perfect level, was already underway for the bands, and the choir had warmed up their voices.

The Secondary II band started off with three pieces: *Attack of the Cyborgs*, *Angel Echoes*, and *Southampton March*. Then, the Secondary III band performed four pieces: *High School Cadets* (an extended version of the Royal West Academy anthem), *Celtic Dance*, *Bohemian Rhapsody*, and *The Great Locomotive Chase*. RWA Winds played three pieces: *Sing Sing Sing*, *Heartland Overture*, and *Lean On Me*. Jazz Band played three pieces: *25 or 6 to 4*, *Beyond the Sea*, and *Tequila*. The A Capella Choir sang three songs: *We Know The Way*, *Opetaia Foa'i*, and *Back to Black*.

Finally, Honour Band played two pieces featuring soloists: *Clarinet on the Town* featuring Carl Ek on the clarinet, and *Bugler's Holiday*, an exclusive trumpet trio piece that could only be performed by three trumpets in Senior Music, who were Edward Mendelson, Ben Cheung, and Jasmine Akrivos-Mohammed. Three other pieces were also performed: *Petty Harbour Bait Skiff* featuring a euphonium solo at the beginning by Amanda Kronish and a trumpet solo at the end played by Edward; *Con Brio*, a Canadian march piece; and *Persis*, a very difficult piece which the Honour Band has been practicing since June 2017. Finally, a mass band performance with both the Honour Band and RWA Winds took place, and they all played a piece called *Adagio*.

This year's Spring Concert was a huge success, with its numerous performances by grade-level bands and extracurriculars alike, and the annual 50-50 Raffle bringing home a lucky parent over \$200.

National Debate Championship

By Dylan Gharibian & Antoine Parisé



A few months ago, the Royal West Academy Senior and Junior Debate teams attended the Quebec provincial debate tournament. At this tournament we qualified for the Canadian Junior National Debate Championships. We were chosen to represent our school and our province along with six other teams from various schools.

We got to work practicing and composed our prepared motion. Prepared motions are debates where teams know what the topic is ahead of time. They are expected to do research and find facts and statistics supporting their case. This tournament's prepared motion was centred around First Nations representation in our government. After a month and a half of preparation, we were off to Calgary AB.

The morning after our arrival we were unpacked, dressed, and ready to debate. After a brief introduction to the tournament, we were given our round pairings and sent off to debate two rounds. In prepared motions, students have to debate both in favour and against the motion in two different rounds. Once we finished both of our debates we got on a bus and headed for the scenic town of Banff in the Canadian Rockies. There, the tournament had organized some fantastic sightseeing and a fun night of bowling.

Next up was Saturday, where we had four rounds that would determine who would move on to the quarter-finals. These four rounds were impromptu, which means debaters got their motions 15 minutes before the round started and needed to make their points on the spot. These topics ranged from women in superhero movies to politicians on social media. After we debated four teams from various provinces, we explored a bit of Calgary, ate at a very good restaurant and went for some well-deserved ice cream.

Finally, there was Sunday, the last day of our trip. There, at the Calgary French & International School, the quarter-finalists were announced. We had a chance to see some impressive debates with different styles and

tactics that we could learn from.

Before the final round we sat down for a banquet in the school's gym. The mayor of Calgary, Naheed Nenshi, a long time debater, gave a speech about the importance of debate in our society. The tournament ended with an Ontario team victorious and with all who participated having learned something new and met new people.

We would like to end this off by thanking all of those who made our experience possible. We'd like to thank the organizers of this event who were so good that the tournament ran an hour ahead of schedule. We'd like to thank our RWA debate teammates who helped us practice. We'd like to thank the alumni debaters who helped us piece together our prepared motion, and finally we'd like to extend a special thanks to our wonderful debate coach, Ms. C. Holloway, who helped teach us and guide us through the art of debating.

Marine Biology Trip

By Deen Akrivos



Widely regarded as the best Royal West Academy trip, the Marine Biology Trip really lives up to its name. The trip is full of great activities and interesting learning experiences for students to enjoy with their friends. Not only does this trip's planned activities greatly surpass my expectations for the trip, but we were given tons of free time to enjoy in the town for playing sports, campfires, and a bit of homework.

But don't take my word for it, Colin Evans, a Biology student and participant in the Marine Biology Trip had this to say, "Out of all of the RWA trips I've been on, the Bio Trip is the one you can't miss."

Overall, although the trip was a lot more work than I was expecting, it was not the same kind of work that most of us are used to. Throughout the trip, we had many interactive experiences such as a boat ride in the Bay of Fundy, where we collected a massive sample of sea creatures and got a first-hand look at them. We also did a multitude of labs on tons of different organisms such as crabs, sea urchins, starfish, and many others. These labs gave us a more scientific view on some of the creatures which we had found on the boat as well as great material to fill our personal journals with.



Along with the usual daily routine of labs, activities, and back and forth from the lab to the residential area, we also had some homework, as would be expected on an elective trip. To most students the thought of homework on a trip seems dreadful, however on this trip it was very welcome, as it was not the type of homework you would expect. On one of the days, we took a trip down to the beach where, in groups of four or five, we collected data on intertidal creatures, or creatures living in the areas where the tide is sometimes in, sometimes out. Afterwards, we had multiple nights to work in groups to prepare a massive poster, visually representing the sea life in the intertidal zone. On the final day, we were able to present the projects which we had been working on for the whole trip, and demonstrate all we had learnt.

This group work was personally my favourite part of the trip as we got to work together to achieve what we considered an amazing result. All around, the Marine Bio Trip was a great learning experience and I would recommend it to anyone looking for a fun trip and an amazing elective.

Environmental Committee Recap

By Rowyn Légaré

Another successful year came to an end for Royal West Academy's Environment Committee. The group of 20 students between Secondary II and V was led primarily by teachers Ms. Almeida and Ms. Suarez. Each year, the committee puts in countless hours of work and energy—during and outside of school hours—towards making the RWA community a more environmentally-friendly place. With subcommittees like the Park N' Lot, the Green Bean Café, Waste Reduction Week, La Nuit Verte, and Earth Week, there's a place for everyone to be involved with EC, whether they excel in gardening, cooking, or art.

Since the Park N' Lot was converted a few years ago from the unused concrete parking lot into our own community garden, it's been steadily improving. The garden is tended to throughout the year by students, teachers (Mme Bourdeau and Mme Gauthier), and members of the Montreal West community. With beautiful plants, picnic tables, and a chalkboard, it provides a beautiful environment for students to be in



touch with nature while gardening, eating lunch, and even while having class outdoors. A recent addition to our garden is a beehive, which helps to encourage pollination and increases the production of our plants as well as helping in the preservation of our precious insect friends. Another benefit of our bees is the gorgeous honey that they produced, which the Environment Committee sold throughout the year. We have just a few jars left—pick yours up in Room 104 for \$5.

As usual, the Green Bean Café was a success this school year. The Green Bean Café serves healthy vegan and vegetarian meals prepared by students once a week. As well as encouraging students to eat sustainable and local food, it provides an opportunity for them to learn how to prepare healthy home-cooked meals.

Each year, the Environment Committee organizes two weeks during which they lead activities focused on encouraging the student population to adopt a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle. The first week, Waste Reduction Week, took place in October. The second week, Earth Week, was in April. For five days, the EC led many fun workshops at lunch and after school, all centered around food and what we can do to reduce our food waste. Something new that was put in place is the give-or-take-a-snack table. The goal of this was to reduce the amount of perfectly good food that is thrown into the garbage everyday by giving students the option to leave it on the table for someone else to enjoy.

Another large part of Earth Week is La Nuit Verte, an annual art exhibition that showcases student pieces related to the environment. As well as observing the artwork and a buying snacks from a bake sale, students had the opportunity to perform onstage in an open-mic style show. Of the event, EC member Sophie Comtois said, "It was a very motivational and inspirational event this year, with all the incredible student performances that we had." During the evening, \$203.75 was raised. In addition to this amount, \$1534 was raised during a free dress day organized by EC. Most of the money will be donated to organizations such as the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Hope for Wildlife, and Animatch, with an amount being donated towards the renovation of our auditorium.

Sec IV Boston Trip

By Matthew Goldenberg & Dante Gonsalves

Two months ago, the Secondary IV students had the opportunity to travel to Boston MA as their grade trip. It was unforgettable because students like me got to experience many different memories that they will remember for the rest of their life. It was an enjoyable trip that I suggest every student at Royal West Academy take part in. Every day, we did many different activities that were enjoyable and that taught us things we never knew before. "I think that the Secondary IV trip was an amazing experience for all the students to connect with each other in an environment other than our school. We made lasting memories and it was definitely a great break from the stress and pressure of our daily school lives," said Michelle Levy.

The Boston trip was four days long—we left on a Tuesday morning and got back on Friday night. Packing up the bags and going on the excited bus leaving from RWA was great. Everyone was happy and couldn't wait to get there. Part of the happiness was missing valuable school time but other than that, everyone was eager about the trip ahead. It was a long bus ride filled with entertainment and games.

We finally arrived and our first activity was the Museum of Science. The museum was interesting. I learned many new things about the nature of science. There were also many games that visitors got to experience like walking through a maze filled with mirrors. After that, the whole

group went to watch an Omni movie which had a 180-degree projector. Starring in front of you was a motion picture with a screen which made the short films much better. There were multiple little movies that taught us other things. One of them was about a female architect helping poor communities by building bridges.

After the movie, it was time to head over to Quincy Market for supper. The food was delicious because there were restaurants we never tried before that were different in Montreal. After our meal, we had time to shop in Quincy Market before we headed back to the hotel and called it a day.

The following day, the students and teachers headed to Salem. Salem is a city famous for its 1692 witchcraft trials. We were given a guided tour by a former witch who explained the history behind the Salem Witch Museum. It was really interesting learning about something you never thought was possible.

For lunch we went back to Quincy Market and then walked to the New England Aquarium. The Secondary IVs got to see the beautiful marine creatures in their habitat. The animals we saw were really fascinating because they are really rare species that are often hard to find in the ocean.

Wednesday night was our only group dinner that was paid for. We ate at the Fire+Ice restaurant. This restaurant was original because we had to make our own stir fry plate with all raw ingredients. We then brought our food to the chefs who would fry our food while doing tricks with their spatulas.

Our final activity of the day was watching a play called *Shear Madness* at the Charles Playhouse. It was a very funny play filled with humour for all ages. The audience also took part in having discussions with the actors on how to resolve the problem. The actors were really talented because they made the audience decide how the ending should fold out.

On the Thursday, we had to wake up early as we had to eat breakfast before heading out to Harvard University. Once we reached Harvard, we were split up into groups where we each met our own tour guides. These guides were all current students attending Harvard. I found this really cool as we got in depth opinions and views on

many things that go on at the school. They were also able to tell us about personal experiences and the many opportunities available at this prestigious school. At the conclusion of the tour, we arrived at the Harvard Museum of Natural History, where we took a tour. I found this extremely interesting because I got to go around and look at the things I enjoyed. I was able to pass over the things that didn't interest me and spend more time at those that did.

After the Natural History Museum, we had time to go around Harvard Square. It was there that we ate lunch and did some shopping. We were able to go to The Harvard Shop where many got apparel to be able to show that we had visited. After lunch, we went to the Museum of Fine Arts where again we guided ourselves which was enjoyable.

Finally, before dinner, we went on a tour of the Freedom Trail where we visited many monuments such as the Benjamin Franklin Statue and the State House. This was a good experience as it allowed us to see many things we have learned about in school, up close in person. After a long day, we then went back to Quincy Market to eat dinner and have free time before we returned back to the hotel to go to bed.

Finally, on our last day, we had the earliest wakeup of the trip. We had an early appointment at Fenway Park—if we were late we would lose our spot. So, we had breakfast really early and got on the bus to Fenway. Most of us fell asleep because we woke up so early and

it was a long ride. Once we got to Fenway Park, we were divided into two groups. The guides we had were excellent as they were very good at explaining and had the answers to all of our questions.

We then left Fenway and went to Washington Street, where we had time to walk around, shop, and eat. It was fun because it was a nice sunny day, we were all with our friends, and just walking around downtown Boston.

After a long, fun trip we then got back on the bus and began our trip home. The bus ride was fun although not as fun as the one there, because many of us were extremely tired from the long trip and the excitement of getting to Boston wasn't there. When we got closer to Montreal, we thought back on the trip that we had and we realized that we had made memories with our friends that would last a lifetime.

EMSB Leadership Camp

By Spyridon Markopoulos & Alex Plawutsky



This year's EMSB Leadership Camp at Camp Papillon was a great success!

Around 230 students, across eleven school boards, attended camp. The camp taught students leadership skills that they will use throughout their life and they also learned how they can get involved as leaders in their own schools.

Leadership Camp is run by a group of 31 student leaders including Royal West Academy's very own Spyridon Markopoulos and Alex Plawutsky. This group of organizers met at Westmount High School every week from January until April to organize and plan this entire camp experience, including organizing games, activities, and keynote speakers.

This year's camp was grateful to hear about the experiences of UFC fighter Mr. T. Murphy and US Army Retired Sergeant Rick Yarosh. They talked about facing adversity and finding hope. These messages that will long be remembered by the campers.

This camp is known for "breaking people out of their shells" and allows students to diversify and expand their friend group. Our school's Iris King, Chloe Gemmel,



Kevin Adams, and Costa Mandelos attended this year's Leadership Camp. We were amazed to see them fully engaged and interested in what camp had to offer. It was a remarkable experience that we will never forget. Cannot wait until next year!

Sec II Dramatic Production

By Spyros Provatas

May 22 was the date of the Secondary 2 Dramatic Production, led by Ms. Koyounian, English Language Arts and Dramatic Arts teacher at Royal West Academy. The preparation for the production began a few months before the dramatic production took place, giving the groups a lot of time to write, block, memorize, and thoroughly understand the characters that they would be playing in their 10- to 15-minute dramatic productions. Based on the laughs and cheers from the audience, these productions proved to be extremely well done.

The first day that the project was introduced to the students, they picked a colour that they would base their play on. For example, the colour yellow would represent happiness, green would represent disgust, and so on. They were then given multiple classes and time out of class to write their scripts. When this was finished, they began memorizing and getting into character. The students were given voice exercises by Ms. Koyounian that they did daily to help box their words as well as let them flow better on stage. In my opinion, this was very beneficial as the actors' reactions were voiced properly and did not confuse the audience listening to the play.

Two weeks before the production was presented, Ms. Koyounian helped her students block their plays as

well as provide props that would enhance their production.

A week before the production took place, there was a practice which gave the students a quick sneak peek of what they would experience on the big night. The students presented in front of their peers.

The day of the production was very special. The students of Ms. Koyounian's drama class had written their own plays and were just about to put everything into action. It was obvious that everyone had butterflies in their stomachs that night. However, those butterflies instantly disappeared when they stepped on the stage. They had powerful voices and bounced around the stage like they were fueled by Red Bull. In fact, they became almost unrecognizable to their friends and family that were watching them, and that wasn't just because of the stage makeup!

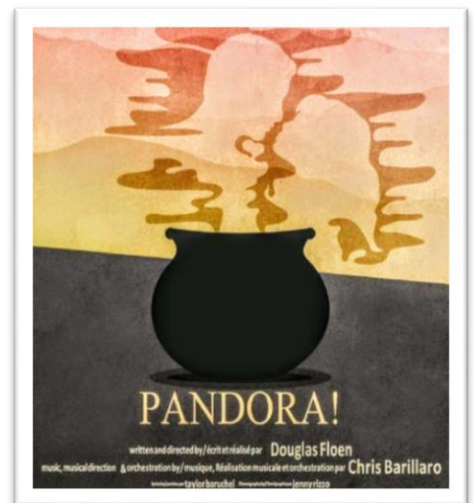
In conclusion, the dramatic production was amazing, bringing out the talent out of many students and giving them a first look at acting. The Dramatic Production was the work of the Secondary II students but was also very well planned and organized by Ms. Koyounian, without whom none of this would have been remotely possible to pull off.

Musical Tryouts

By Sofia Iarocci

On May 16, Royal West Academy held musical tryouts for next year's musical, called *Hoedown*, led by Ms. Kuch, Mr. Floen, and Mr. Barillaro.

These were the details of the previous musical when it was to be performed this school year: "Come see RWA's 2017 Musical *Pandora!* December 18–21 at 7:30 PM.



Written and directed by Mr. Floen. Music, musical direction, and orchestration by Mr. Barillaro. Choreography by Jenny Rizzo. Lyrics by Taylor Baruchel and performances by RWA students!"

This year, there were a lot more people auditioning, especially in Secondary I. I, having done musical last year, was familiar with the process. You go into the room, following the order of the sign-up list, and you have to say who you are. Shortly after, you have to start singing. Beforehand, you had to choose one minute of a song from a musical and in the audition room (the girls gym) you either choose to sing a capella, or bring sheet music so that the writer of the music in the play, Mr. Barillaro, can accompany you on the piano. After singing your song, Mr. Barillaro will ask you to sing a few low notes, after playing them on the piano, and then a few high notes. Then, they say thank you and send you outside.

The next step is waiting. You wait anxiously until a week later. Then, on May 22, the list is posted, and you see what part you got, and of course if you got in. One thing to notice was that all the names of the characters were parts of the names of grads from last year. This was an extremely clever thing to do, as a memento. The cast of musical last year, having spent so much time with each other, bonded and became a family. I am very happy to say that I am part of that family. The best part of the names of the characters is that even though the grads from last year couldn't be here, it's like they're with us anyways.

Although the auditioning process is a bit stressful, the end result is so rewarding, and you will find yourself thanking yourself for going to the auditions in the first place. So, if you forgot to audition and you like singing, dancing, and acting, don't miss musical auditions next year!

The Life Of Improv

By Arielle Dennison

Sanford Meisner once said, "Acting is behaving truthfully under imaginary circumstances." I found my experience coaching Royal West Academy's Improvisation Teams is very fitting to this quote. The truth is, you can be very skilled and talented at

something that you love, but the real challenge will always be how you express this profound enjoyment to the world.

This year, coaching the junior and senior teams not only made me question and improve my own acting skills, it also made me realize that sharing something that you love with the world can be at times disappointing and frustrating but, in the end, rewarding. To say that coaching these youngsters to be ready to compete as improv masters was easy would be lying through my crooked teeth. While coaching the senior team was quite easy, seeing as they already had an in-depth understanding of the requirements and skill necessary for the improv contest, the same could not be said about the juniors.

Now don't get me wrong. I love kids, but expecting a bunch of young teens to respect and listen to you is almost downright unrealistic—especially when you're only a couple of years older than them. I went into our first improv meeting hopeful of recruiting some young people with pizzazz and excitement, but instead came into a room full of sadistically humoured teenagers with little to no will to listen. At first I was discouraged. Your typical improv competitor was high energy and enthusiastic about every practice and this was very clearly not what my co-captain Bronwyn and I were met with. We thought that we were going to have to just tough it out through the season until one day, something changed.

One December day, after we had left school following our usual Monday practice, we had to go back to school because I had forgotten my wallet. Much to our surprise, we saw the kids, still at school, practising



improv scenes all by themselves. Needless to say this made Bronwyn's and my hearts melt. This whole time we had thought that they were just coming to these practices to get a credit and goof off, but really they had come to love it. From that moment on, the environment at practice had really changed. We started building relationships with these kids, we were excited to come to practice, and we even had an outside of school field trip with them.

As the competition season neared, Bronwyn and I realized that their dry humour and nonchalant attitude had really proven to be extraordinary strengths. In fact, they scored themselves some serious points in the contest, and they had the whole audience laughing. To be frank, I started this season off behaving untruthfully under circumstances I had created for myself, and ended the season behaving truthfully under the spotlights of the improv stage, and I couldn't think of better people to have shared my journey with. Thank you, journey team, you've taught me a lot.

Backstage On The Set Of *The Tempest*

By Zachary Cohen

There's something special about going to a show that isn't easy to describe.

Something about the mix of emotions and adrenaline that comes with any sort of performance creates an atmosphere that simply can't be duplicated.



Behind the scenes, it's exactly the same. Before the show, all the actors gather backstage to warm up. Nerves are flying all over the place, people are running, yelling, or practicing scenes. Finally, everyone settles down as the graduating students lead the warm-up.

Afterwards, the show begins. Backstage quiets down as people wait for their scenes to begin in the West Wing or at their entrances or watch the show from the back of the auditorium. As the show passes, those backstage look for exceptional performances, interesting choices made by actors, and mistakes—for there are always mistakes.

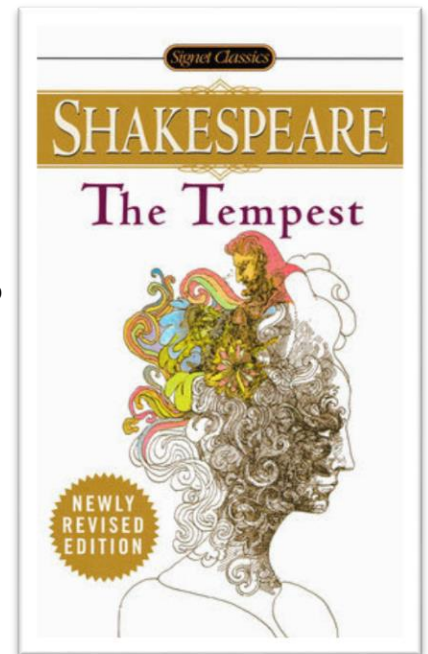
At the end, everyone takes their bows, and heads backstage to talk, change, maybe wash off their makeup, and generally prepare to head home for the night. At this point, it's usually around somewhere between 9:30 and 10 at night, so people need to get home quickly to get their homework done. If any Bards

alumni are present, they are free to head backstage to meet with their friends who are still in the show. Everyone heads home, works, goes to sleep, wakes up, and heads to school for another day.

This year, one of the two plays performed by Royal West Academy's Bardolators was *The Tempest*, starring Anthony Falcone and Jada Wood as Prospero. The *Tempest* was the last show performed by this year's graduating Bards members.

To gain a further understanding of what it's like backstage, I interviewed Anthony Falcone, a Bardolator of four years, to see if he could shed some light on the topic. "The atmosphere backstage during a show is always filled with excitement and tension. For the grads, at least, there was a bittersweet feeling since it was our last show," says Anthony.

The last show of the year is always heartfelt for those leaving. In fact, there are several traditions that are carried out for the grads to properly say goodbye. First off, at the end of the last show, which usually falls on a Thursday, all the actors gather onstage following the finale. The grads gather at the front of the stage, and each of them gets to say their piece about the director of the show, Mr. Floen. These moments are emotional, tearful, and sad affairs as the actors say their last goodbye to the program that they love.



So there you have it. Backstage with the Bardolators is happy, sad, nerve-racking, exciting, tense, sweet, hilarious, and much more. In order to fully understand what it's like, come see the show next year!

Interview: Ms. Natasha Salmers

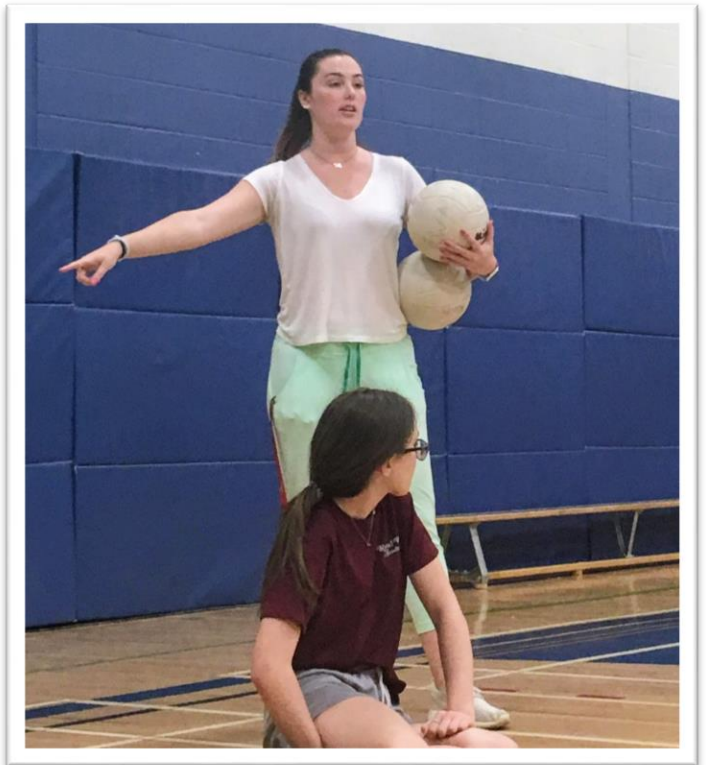
By James Lourie

Today I had the chance to interview Ms. Salmers, one of Royal West Academy's newest staff members. Ms. Salmers' is Mr. Bateman's long-term replacement. She coached the Halo Road Race practice with a fellow classmate and me, and she teaches physical education as well as our unique Leadership elective.

I'm sure all of us are aware that our school is a bit different from other public high schools. We've all heard stories from friends who go to different schools bragging about their inflated marks and more relaxed work ethics. Our school is known to be quite demanding and taxing to the students compared to other public high schools. I wanted to hear it from a different perspective, that of a first year teacher—what does she think of RWA, how is it different compared to other schools she's staged at, and what are some interesting views/outlooks she has on our school's community?

One cold and grey spring day, I sat outside with Ms. Salmers and a fellow classmate, cheering on our Halo participants as they dashed up and down Devil's Hill. I was coaching Halo for the Beyond The Classroom assignment that is given to Leadership students every year. It encourages students to go out of their way to help improve our school's community—much like the publishing assignment given to my English class which pushed us to get an article of ours published.

When I asked Ms. Salmers what she thought about the environment of Royal West Academy, her response was not unexpected. She said that she finds it very energetic and busy as a lot of students are very strong academically but at the same time spread thin throughout the many diverse ECAs. She added that it is a very warm and upbeat environment which she enjoys. "When you're walking through the halls and students say hi to you or there's a lot of conversation and it's busy, I like that. I don't like when it's closed off into



classrooms, it's nice to have the social aspect", said Ms. Salmer's cheerfully.

When asked to describe the differences between the previous schools she staged at and Royal West Academy, her response was similar to most of our folks comparing their high school experience to ours. She said that RWA is very academically driven and that the teachers and students give a lot back to the school. "I've never seen so much involvement compared to other schools", said Ms. Salmers.

She said that at other schools the ECA programs are not very present and that their students mostly go to and from school uninterrupted except by their sport commitments. Whereas when it comes to RWA students, they come from across the island to experience what it has to offer. "Kids willing to come from Hudson, Lachine, and from the east end shows a lot of commitment for a school, I admire the students," she said.

I then asked Ms. Salmers what her take was on the awesome diversity of ECAs our school has to offer and she responded that it was out of this world! "My high school would have a basketball team, a volleyball team, a hockey team, badminton, and that was kind of it. There were no after school plays, there was no dance



show. It's impressive how RWA is able to accommodate all of this, and it is also very impressive that the students are able to dip into so many different things and organize themselves to make it to all of their chosen ECAs!" said Ms. Salmers.

To finish off, I asked her what her favourite moment at Royal West Academy has been so far. Ms. Salmers said she had not one, but two. The first being the Bantam Boys Hockey Team winning the championship which she deemed to be very cool. The second being, "When the girls were in the gym by themselves and they were all playing volleyball and giggling when they suddenly all started line dancing."

I hope Ms. Salmers really enjoyed her first year of teaching at Royal West Academy and we will get to see her again at the school with a permanent spot.

Lights And Sound

By Lucas Hewel-Spicer

Lights and Sound is one of the many extracurricular activities at Royal West Academy supervised by Mr. Northey. This activity is for the purpose of giving plays, which use intuitive lighting and sound, particular atmospheres, and setting up microphones for other events. I spoke with Gabriel Verghese, a graduating Lights and Sound member, about his time there.

This is all done with the help of two boards, referred to simply as the light board and the sound board. Each of them can be used in fairly simple ways but if one wants to take the time they can make much more use of them. This helps the hosts of the events but also gives the participating members experience with the equipment and how it is to work as a team to achieve satisfying results. "I think Lights and Sound can teach anyone valuable lessons about teamwork, leadership, and responsibility if you commit," said Gabriel.

Some of the events that Lights and Sound participate in are: the Shakespearean plays, the annual musical, seasonal concerts, and barbeques. Members are able to choose what activities they would like to participate in and can earn up to two credits. Being in Lights and Sound is a big commitment that requires a lot of work,

but it is definitely worth it. "It has been a lot of fun, and it made me feel really valued at school because I found my niche that few others can really do. I would definitely recommend," says Gabriel.

For the most part, the environment is very relaxed but when a problem occurs, everyone focuses to make sure a solution can be found easily. Overall, working in Lights and Sound is a lot of fun but requires the time and commitment.

La Nuit Verte

By Dalia Tobenstein & Ella Barakett

After attending the wonderful event called La Nuit Verte at Royal West Academy, I must say I was quite impressed by the quality of the event. Between the setup and the entertainment, it was a perfect night! I also interviewed the very talented Ella Barakett to get the perspective of the event from a performer. Here is Ella and my honest review on the night.

La Nuit Verte is a night where students are offered a chance to get a credit by simply cooking a vegetarian dish, performing an act of their choice, displaying their artwork or even simply socializing until the night ends (although doing this results in a half-credit). "I chose to sing as I saw the free microphone and engaged audience," explained Ella.

The setup was quite impressive as the Environment Committee brought out real plants and fairy lights to give the evening a very "at home" feeling as well as bringing out board games and cards for the audience members to always be amused. "This also made me feel more comfortable onstage knowing that the audience members were having fun and in a good mood!" responded Ella when asked if she had fun during her performance.

Ella performed a song of her choice in front of her schoolmates, in a very casual way that matched the feeling of the evening. As the audience watched, they sat up close on the floor, tables, and even comfy couches! It was very intimate and "I felt like I was singing without an audience! Everyone was so respectful," said Ella about her experience.





homemade vegetarian food or if you're simply looking for an easy way to earn a (half a) credit, come to La Nuit Verte. You'll have a blast! "Hope to see everyone who loves karaoke, art, comedy, and games, there next year!!" said Ella.

Cinco de Mayo

By Alicia Palkovi



On May 7, Cinco de Mayo took place, and it was nothing short of a success. Filled with delicious dishes, lively music, and fun activities, the celebration was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended it. Royal West Academy's Cinco de Mayo was a great opportunity for students and staff alike to experience and discover more about Latin culture, and everyone left taking with them valuable memories. The \$2 entry fee included a plate of food, drinks, and access to all the extended lunch hour activities in the auditorium. All proceeds went towards the renovation of our much-used auditorium.

Cinco de Mayo marks the day of the Mexican army's victory over the French Empire in 1862. It first started to gain international recognition after a group of college students decided to celebrate it. Rather than just celebrating the success of the Mexican army, we also paid tribute to the many cultures of Latin America.

The students of RWA's Spanish classes all played an important part in Cinco de Mayo's realization. Each student was responsible for making a contribution. Lots of students made traditional foods from different countries such as Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Bolivia. Others were in charge of organizing activities such as dancing and drawing. One student was the DJ, and he was responsible for playing music that went with the theme of the event.

As well as there being activities such as dancing and drawing, there were also other traditional



Once her wonderful performance singing the song *Flashlight* by Jessie J was over, the crowd cheered her on as they did all the performances and the next performer was up. "I felt so at ease having my friends there to support me, even some people in older years congratulated me on a job well-done," said Ella. I agree with her, as the night was a great way to bond with others.

I personally think that La Nuit Verte is a great way to meet new people because everyone is so friendly when they are in a good mood! By the end of the night when everyone was comfortable with each other, there were even acts who decided to take advantage of the open stage and proposed for prom!

"This is exactly the type of evening someone would want to attend to just hang out or to let go of the RWA stress and have fun!" says Ella. I agree with this as well because although it's at school, it really doesn't feel like it! Everyone was laughing and enjoying themselves that Thursday night.

Ella concluded, "I strongly encourage anyone who's looking to relax or even perform to attend!" and I couldn't agree more. Ella, Dalia Tobenstein, and I all agree that if you're looking for a night to relax with friends or meet new ones, perform, eat great





activities that were organized. A piñata was set up in the auditorium, and many students took turns trying to break it open. It didn't take long for that to happen, as plenty of candy burst from the piñata within minutes. There was also a limbo competition!

I had a great time at this year's Cinco de Mayo, and I'm sure many others who were there did as well. I got to enjoy delicious cooking and spend more time with friends. Although this is my last year in Spanish, I am most definitely looking forwards to next year's Cinco de Mayo and I hope all of you reading are as well.

Rice And Water

By Noah Freedman

Malnutrition is and has always been a big issue, especially throughout the third world. During the Rice and Water program, students got to experience what those who are affected by malnutrition every day might feel like. Also, by fundraising, we donated money to help the people who are affected, hoping to make a change in their lives.

At Rice and Water, I had a taste (excuse the pun) of what people affected by malnutrition are unfortunately limited to for a day. As a growing boy with a big appetite, it was hard for me to eat only rice for a day. Despite that, I was able to complete my task, even if I was longing for something else. However, in some countries, people don't have any other options.

One of the program's other requirements was to attend a Social Justice Club meeting, where we talked about Black Lives Matter and climate change. This was a new and fun experience for me at one of the many activities that Royal West Academy offers. Finally, we were

served pizza at the end, which was a great way to finish off the activity.

After my experience, I was even more enthusiastic to donate to others who have limited or no options. I think that the donation part of the activity was very considerate and shows that this school cares. Donating to a cause that helps people who are underprivileged made this extracurricular activity one of the best.

In conclusion, Rice and Water was a unique and enjoyable experience, and I will certainly join next year.

If you are looking to be a part of an ECA that gives you a cultural or community credit and would like to help a good cause, join Rice and Water, and you'll have as much fun as I did.

Omega

By Vishal Ubha

The SLA, short for Student Life Association, is almost exactly what you would think it would be. At Royal West Academy, a new SLA group is elected every year with the hope of making student life at RWA more enjoyable. At an assembly every May 4, each group of four battles with their different ideas on improving student life, and normally the most inventive slate wins the election.

This year, the group Omega fought a close battle against groups Expansion and Element, yet was proven victorious a couple of days later after everyone's vote had been counted. Omega is composed of co-presidents Spyridon Markopoulos and Katie Gassios, event planner Brandon Ciccarello, and secretary Jasmine Puterman-Salzman—individuals all motivated to bring positive changes to student's lives at Royal West Academy.

One change, for instance, is a big brother/sister program in the works, which welcomes Secondary I students into RWA by pairing them with a Secondary V student to show them around the school. Also, an abundance of events are being organized by Omega to improve school spirit, such as Habs Night and Movie Night, where students can pay to watch the Montreal Canadiens play hockey or to watch a movie after school. The group is also working diligently on increasing the number and the quality of our school dances as well as its barbeques.

While the aforementioned ideas have been stated in the past, Omega has also thought of a handful of new ones, too. One unseen idea is Colour War, which is a week-long, grade versus grade competition. Each grade competes in various activities throughout the day during non-class hours, earning points after each activity and promoting unity. At the end of the week, the grade with the most points is awarded a pizza lunch. Another fresh idea is Let-Loose lunch, where music will be played through speakers in the auditorium throughout lunch on selected Fridays during the gloomy months of winter, to boost students' moods and energy. Also, on selected weeks, Omega has decided to sell certain drinks or food according to the day—for example, Milkshake Mondays, Timbit Tuesdays, Waffle Wednesdays, Thirsty Thursdays, and Freezie Fridays will all be implemented.

All the above changes that Omega is already working to apply will most definitely improve student life and promote school integrity for the next year, and will therefore enhance Royal West Academy as a whole.

Stop Motion Animation

By Ryan McGibbon

For those of you who don't know, the Secondary III students at Royal West Academy had a professional stop motion animator come in to teach them. Over the span of a few weeks the students learned about stop motion animation, then even created their own short movies.

The Secondary III's invented their own stories and characters. They then proceeded to create backdrops and sculpt their characters out of clay. In the final class of this activity Mr. E. Goulet, the professional, set up tripods in the library for the students to use to animate their characters. Being a Secondary III student, I participated in this activity. I had so much fun with this project, so I decided to get more information about stop motion animation by interviewing Mr. Goulet.

To begin the interview, I asked Mr. Goulet some personal questions to get some background information on who he is. He had always liked filming and movies—he used to make his own when he was younger with his brother. He discovered stop motion animation when he was studying at Concordia University. That is when and where he fell in love with stop motion animation. Mr. Goulet has worked on some popular videos and movies. For example, he has worked on a McDonald's commercial and the movie *The Little Prince*. Some smaller series he has worked on are *La Famille Sac à Papier* and *The Adventures of Saro Wormy*.

I then asked him about his thoughts on stop motion animation. When we made our characters in class we used clay, but in the interview, he told me that you could use any type of material that you want. He also said that if you make bigger characters you need to use a skeleton structure or else it is too hard to manipulate the characters. If you were wondering what happens if you mess up moving a character and can't find the spot to put it back, I asked him and he said that you cry and then you have to start all over from the beginning of the movie or scene. Lastly, I found out that stop motion isn't the only type of animation. There is also hand drawn, computer, cut out, and strata cut animation.



For the final part of the interview, I asked him what he thought of RWA. He said that at most other schools he has worked at, the students always have crazy ideas for the movies. Royal West Academy, unlike other schools, stayed very dedicated to their project. Even though our ideas were crazy, we persevered and finished out our ideas nonetheless.

In the last few moments of the interview he gave out a tip for anyone wanting to go into animation. That tip was, "Follow your dreams and work a job that makes you happy."

The Importance Of Sleep

By Lara Richardson

Are you getting enough sleep? Teens need approximately eight to ten hours of sleep at night to perform at their best. A recent study shows that the average amount of sleep that adolescents get is approximately seven hours—not nearly enough for their own good. An informal survey conducted in the fall of 2017 at Royal West Academy and Collège Saint-Anne (about forty students) had similar findings to this study. This serves as a reminder that teens need a significantly higher amount of sleep each night than what the average Royal West Academy and Collège Sainte-Anne student is getting. According to Scientific American, a very common reason for the lack of sleep in young adults is the effect the screens of their electronic devices have on sleep schedules.

Harvard Health shows that looking at the blue light emitted by smartphones, tablets, and other electronic devices, during the two hours before one goes to sleep, confuses the body's natural sleep pattern, or the circadian rhythm. Light sensitive cells, found in the retina, signal to the brain, by releasing natural hormones, whether it is night or day, thus creating our sleep patterns. If we are exposed to light near bedtime, the retina will be tricked into thinking it is actually day, and doesn't send the message to your brain to create melatonin, a sleep hormone. Blue light at night is a major external factor as to why people simply don't get enough sleep.

Poor sleep limits one's ability to focus, listen, and learn. A restful sleep helps increase performance and will improve your health. Sleep should be more of a priority—especially for developing teens. So put away those smartphones by 9 PM and you'll see how much better you feel!

Halo Road Race

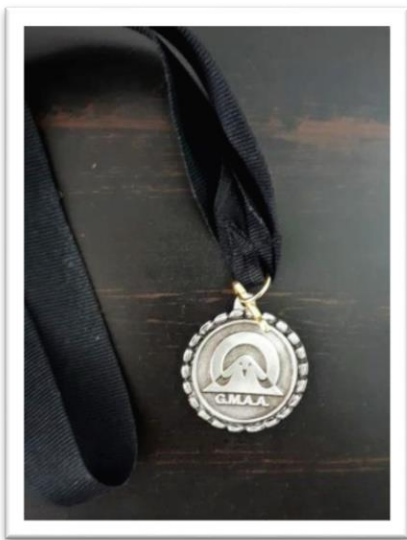
By Raffaele Nelli

May 17 was a big day for several Royal West Academy athletes. The annual Halo Road Race was taking place in the middle of May, like usual, and some of Montreal's best runners met up to take part in a big race, The Halo Road Race. I participated in the Bantam Race (12–14-year-olds). Last year, I finished 16th, next to my other three friends who got 14th, 15th, and 19th.

This year, I was aiming for the top ten, which was very realistic since I had gotten third and fourth in Outdoor Track 3000-metre runs, third in Indoor Track 3000-metre run, and second and seventh for Cross Country Running—all in the past year. I also went to the Provincials for Cross Country, so this goal of being in the top ten seemed possible.

I went to school like usual with my five other friends, two of which were coming to the Halo Race with me as well (Jack Garxenaj and Dimitrios Retsinas). We were given a 10:30 AM early dismissal, right after the second period. The bus ride was about 20 minutes, from Montreal West to the race destination, Mount Royal. We were there at 11:15 AM and the races started at 2 PM, so we took the time to play football, soccer, and other fun activities.

When the races finally started to take place, we lined up by school, and got ready. The races went from Bantam Girls, to Bantam Boys, to Midget Girls, to Midget Boys, and finally Juvenile Girls, to Juvenile Boys. Our race was divided into two groups of 65 kids each, and I finished the two-kilometre race with a final time of under 7 minutes—for fifth place. My friend Jack got second, while three other RWA students finished inside the top ten as well (seventh, eighth, and ninth).



This was truly a great experience and I recommend other students who love to run and be outside having fun to join the Halo Race team and attend their practices (two times a week) which will prepare them well for race day. I've always loved to run so this

was a perfect opportunity to get some physical activity, enjoy time with my friends, and of course participate in such a fun race. The best thing is about this extracurricular activity is that it doesn't matter how good you are at running. As long as you attend the practices, ready to improve from the last one, you are surely welcomed and should feel proud of yourself for constantly improving, because you will surely improve immensely at running, which is good to see. And if you need that final credit, Halo Race gives you a sports credit. So for anyone who needs one, this is the perfect opportunity to capitalize on and take advantage. Just make sure you are committed and willing to actually attend the practices.

Volleyball Program

By Victoria Dipietrantonio & Amelia Bonter

The Royal West Academy volleyball team has been around for almost a decade now and has been performing extremely well. This ECA starts with young girls coming into Secondary I—they have the opportunity to either join the club during the summer after Grade 6 at a week-long volleyball camp, or at the beginning of Secondary I after regular tryouts occur. The volleyball club at Royal West Academy is unlike any other. What differentiates it is that it is a life changing experience for the players and builds everlasting friendships between them.



To start off it is an all year round commitment. During the GMAA season players can have up to three volleyball practices a week (either after school or before school) and one game every week. I asked one of the volleyball players here at RWA, Amelia Bonter, what she thought about having morning practices and she said, "Sometimes in the morning it's a little hard to get up, but once I get there I'm happy to be there and I'm a little more awake for the rest of the day."

This shows the deep commitment of these volleyball players and their passion for the sport. Keeping up with school and having time for volleyball is a huge challenge. Because of this large commitment not everyone is cut-out for the volleyball program offered here at Royal West Academy, but those who chose to take on this challenge are forever rewarded by the experiences and memories made on this extraordinary team.

Not only do volleyball players have the chance to participate in the GMAA season, they also have the opportunity every year to send one or two teams to participate in the RSEQ league. This league is combined with French high school teams usually situated in the Montreal sector. The level of playing is more competitive and challenging than in GMAA because many of the teams participating are in sport-étude programs such as Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf or Collège Notre-Dame du Sacré-Cœur. Often, teams going to provincials are put into the French league to see the level at which they will be playing at the provincials, where one representative team from each district will take part for the title of best in Quebec in their respective age groups.

If players win the GMAA season they are invited to play at provincials. This event is usually in the first or second weekend of April. Players from all over the province get together on the Friday for an opening ceremony, where each team is introduced and welcomed to the sporting event. They are then sent to their classroom where they will be spending the next two nights of this tournament. On the Saturday and Sunday players play 100% to get to first place or do the best they can. Players also have free time in between games or at night where they can bond with their team and meet other teams from around Quebec. Provincials is not only extremely hard



on the body because teams play four to six games each day, but it is also mentally challenging. During the regular season players play one game per week—in this case they have time to forget about their mistakes or losses and move on, but provincials is two days back-to-back so players don't have time to move on. A large part of volleyball is the right mentality. If it isn't there then the team can't go very far at provincials. The pressure that every game matters also brings a colossal amount of stress, making the players' jobs even harder. This weekend shows which team is really the strongest both mentally and technically, and is a great challenging experience for both young and older volleyball players.

Volleyball is an amazing sport, but like every sport it has its pros and cons. It is a hard sport physically and mentally, definitely meant for people who are organized and hard working since it is an all year round commitment. Although it might be tough on the brain and body, it is a sport that has developed and matured most of its players. It brings the players joy and it is often a little getaway from the trouble in school or out of school. It is an important sport here at RWA and we hope to keep it this way.

Cross Country Race

By Alexander Kalaganis

This year was my first time doing the GMAA cross country race. It was an experience I would have

regretted to miss. When my friends asked me if I was into running, as I was a soccer player and endurance is a necessity, I thought to myself, "Yes, I am." It was at that moment they had brought up the cross country race. At first, I wasn't too sure if I wanted to participate because I would be bombarded with homework due to the amount of practices needed for the race. I soon realized that I was overthinking, and a lot. So I joined.

Every practice was so much fun—my friends and I would run a couple more laps after everyone left. We got to see different parts of Montreal and go to plenty of parks. After about three weeks of intense running and body conditioning, the race was around the corner.

I woke up the day of the race and ran a light jog around my neighbourhood. When I arrived at school we immediately got on the bus headed to the park. It was beautiful! At first, we walked around the track to be aware of where we were going to run. Once that was over we were off to play soccer and eat lunch. Along the way, I saw some of my friends from other schools such as Collège Villa Maria and Loyola High School. I also met plenty of other people as they joined our soccer game.

When we were told to get in place for the race, I felt a sudden tingling in my stomach, I was nervous. When the starting gun had been shot, I started to sprint. I was doing this to get ahead of the other runners before running at a consistent pace for the remaining three kilometres. I started off around tenth place. Three of my friends were ahead of me. It was great because Royal West Academy had a guarantee of four racers in the top ten positions, which would make us all qualify for the regionals. Around five minutes in, I was in fifth place and was gaining on the fourth-place runner. Everything was going well until I took a wrong turn and found myself in eighth place. "I'm so stupid!" I thought to myself as I continued to run.

It was now the final lap and I was still eighth. I could see the finish line! At least my friends were in front of me. I ended up finishing right behind one of my best friends. We represented our school immensely. We placed third, fifth, seventh, and I was in eighth. We all were handed ribbons with the position we came in indicated on them. We heard many chants coming from the audience and our fellow school members.



“What a race,” my friend said as he was holding his third place ribbon. After our second lunch, we went for another game of soccer followed by watching the seniors race. When all that was done, we were off to take pictures followed by getting back on the bus to head back to school.

“What a day!” I said and went to thank my gym teacher Ms. O’Neil for her amazing training tips and workouts.

Rugby

By Daiyan Islam

As Royal West Academy students, we are constantly having to have our noses in tons and tons of workbooks.

Our extracurricular activities give us a sense of freedom from all that tension. We have four distinct categories that have their own respective activities: Community, Cultural, Environmental, and Sport. There are several different sports teams here at Royal West Academy, such as rugby, soccer, basketball, and many more.

During this time of the year, many students take part in the school’s rugby teams. Not only is it fun to play but it’s also as fun to watch. Especially when our home team is sweeping every match.

One of this year’s rugby teams composed of Secondary IV and V boys has been playing phenomenally. They have been on a big winning streak. In fact, their last two games were victories with big leads. This success is



without a doubt due to arduous work and commitment. Rugby player Darian De Bellis knows firsthand what it is like to win these games. “We’ve been working extremely hard! We’ve had plenty of training to get us in shape and ready for game time. And when it comes to the game, we’re giving it our 100% and using everyone to get those points”, said Darian.

Not only does playing a sport help you physically, it teaches you the principles of working with others. In our normal academic lives, we have a vast number of team-related work that is asked of us. In our future, we will encounter countless team projects. Darian is on the right track to getting that work done quickly. “We learn how to use each other to make ourselves better”, he said. The lessons learned on the pitch don’t only apply while you play the game. You can apply them to your everyday life. “This can help in the future with studies because plenty of jobs are done in groups and learning how to work with people from day one gives you a massive head start,” added Darian.

Working together is an important part of playing a team sport, and every player has his or her own role to fulfill. However, what keeps one motivated to keep doing so without giving up is the bigger question. “Team Spirit! It’s amazing. Everyone is helping each other out. We never get mad at one another and we’re always there for each other,” said Darian. I bet if we all had that mindset, we would definitely be destined to succeed.

If you’re interested in playing a sport as an extracurricular activity, I’d suggest that you join rugby. It’s a fun sport to play and you’ll learn some important life lessons. So, buy your cleats and mouth guard and join now!

Halo Race

By Luca Winiarski

What a beautiful day for the 2018 Halo Road Race, on May 17 with a temperature of 17°C, Royal West Academy students, Secondary I through V, competed in races at Mount Royal with distances ranging from two to five kilometres. The Halo race had over 6000 runners this year and is a very tough and demanding race to compete in—it is a long-distance race which demands a good cardio and it was uphill which increases the level

of difficulty. Several schools competed against Royal West Academy including Royal Vale High School, Loyola High School, and Lower Canada College.

Luckily, I got to interview Secondary II runner Jacob Covington. He told me all about the Halo Road Race, including the preparation for the race. Everyone in the Halo race started training from 3:10 PM to 4:00 PM after school every Tuesday and Thursday from April until mid-May. This was a difficult race, it was uphill, and it was not mandatory for students which means only people who are interested or experienced at running would apply to compete. This would mean that the level of runners would be a little more advanced. "Everyone gave it their all," said Jacob. "I'm very proud of how we placed". Royal West Academy left their mark and should be receiving banners soon for their performance.

The end result of the 2018 Halo Road Race was incredible and very positive. Jacob said, "It was a lot of fun, everyone was happy, and memories were made."

It was a very competitive but friendly event and just overall very enjoyable for all the runners. It was a great experience for everyone who participated. "I really enjoyed running alongside my friends," said Jacob.

If you want to have a great experience, make new friends, and just have a good time, join the Halo Road Race next year!

The Governing Board Report

By Mr. Nijad Dahdah, Chair

The Governing Board held its meeting on May 22, at 7:00 PM in the school library. This was our seventh and final meeting for this school year.

The regular reports and documents were presented for information or adoption. One of the new items that were discussed was the preparation for an invitation to a Town Hall meeting which was called for by the EMSB Chair and the Parents Committee Chair.

I was invited along with a maximum of three other GB parents to attend the Town Hall meeting on May 28, to present Royal West Academy priorities regarding the improvement of the condition of our building. The Ministry has given funds to the Boards which are

intended primarily for renovations and repairs. The Ministry allocated \$41 million to the EMSB. After discussions, the GB members unanimously voted to put the "Auditorium Renovations" as our school's priority. The members also voted for Anne Monereau, Ryan Ortiz, and Norm Gharibian to join the Chair at the Town Hall meeting.

The project of the "Library Renovations" was presented to members on behalf of the administration by Anna Supino. The renovations will be done this summer and should be completed before the start of the coming school year. More information will be included in the minutes of the May meeting on the GB webpage.

The school fees for 2018–2019 were presented by the administration. The following fees were unanimously approved by the members:

Activity	2017–18	2018–19	Change
Students Fees	\$325	\$325	
Senior Art/3D Design	\$25	\$0	-\$25
Music	\$70	\$70	
Honour Band	\$40	\$40	
Hockey	\$100	\$100	
Musical	\$100	\$85	-\$15
Bardolators	\$150	\$150	
Volleyball Club	\$150	\$150	
Graduation	\$40 + \$15 / ticket	\$40 + \$15 / ticket	+\$5 / ticket
Admissions 2019–20	\$70	\$70	

The GB year end statement was presented by the Treasurer Jacqueline Stein-Elman. The statement was unanimously approved. It was noted that the current Governing Board allocated budget of \$250 plus the carry forward balance of \$30 from last school year was donated to the RWA Volunteer Reception to be held on June 7, 2018.

The Principal presented the most recent updates of the school budget.

On behalf of the Governing Board members, I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer.

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.

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!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 4	Graduation Ceremony
June 5	Pedagogical Day
June 6	Farewell BBQ
June 7	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
June 11	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
June 12	USED Uniform Sale @ 7 PM–8 PM
June 13	NEW Uniform Sale @ 3 PM–8 PM
June 14	NEW Uniform Sale @ 3 PM–8 PM
June 22	Graduation Prom
June 25	(Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day)
June 26–29	Pedagogical Days
June 28	Report Card Distribution
Jun 28–Jul 3	Bardolators Trip: England
July 2	(Canada Day)
September 3	Labour Day

RWA
News

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