

RWA



News

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FEBRUARY 2019

A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

Mr. Steven Manstavich, Vice-Principal

Ms. Christy Tannous, Vice-Principal



Heavy snowfall in January benefitted our Secondary II students with fantastic ski conditions for their annual ski trip to Stoneham, QC. One hundred and forty students attended the trip, which took place February 5–8. Students skied and tubed over the course of four days—a good time was had by all! Thank you to Mme Belina and all the teacher chaperones for their commitment to this wonderful experience.

Les élèves de secondaire 5 étaient également en voyage du 5 au 8 février, à New York. Cent soixante-cinq étudiants ont été charmés par la Grosse Pomme à travers le théâtre musical, les sports professionnels, les musées ainsi que d'autres sites uniques à cette ville qui fait rêver petits et grands. Nous tenons à remercier monsieur Aiken pour l'organisation du voyage, ainsi que tous les membres du personnel accompagnateur pour avoir aidé à rendre cette expérience inoubliable pour nos finissants.

This year's Exchange Program saw a group of Secondary III students, along with Mr. Diacoumacos, Mr. Northey, and Mme Belina head off to India for just over two weeks! Having departed on February 7, these

students and their chaperones visited numerous locations in India, including the Taj Mahal and our host school. Thank you to the chaperones for your time; everyone involved had a safe and rewarding trip!

La semaine de reconnaissance du personnel (Staff Appreciation Week) a eu lieu du 19 au 22 février. Un grand merci à la Royal West Academy Home & School Association pour tous leurs efforts. Au courant de la semaine, nous avons eu droit à des déjeuners dignes de la royauté ainsi qu'à des mets succulents. Nous tenons à remercier mesdames Heidi Rackover et Shawna Brook qui ont coordonné l'événement. Les enseignants et le personnel ont été très touchés par leurs efforts et se sont sentis très appréciés. Mille fois merci!!

The Salon des inventions, which was to take place on February 13 was postponed to February 19 due to the unexpected snow day. Secondary I students presented their inventions to their RWA peers. There were approximately 70 inventions, some certain to go on to be big moneymakers in the future. Congratulations to all the students who participated and a big THANK YOU to our Secondary I science teachers and prefects for their help with the event.

Près de 400 élèves en secondaire 2 à 5 ont participé à la 30e foire annuelle Expo-sciences, tenue le 14 février (*voir page 5 pour les détails*). Cette année encore, tous les projets ont été exposés dans le Foundation Gym, et jugés par près de 150 bénévoles du monde universitaire et professionnel. Comme à l'habitude, les projets étaient fantastiques et le calibre de recherche scientifique démontré par nos étudiants était impressionnant. Nous remercions tout particulièrement Mme Jennifer Pevec, coordinatrice de l'événement, ainsi que mesdames Dillon et Fogel, enseignantes en sciences. Merci également à toutes les techniciennes de



laboratoire et professeurs de sciences qui ont conseillé les étudiants lors des activités préparatoires.

Now that Term 3 has begun, many of us have started thinking about year-end exams. Please note that these exams begin in May 2019. Parents are asked to avoid scheduling appointments or summer vacations until they are certain that their child will not need to attend summer school (July 2019) or write supplemental exams (July 22–August 2, 2019). Additionally, parents should note that Term 3 is weighted at 60% of the final grade for a particular competency. Given the lengthy duration of this term (3½ months), if your child is experiencing difficulties, we encourage you to communicate regularly with their teachers. Email is the most efficient way of reaching teaching staff—email addresses can be found on the RWA website at www.royalwestacademy.com.

Notez qu'en raison de la fermeture de toutes les écoles de la EMSB le 24 janvier, la journée pédagogique provisoire prévue le 12 avril 2019 sera désormais une journée d'école régulière pour compenser. Tel que publié dans le calendrier, le vendredi 12 avril sera un jour 5.

La rencontre des parents (Parent-Teacher interviews) aura lieu le 14 mars 2019. Les parents sont invités à rencontrer les enseignants en après-midi, de 15h15 à 17h15 et en soirée, de 19h à 21h30.

Finally, Royal West Academy wishes a safe trip to the group heading off to Costa Rica on the Spanish Trip, to our Honour Band heading off to Cuba, and to everyone travelling over the March Break (March 4–8, 2019). Be safe and bring back stories and memories to share. Rest and recharge for the home stretch that is the third term.

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Mr. Mitchell White, RWA Foundation President

I have some exciting news to share on behalf of the Royal West Academy Foundation.

We are holding a big super raffle to raise funds for our beloved school. Ticket buyers can win one of two pairs of great seats to the **Ariana Grande** concert at the Bell Centre on April 1, 2019. These seats are valued at more than \$400 per pair and offer an amazing view of the stage. They are impossible to come by, so your best chance of scoring a pair is to buy a raffle ticket! Or two or three ... or six!

We also have some great secondary prizes, including tickets to a **Blue Jays** game at the Olympic Stadium on March 26, 2019, and passes to the **Osheaga Festival** this summer, thanks to the support the RWA Foundation has received from Evenko.

Raffle tickets are just \$10 each (or 6 for \$50) and can be purchased online at <https://rwaf.ca/shop/raffle-tickets/big-super-raffle-march-2019/>. Tickets will also be sold after March Break at the school.

Winners will be announced on March 22, 2019.

Organizing a raffle is a lot of work, and we are always looking for volunteers. If you would like to help sell tickets, or spread the word, please let us know! Get in touch with us at info@rwaf.ca.

Or come out to our next meeting, to be held March 18, 2019 at 7 PM in the Teachers Lounge on the second floor. If you can lend a hand, or even if you're just

Big Super Raffle
RWA Foundation

10\$ - Each
50\$ - 6 pack

Prizes

- #1 1 pair of Ariana Grande tickets
Monday April 1 at the Bell Centre
in the Red section
- #2 1 pair of Ariana Grande tickets
Monday April 1 at the Bell Centre
in the Red section
- #3 2 pairs of tickets to the Blue Jays vs. Milwaukee Brewers
Tuesday March 26 at the Olympic Stadium, Section 214
- #4 2 passes to the Osheaga Festival
August 2-3-4, Parc Jean-Drapeau

Winners will be announced on Friday March 22, 2019

curious, come see what we're all about! Access is via the Ainslie Road entrance. If you want to help but cannot make the meeting, just send me an email.

Hang in there—spring is just around the corner!

Carnival Day Ski Trip

By Luca Valerio

-MONT-
ORFORD

The annual Royal West Academy carnival day is held every year on the Tuesday before exam week. This year it was held on January 22. There were five activities that students could choose to participate in. There was skiing/snowboarding, tubing, snowshoeing, playing hockey, or in-school activities. I decided to go snowboarding this year at Mont Orford.

We had to be at school for 7–7:15 AM because we were leaving the school at 7:30 AM. Everybody was packed into the cafeteria with their gear, eagerly awaiting a day of fun. All the Secondary V students were on bus four. The students in the younger grades started to board the buses until it was just the Secondary V student's left in the cafeteria. We soon found out that the last bus that we were supposed to be on had a problem with the heating. The company was sending a new bus that was

supposed to come in about five minutes. Twenty minutes later, we were still waiting for the bus and the teachers decided to stop waiting for it and cram us into the three other buses. Many of us got onto the buses but there were about 10 students who did not fit. The new bus got to our school around five minutes after we left and the rest of the students got on that bus.

The drive was about an hour and a half long and we finally got to the hill. We got there about 45 minutes later than we should have due to the fact that our bus didn't come and there was traffic on the way there. Once we got there my friends and I went straight to the chalet to get ready as fast as we could because we had already lost about 45 minutes of ski time. Every year we have to complete a small test so the teachers can see if we're good enough to ski or snowboard on our own without getting hurt. Once my friends and I completed this and got our lift tickets we went up the chairlift.

Out of all four chairlifts that they have on Mont Orford only two we're open, but there was still enough space, so we were not running into each other and injuring ourselves. It had snowed a lot the weekend before so there was a lot of fresh snow on the mountain, and the



runs were very nice and groomed which made for some fun skiing and snowboarding. We all went in for lunch at around 12:30 PM and we ate really quickly because we didn't want to waste any ski time. It was a cold day out, but we had enough gear on to protect us from the cold. It did warm up in the afternoon which was nice because we could take off some of our gear.

Our last run was around 2 PM because we had to be back on the bus by 2:30 PM. I asked my friend Youssef Semlali what he thought about the day and he said, "Even though we had troubles with the buses in the morning I still ended up having a great day."

The drive back was much better because we got to be on the fourth bus, and we were not all cramped into three buses. The perfect combination of nice ski conditions, a lot of snow, and the weather not being too cold made for a very enjoyable day of snowboarding with my good friends.

SLIPP

By Meiri Tsuruzono

The Student Leadership in Injury Prevention Program (SLIPP) is a student-run program with the goal to spread awareness among our generation of young people about driving safety and alcohol/drug intoxication. Our main purpose is to get students of our generation to understand the importance of knowing how to act in certain emergency situations as well as the dangers of alcohol and drugs. Throughout this year, our team will be conducting different activities such as alcohol-free cocktail sessions where we will be introducing some different recipes for alcohol-free cocktails that are great alternatives for parties instead of actual alcohol. Other activities we have planned for this year include *Mario Kart* with marijuana glasses during lunch and lollipops with special educational messages for all of the students. Brianna, a Secondary V student remarked, "The activities last year were actually fun and it was interesting how you can experience what it feels like to be under influence of drugs with the goggles!"

For years, there have been many problems with underage drug and alcohol intake. Unfortunately, these issues commonly result in accidents which can cause serious damage to everyone involved. The key to



decreasing these accidents will be to spread awareness of the dangers linked to intoxication and drug and alcohol use in general. That is why our mission is to inform students about the damage that alcohol and drugs can have on the body and to also provide correct instructions of what they should do in cases of emergency. The fact that many students do not know how to take action in cases of emergency definitely contributes to the problem. Most of the time, young people will not know what to do and can be traumatized in a state of shock.

We feel that it is important for students to know what to do in those circumstances so they would be able to protect their friends and family. We hope that through our activities, we can help students understand alcohol/drugs and driving safety in a fun and effective way!

Please keep a look out for our upcoming activities!

Wellness Kits

By Nellie Siemers, Psychology Intern, Guidance Department

The Mental Health Awareness Committee handed out Exam Wellness Kits in the foyer for all interested students. The kits contained test anxiety tips, general pretest tips and motivational quotes as well as chocolates and tea. These kits were made in hopes of giving students a way to reduce their stress during this busy period of the year as well as giving them something that would help them with their exams.



This project generated lots of positive feedback and the students seemed to really appreciate the content of the kits. They also really appreciated the fact that the kits were offered to each and every student, free of charge. Students said that they felt cared for and that the tips were going to be helpful. Overall, the Exam Wellness Kits made students happy and we hope to do this project again.

Happy studying!

Another Successful Science Fair

By Ms. Jennifer Pevec, Science Fair Coordinator



Almost 400 students in Secondary II–V participated in the 30th Annual Royal West Academy Science Fair on February 14. Again this year, all the projects were housed in the Foundation Gym where over 160 judges from both the academic and professional worlds evaluated the students' work during the morning. Then in the early afternoon and evening, the RWA Science Fair opened up to visitors and students from nearby elementary schools.

The day ended with the awards ceremony. A full listing of those awards can be found on the RWA website.

From Vegas Bound To A Hoedown

By Devon LeBlanc



The RWA musical is more than just an ECA

I've been a part of the school musical for a very long time. I first joined in Secondary II honestly not knowing what to expect. I was certainly not expecting the musical to change my life the way it did. From the moment I first stepped out on stage, I was swept up by a whirlwind of costumes, spotlights, hair, makeup, laughing, crying, backstage whispers, dancing, and singing. I was star struck and intimidated by the amazingly skilled performers in the older grades and wanted nothing more than to be able to be like them someday.

Here I am four years later, having performed in my final musical at Royal West Academy, and it seems as though nothing has really changed. I still feel that same rush every time I put on a show, and am still star-struck and in awe of the talent that surrounds me in each rehearsal and performance.

This year's show was truly one of my favourites. *Hoedown* is set in the late 1950s, which provided a great opportunity to showcase the contrasting music of the time—from preppy, upbeat quartets to the first appearances of rock and roll. The musical also illustrated the way that society changed as the music did, becoming more rebellious as people began to dare to try things that were exciting and new. Our main character, Finn, fearlessly led the audience through her journey, attempting to break that glass ceiling and open





up the other characters to this new era. I had so much fun playing the sweet country girl, Anna, guiding Finn and her band into the spotlight. It was wonderful the way that everyone got into their characters and it was really our extraordinary cast and crew that brought this amazing show to life. The amount of enthusiasm and passion that everyone puts into these shows is truly incredible and I was honoured to be a part of it.

I still don't think it's really sunk in that my weekends won't start with vocal warm-ups and Bob Dylan songs, that my after-school time won't be spent learning lines in the auditorium and dancing across the stage. I have gained so much confidence, learned so much about what it means to be a part of a community, and formed such strong, supportive friendships through the musical program. I really cannot imagine what my high school experience would have been like without it.

I can't wait to come to see the show next year and see the younger generations rise to be the stars they deserve to be, and continue to welcome new members with open arms into the musical family.

Religious Heritage Project

By Jesse Etinson

Ethics class is, in my opinion, one of the most interesting and enlightening classes taught to

Secondary V students here at Royal West Academy. It pushes you to go out of your comfort zone and discover so many things that you wouldn't have come across without this extra bit of incentive.

A specific project that I would like to mention that pushed me to write this article would be the *Places of Worship* project that the students taking this course were assigned earlier in the school year. The aim of this project was for each student to go and visit a place of worship of any religion with one of their fellow classmates. Each student was assigned a different place of worship to go to and tour with a friend. Each group made three requests for which places of worship appealed to them and then were assigned one of those three depending on the other classmates' requests, so that no one would end up with the same one.

I took part in this project with one of my friends and I was assigned a synagogue called the Shaare Zedek Congregation. Being Jewish myself, it was something I was familiar with and I told my friend that I "didn't see an opportunity to learn very much from this project."

My initial judgement was completely and utterly overturned because after visiting the synagogue I had learned much more about that exact place, and even the Jewish religion. Being familiar with the religion that my place of worship practiced meant that I already had





a sufficient amount of knowledge about it. But even under these circumstances I was able to learn so much more about it.

Now imagine having the opportunity to visit a new, unfamiliar religion for the project. The possibility for learning new things is almost endless. For this reason, I believe that Ethics class is something very educative in a completely different way than most other classes that we are taught, and I believe that it should be a course that is taught in all schools, not only in Montreal but across the world, as it allows one to better understand and appreciate the different cultures that surround them every day.

A Slice of Shakespeare

By Niall Cunningham

Bardolators, colloquially known as the Bards, are students that study Shakespeare by producing and performing two shows every year as well as the focus of this article, the Shake Scene, with the help of Ms. Koyounian. Now, for those of you who are unfamiliar with what a Shake Scene is, a Shake Scene consists of groups of Bardolators directing their own portion of a Shakespeare play to perform in



front of the various grade levels. The goal is to not only aid in the education of Shakespeare throughout the school and incite discussion but also to raise awareness of the program itself.

The process of producing a Shake Scene is long, arduous, and often forgotten about throughout the year by Bards of all ages as they tend to be overshadowed by our biannual shows. However, it is an integral part of the Bardolators program. A former Bard and Royal West Academy alumnus, Dara Cunningham, explained in an exclusive interview, “The Shake Scene is what makes Bards, Bards. It’s really fun and a learning experience for everyone involved.”

The process for most members begins sometime after winter break. The students return to school and are welcomed with groups, scripts, and a brown envelope containing the documents and paperwork necessary to produce a scene. However, the senior students that have been selected to direct scenes in pairs have begun their work far before that. Prior to the vacation, a meeting is held with the seniors and Ms. Koyounian herself in which pairs, scenes, and sometimes groups are decided. Following this initial meeting, the seniors must present Ms. Koyounian with a copy of their script, complete with cuts. Each pair gets a randomly selected cast based on how many people are needed to perform their chosen scene. The rest, as they say, is history.

Currently, I am a director of the Macbeth scene that will be presented to Secondary IV classes (if you see this and are interested, feel free to ask your RWA English teacher!). I am also a senior student that has been participating in Bards since Secondary III. Having acted in multiple scenes before this one, I have learned and experienced the possible pitfalls and traps involved in

the production of a Shake Scene. In order to possibly complete this trial, directors have to be consistent in rehearsals, get their props, costumes, and cuts on time, and think about what direction they want to go with their cast. Disorganization is like a drop of ink in what could have been the perfectly good glass of water that is a scene—it must be avoided at all costs.

After roughly two months of rehearsal, learning lines, getting props, and choreographing, the scene gets presented in front of all the Bardolators. Then we go

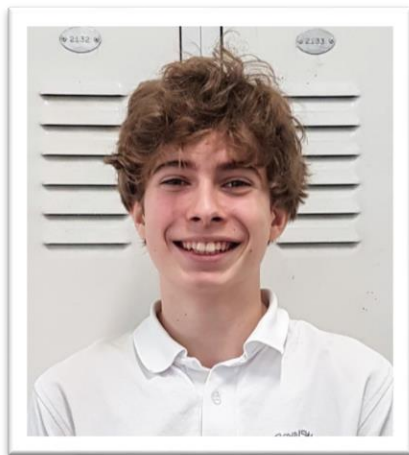
around classes throughout the subsequent month to present and talk about our scenes and the program during the rehearsals for the next play. I'm very excited to see how my, and all my peers', scenes develop and am looking forward to presenting to the Secondary IVs.

Should you be interested in the program, I am personally playing Hamlet in the RWA auditorium on April 14–17, 2019.

Lights & Sound Crew

By Massimiliano Garzia

Here at Royal West Academy, many groups often work hard for the benefit of the students, staff, and guests during special events at school. Often times, they aren't recognized for their hard work and success during important moments for the school. One of these clubs is known as the Lights & Sound Crew. I conducted an interview with Xavier Abergel-Gladu, a student who has been a part of the Crew for about four and a half years.



The Lights & Sound Crew works on the technical aspect of most events that take place at the school. They cover almost every event including the barbecues, variety show, high school reunions, and even the graduation ceremony. They make these events possible by using microphones, speakers, and lights as well as setting them all up and calibrating them to make the event look better, be more professional, and all in all be a success for everybody involved in it.

Xavier specifically is in charge of multiple different events around the school such as the variety show and the barbecues. He explained, "I'm in charge of the miscellaneous tasks ... everything except the musical and the Bards plays."

The majority of the people working in the Lights & Sound Crew work at least 16–20 hours throughout the year, a lot more work than a usual extra-curricular activity where only about 7 hours is necessary for a credit. Even so, some of the hardest workers rack in just around 30–40 hours all throughout the year, many hours worked for each event, making sure everything is perfect for everyone working on the show and the audience. To Xavier though, most of the hours worked don't feel like work at all but more like a fun experience with friends.

Obviously, a big benefit that especially affects someone who joins, is the credits. Working with the Lights & Sound Crew can earn anybody two credits (choices are environment, community, and cultural). This partly pays off for the hours worked around the school during the major events that take place. But another large benefit that is often overlooked is the social and learning aspect involved. According to Xavier, "You meet a lot of new people and learn things that could be useful to you if you are thinking of pursuing a career in this domain."

In the Crew, you can socialize and make new friends while also learning important skills side by side with others who are either just as inexperienced or can teach and help learn. These skills can also be used later in life depending on the career path of course. Still, education on these subjects is always a good thing no matter what anyone chooses to do later in life.

If this sounds enticing to anybody, one would start by signing up for the Crew early on in the year, attend the meetings, try to stay updated with all the events, and volunteer when possible to gain experience. Overall, it has been a very enjoyable experience for Xavier over the years—he says, "I have been doing it for four and a half years now and I don't regret it. I've made friends and I have learned a lot of interesting things about lighting and sound engineering through my experiences in the Crew."

In the end, it is a very positive experience for everyone involved. They work hard and benefit from their experiences greatly over time.

Amazonian Rainforest Awareness

By Brianna Dasilveira-Pereira



The Environment Committee is currently trying to raise awareness towards a serious and important issue happening in Brazil.



Brazil's newly elected far-right president, Mr. Jair Bolsonaro, wants to destroy part of the Amazonian Rainforest for mining, farming, and dam building. Mr. Bolsonaro is putting the rainforest in danger as well as the wildlife and many tribes living there, such as the Mundurukú, and if all his plans for deforestation continue, CO₂ levels will increase, causing a rise in the already important issue of climate change. Mr. Bolsonaro must be stopped—if not, his plans will have a negative effect not only for the people of Brazil but the whole world as well.

The Environment Committee is hoping to showcase a PowerPoint on Bolsonaro's plan and the effects of it on all the display screens in the hallways of the school. We want to make the school, and hopefully others as well, aware of this issue currently happening in the Amazon. Stella Eleftheriotis, fellow Environment Committee member, says, "I think it's critical that we do our best to help preserve the Amazon, because not only is it our primary source of oxygen, but its destruction is leading both its biodiversity and ourselves to some serious and dangerous conditions."

We have also linked a petition in the Environment Committee Instagram (@rwa.ec) as another attempt to help protect the rainforest and encourage students, staff members, and others to sign the petition in order

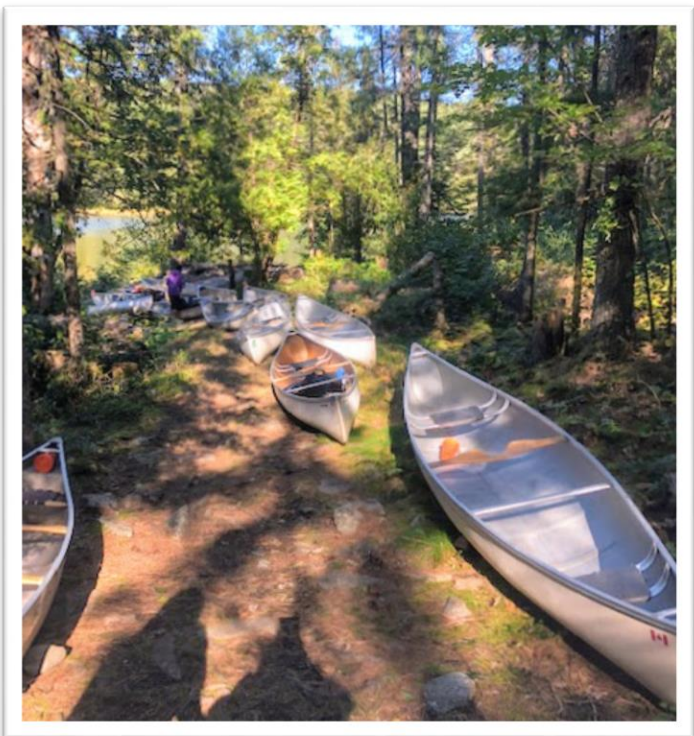
to stop the destruction of the rainforest and endangerment of wildlife and indigenous peoples' habitats.

Canoe Camping

By Hannah Booler

A couple of months ago, the annual Senior Canoe Camping trip took place. A group of approximately 42 Secondary V students, Mr. Zigby, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Nemeth, and three extra chaperones went to Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario the weekend of September 21–23 to camp. They spent the weekend canoeing and completing portages on Barron River. These portages varied in distance, going from small 100m trails to long 880m ones. In total, they travelled eight kilometres in portages over the duration of the trip.

As they first arrived at the site, the students learned how to pack their canoe, portage, and how to work together in their canoe. They were supposed to leave for their first trip shortly after that, but got delayed due to strong winds. In that time, the students took advantage of the delay to go for a swim in the lake. Then they went off on the first part of their trip, where they canoed and portaged until they arrived at their first campsite. Once on land, the students were faced



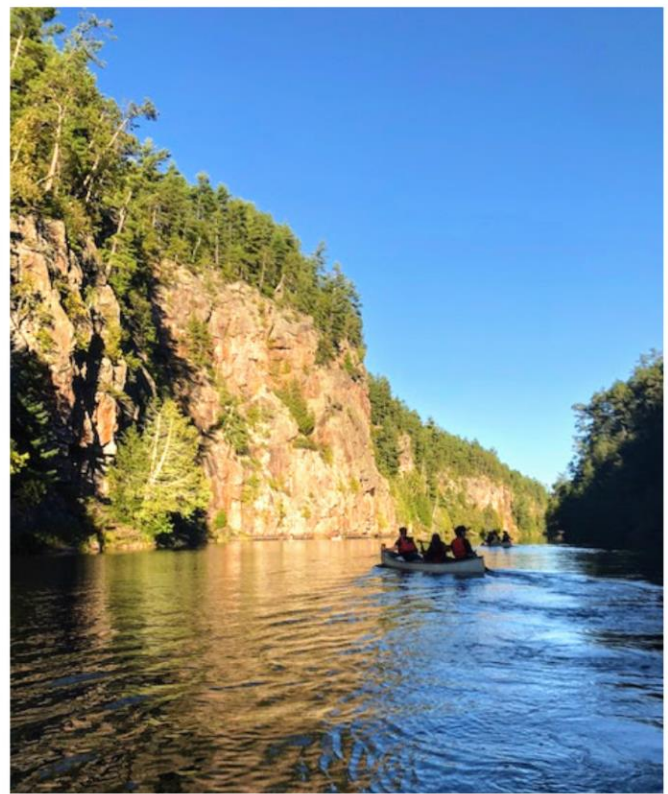
with the task of setting up camp for the night and making their own food. It really forced the students to act maturely as they were responsible for cleaning up after themselves and not leaving an ounce of waste behind. The next two days followed a similar pattern of canoeing, portaging, setting up camp, and enjoying the great weather and amazing park.

The students who participated got to enjoy the beautiful sights of the park as they canoed down the river as well as learn collaboration skills and work on their teamwork throughout the trip. They had to learn to work with others when completing the tasks required such as making their own dinner, portaging all the bags and equipment, canoeing, and setting up their tent. It took them some time to learn how to portage efficiently, but by the end, they were all working together and the portaging was done very well. Having all the students help each other out set created a good tone for the weekend.

The trip was intense and packed with travel, but was a great way for the students to disconnect from their electronics and bond with each other through the experience. For many, it was their first time completing such a trip and they all thoroughly enjoyed it. This trip is not for everyone, as it requires students to be out of cell phone range, not have access to running water, and to be responsible for all their own belongings, which includes all their cooking supplies and equipment, and some students may not be ready for that intense of a trip.

Emma Wolfe, a Secondary V student and participant of the trip, had an amazing time on the trip and shared her favourite memory, "My favourite memory was everyone cooking their meals together on the last night. We had a big campsite and we made a fire that we cooked s'mores on."

Emma felt she learned a lot about "the essentials of packing light and using our resources" throughout the trip. After being asked what she enjoyed the most about the trip she responded with, "I enjoyed being with fellow classmates disconnecting from our phones and school. It was beautiful out on the water and the weather was amazing. We worked hard and completed the portages and had a lot of fun all throughout the trip.



I enjoyed paddling on the open water in the sun with my friends," which really sums up how the weekend went and what it encompassed.

BBQ: An RWA Tradition

By Eric Huang

Royal West Academy is known to be quite challenging at times throughout the year. With a lot of work aimed at bettering our work ethic and in turn preparing us well for the next stage of the game we call life (that next stage being CEGEP). So, it's always nice to start the year off with something fun, something that will bring up the school spirit, and when the end of the year comes around, something to celebrate a year of hard work. What better way to celebrate than to host a barbeque for an entire school of bottomless pits for food (i.e., teenagers)?

At the start and end of every year, the Student Life Association (better known as SLA) organizes a barbeque for all the students and teachers during an extended lunch period. Thick juicy hot dogs and veggie dogs are grilled at the barbeque and served fresh in toasty buns—and when I tell you thick and juicy, I don't mean





the thin ones you normally see in 24-packs at Metro or Walmart, I mean the good, premium, flavour-packed ones. A refreshing drink of choice is offered alongside with a sweet freezie to finish off the meal.

This is all happening on the backfield of the school where a plethora of activities are set up for the student body once they've finished their delicious meal. There's volleyball, there's face painting, and there are mock engagements—all these activities to make a tasty barbeque an amazing one. But as with anything amazing, there is always room for improvement. That's what I want to touch upon in this article as Omega, the current slate (the SLA equivalent to a political party) passes the torch onto the next SLA slate for this upcoming End of Year barbeque.

First, let's go back in time. Back to the Start of Year barbeque and the second barbeque ran by the current SLA co-presidents Katie Gassios and Spiro Markopoulos. It was also the first time I was part of the Start of Year barbeque not as a student, but rather as an SLA member, and I had a blast with that barbeque. Not just me, but all the students seemed to be having a great time and it was a neat way to welcome back everyone from their vacation. Which made me wonder: why was this barbeque so exciting? In an interview I did with

Katie, she told me that one of the biggest things for that barbeque was "to bring back the snow cone machine."

However, the barbeque did have its own set of problems. One of the more notorious ones being that SLA ran out of the paper sleeves used to put the hot dogs in. Halfway through the hour-long event, the SLA had no sleeves left. I remember vividly not knowing what we were going to give the hot dogs out in. Our situation was quickly resolved as we decided to substitute the sleeves with brown paper, and it worked surprisingly well.

This brings me to my final topic. To the future years of SLA: if it's not broken, don't fix it. Bring back the snow cone machine. Use the thick juicy hot dogs, the refreshing drinks, and the sweet freezies. Set up all the same activities: the volleyball, the face painting, etc. and make sure you have enough hot dog sheets for all of them. Add some more activities as well. Linda Song, a fellow student I interviewed on the topic of the school barbeques, proposed that SLA add a photo booth, "Maybe like a photo booth or a place to take pictures. Hang a cloth up against a wall somewhere and have a tripod ready to take pictures of anyone that wants to. Even have a table with a bunch of props on it right next to the photo booth. I think that would be super cool."

Katie even suggested adding a popcorn machine and a soccer game in the front field, saying, "I feel like the popcorn and the soccer will entice even more people to participate in the barbeque. Make the kids more excited."

Do whatever you can to make this End of Year barbecue better than the last one.

All that said, I trust that the next slate will do a good job running the upcoming barbeque this spring. Whether they take the advice from within this article or not, one thing is for certain, it is going to be a blast during that barbeque. From one grade to the next, here is the torch. Good luck!

Student Life As A Prefect

By Vrinda Mohanlal

In just a little over two months, the welcoming Prefect Board of Royal West Academy will begin to open its arms to new members from younger grades. With the sign-up and application process approaching, Secondary III and IV students are hastily trying to figure out if prefecting is the right committee for them. Deciding whether or not to apply to this cultural and communal extracurricular activity, similarly to other school clubs, upholds uncertainty and anticipation. As a student who has gone through the same process, I decided to give some insight regarding the student life as a prefect to facilitate the choices currently being made by some of our fellow Secondary III and IV students.

At 8:30 AM, all prefects gather in homeroom 213 where they are informed about upcoming events and scheduled occasions by the caring teacher in charge of the Prefect Board; Ms. Colannino. When asking Emma Rodriguez, the Secondary V head prefect, about her opinion on our time during homeroom, she responded enthusiastically with an opinion that many prefects share, saying, "It's during [homeroom] when I feel as if the prefects are a big family. We all get along so easily and with all our diverse personalities, there is never a dull conversation."

When the first break comes around, five prefects must go to their scheduled duties, made by the head prefects, in the cafeteria. The interactive tasks alternate

from guarding the doors, roaming around the cafeteria, and overlooking the cafeteria lines. Secondary V science student, Arielle Mercado, truthfully says, "Although staff members are here, I think it is comforting to have prefects supervise, especially for the younger students who can ask you for help without feeling intimidated."

Hearing this from Arielle as well as from other students definitely instills a sense of accomplishment as one of the Prefect Board's main purposes is to contribute back to the school by helping others.

As lunch approaches in the middle of the day, the prefects start to meet up in the prefect room, which quickly fills up. When the five go do their duties, the remaining prefects stay in the prefect room to eat their lunches and to discuss together. During this time, the prefects get to bond even more and relax in a calming environment. Aviva Wiseman, a Secondary V prefect, describes the vibe in the room perfectly during the lunch hour when she says, "I don't eat in the prefect room often, but it is nice to have a private area where we can all gather and eat peacefully. I find it useful to have it right next to the cafeteria, so after our shifts we can easily return to our, sort of, oasis."

After lunch, prefects are pretty much done for the day and begin the fun but diligent cycle again the next day.

As my last year of being a prefect at Royal West Academy, I strongly suggest that you take on this wonderful experience and become a part of the friendly, respectful, and warm environment that the Prefect Board has to offer.

Midget Girls Basketball

By Bianca Morsa



A Memorable Experience

This year's basketball season began in the month of October, continuing all the way through February. I thought it would be a great opportunity to sit down with one of the members of the midget girls team in order to get some insight into her experience about participating in this particular sport offered at school.

After attending several home games at Royal West Academy, giving me a glimpse of how each game played

out, I ended up getting the permission from Chiara Morsa, a Secondary III student who was willing to give me an in-depth description of the tryout process as well as how the team functioned overall.

As I started to interview her, she first gave me some background information on RWA's midget girls basketball team, such as the fact that their team was classified into division two, meaning they only competed against a select number of schools, including Villa Maria and West Island College as well as Lower Canada College. She also stated how half of the games were played at the other schools, with the other half taking place at RWA.

I was then interested in the tryout process and what skills were required to be selected for the team. Chiara then went on to say, "this process is always a little nerve racking," describing how the number of girls trying out is overwhelming, some with a higher skill level than others, making ones who might not be as talented nervous for their outcome.

Although this made her concerned, Chiara told me that there are actually two days of tryouts, giving girls who may not have performed at their best the first day a chance to impress the coaches by going back the second day to do a series of drills which tests their abilities in certain aspects incorporated in a basketball game.

After getting this insight, I was excited on getting to know more about how the players, once chosen, practice these specific skills for the game. Chiara told me that practices really depend on the previous game they participated in. However, each practice has the same premises, usually beginning with warm ups to work on basic fitness and endurance. They then continue with practicing layup shots as well as scrimmage games allowing for each player to exercise their specific position when playing. By doing so, the coaches are able to recognize what each individual player might need to work on to improve the overall capability of the team.

With this knowledge, I then asked Chiara about her overall experience. Having only good feedback, she shared with me how enjoyable she found playing a team sport was at school. She described the feeling of getting to play a sport you enjoy with your teammates

as exhilarating. Not only do you get to meet new people and make new friends, but the sense of adrenaline that builds up when stepping onto the court is what pushes you to play your best every time. All the while telling me about these emotions she feels watching her team play,

Chiara also said that the principle of the game that the coaches tried to instill was never about winning or losing, but instead about trying your best and having fun.



To close out the interview, I had one last question for Chiara, which encompassed what she was hoping to achieve with trying out for the team. She followed up on my question with an answer that I didn't expect. She told me that at first she was scared that she wouldn't make the team because there were too many good players, and she wouldn't have a chance. But once she did make it Chiara's only goal was to do her best and make herself happy. Her goal wasn't to be the best player, but to play in a way that would satisfy herself, with a positive mindset throughout the season.

The Importance Of Participating In Clubs And Teams At School

By Amelia Bonter



Because I'm finishing high school this year and the end of the year is nearing, I find myself looking back on my high school experience as a whole. I see now that joining and committing to a club at school when I first started high school made all the difference in my experience and even my life over the past four and a half years. I now realize why parents and adults were



always so insistent on joining clubs when I first started here at Royal West Academy.

Coming into high school, I was scared like most kids were because you have to make new friends and you're in a completely new school. I was afraid that I wouldn't make friends. My parents and other adults said that joining clubs would make the transition easier and would allow me to meet new people who shared a common interest. Throughout the year I made friends and school wasn't as scary anymore, but at the end of that first year I decided to join the volleyball team.

Looking back now I am so happy that I tried out. I didn't join because it was a passion of mine or I was particularly good at it, but because I needed a sports credit and I had fun playing it during gym class. Little did I know that joining that team would play a crucial role in my positive experience here at RWA. When I looked at the list of people who had made it on the team a few weeks later I remembered being so overjoyed that my name was on it, that I was now part of a team and that I would meet new people in the process.

Being on the volleyball team meant going to a two-week long camp every summer and training all year with the same girls. Most of us loved it so much that we even went to play outside of school on a club team and tried out for competitive summer training programs. We all shared a passion: volleyball. This created a bond between all of us that would only strengthen over our high school experience. Tabea Devries, a girl on the volleyball team said the following: "My closest friends at RWA were on the volleyball team and I think this says a lot about the type of bond passion for a sport and dedication creates."

I have made some very good friends because of volleyball that I would have otherwise probably never known or never been close with. These friends supported me through high school, and some of my most memorable and valuable memories are with them.

Through my experiences on this team I've realise the importance of participating in school activities, joining sports teams, or joining clubs—depending on what you're interested in. Since Royal West Academy has a whole lot of clubs and teams it isn't very difficult to find

one or two that interest you and it can really make all the difference, especially if you're adjusting to being at a new school with completely new people. I encourage everyone—whether you're in Secondary I or Secondary V—to go out and participate because I promise you will not be disappointed.

What Is Prom Committee?

By Dalia Parrino

Prom is one of those moments that you will always remember. It's the event that some students have been dreaming about since they were young. The last time you will spend time with your graduating class before you all part ways and start a new chapter. Thanks to the committee that planned it, this night will be unforgettable!

At Royal West Academy the Prom Committee is responsible for organizing fundraisers where the money will be put towards the venue, DJ, photo booth, decorations, and invitations.

To qualify for Prom Committee, you along with eight other peers will need to create a portfolio with all of your ideas as well as monetary quotes for all bookings. The amount of quotes varies each year, but on average you will need the following: quotes from three different party halls, and three quotes for the DJ, photobooth, invitations, decorations, table seating, and flowers. All your choices will need to be according to the budget that is given to you.

Another thing that you will need to do but that is not involved with prom is designing the grad apparel. You will need to provide us with the colour choices that your team will be choosing and the logo you have created. A sample order sheet must also be provided.

You need to prove to us that you work well as a team. You will need to plan a fundraiser where we will observe and see how your team communicates and how organized your team is. It is very important to work well as a team and find solutions for unexpected problems because there will always be bumps along the way. In your portfolio you will need to show us creative ways for monthly fundraisers.



Finally, you will need to tell us your theme. The theme is important since both the decorations and the design of the invites for prom revolve around this theme.

It would be a great idea to have a different task for everyone to keep organized. Each person will be in charge of gathering the three different quotes for one of the bookings.

When the due date arrives for the portfolio, your team will have an interview with us and your team will need to present to us what you have found. There's no need to be nervous or stressed, we just want to see how passionate and how comfortable you are with what you have created.

Being part of Prom Committee is a lot of work, but it is something that you will be so proud of when you see the final result. Make a team with your friends and come try out for the 2019–2020 Prom Committee!

Planning The Prom

By Emily Bourjeili

As the school year starts coming to an end, the graduates of 2019 are all thinking about one thing: graduation. But most importantly: Prom. We all have high expectations and of course want this night to be

one to remember, but nobody truly knows what goes on behind the scenes. I wanted to get an inside look on all the planning that goes into prom and understand more about the main purpose and goals of the Royal West Academy Prom Committee. To do so, I interviewed Rylee Wolch, one of the ten members of the 2019 Prom Committee, and asked her questions about her main experiences and challenges that she's had going into planning this event.

Most people assume that Prom Committee is just in charge of planning our prom, but Rylee explained that it is so much more than just that. She said, "The main thing that we do is plan prom which means finding a DJ, a hall, photo booth, etc., but we also do a lot of fundraising including the chocolate sales, and we make and order the grad apparel."

The Prom Committee works hard all year to ensure that prom runs smoothly and that everyone has a great time. But with planning big events like this comes stress, especially when the entire grade is depending on you. Rylee explained, "It does get stressful at times because we know that we can't make everyone happy even though we try to."

This is understandable due to all the different personalities present in the graduating class, and all the different ideas that students possess. I asked her how having a Prom Committee run by students makes a difference compared to having it run by teachers, and her answer was one that a lot would agree with. She enthusiastically shared that she feels as though "it makes a huge difference because having it run by students makes it easier to include the grade in our decisions and ideas because we're part of the grade and have a better perspective of what the grads want as a whole."

Even though the grade is included in some of the fundraising and ideas, the final decision comes down to the Committee and Ms. Chawki, the teacher in charge of the Committee. Knowing that there are ten students in charge of prom, I'm sure many students are curious to know (as am I) how they work together and come up with ideas that they all agree with. I asked Rylee if it is hard deciding on ideas with all the different opinions the students in the committee must have and she

answered, “Many people would think it would be a challenge to actually make a decision having so many different people involved considering we are ten, but it actually doesn’t get in the way. The one time that we had a really hard time coming to a decision was with the grad apparel because of the many different ideas that we wanted for it. In the end we’re all really happy with how they turned out.”

This gives me more insight on how well they work together and gives me a lot of confidence and hope for our prom to be a great success.

This interview helped me better understand the workings of our Prom Committee and showed me that with hard work will come great outcomes. I am sure that the Secondary V students are getting ready for this exciting night and can be assured that the planning is in the right hands.

Green Bean Café

By Rowyn Légaré

For several years, the Green Bean Café has supplied the students of Royal West Academy with delicious vegan and vegetarian meals. Every Friday at lunch, Green Bean serves food that is healthy and made fresh by students after school on Thursdays. Often the recipes are made with vegetables from RWA’s community garden, the Park n’ Lot. The meals are quite affordable, and a discount is offered to those who bring their own container. Gabrielle Canakis-Aizenberg, a Secondary V Environment Committee member who started buying from the café in Secondary II, said, “I’ve always loved the Green Bean Café. I get to try good food for the loose change I find in my bag!”

Dishes served in the past include: vegetable lasagna with balsamic green bean salad and lemon poppy seed cake, vegan coconut curry, vegan teriyaki tofu stir-fry with apple crumble, and honey sriracha tofu with Dan Dan noodle soup and chocolate chip cookies.

Aside from offering delicious food at a low cost, the Green Bean Café also provides students with a fun, enriching opportunity to earn their environment or community credit. Every Thursday after school, a group of students comes together in Room 104 to cook the food that will be served the following day. The group is



led by members of the Environment Committee, who have had more experience with cooking for Green Bean, as well as Ms. Almeida and Ms. Suarez. While participating in this activity, students have the opportunity to improve and develop their cooking skills. Green Bean is also a great place to make new friends, with lots of time to chat while peeling and chopping vegetables or washing dishes.

The Environment Committee would like to encourage all students who need an environment or community credit and who have an interest in cooking to join the team of chefs at Green Bean! Earning a credit is simple—all that is required is a permission slip to handle the kitchen equipment, and to participate in both the cooking on Thursday and the serving on Friday four times. Without a team of people willing to cook and serve each week, the Green Bean Café wouldn’t happen, so student participation is imperative.

Finally, if you’re a student who’s looking for a healthy, inexpensive vegetarian or vegan meal, or just a nice place to eat lunch, drop by Room 104 at lunch on Fridays to experience the Green Bean Café.

Start A Club!

By Alexandra Ivanov

What is it like to start a club at Royal West Academy?

My name is Alexandra Ivanov and I started a club this year. Here are some of my personal experiences and tips on how to start.

Firstly, you need to have an idea of what you would like to do in the club. Choose something that you are passionate about and an activity that you'd like to share with others. This is always the best way to start. When I started my first club this year, I knew I wanted to sing with other people. I love music and singing and wanted to share that with the folks that live at the Montclair Residence near my school. Now, with an idea in my head, I had to talk to the right people to make the club a reality.

To begin with, I gave it a name. The Winter Caroling Club: a group of singers dedicated to learning and performing carols for senior residents. I found a teacher to supervise the club and the next step was to organize a meeting place where eventual club members could meet and practice. This wasn't very difficult because the teachers at our school are generous and one was able to provide their room on Tuesdays at lunch. The teacher that supervised the club was helpful as well—whenever we ran into an issue he was willing to help. Anyway, as long as you ask around there will always be a teacher that can help you with organizing and getting credits for your extracurricular activity.

The next thing students at Royal West Academy might find useful is to know how to get people to join their club. Advertising is everything because it's an important part of convincing other students to participate. Since there are many different extracurricular activities at RWA already it may be difficult to do this, but here are a few tips that can help. First, posting a message in our school daily bulletin is a great way to begin, the second step should be to make promotional posters and hang them around in the hallways. If these two things fail to attract new club members, students can go around to homerooms in the mornings and speak with kids one-on-one.



My personal experience with starting a club taught me these things and I hope other students also get inspired from this. It is my last year at RWA and I wanted to scratch a few things off of my bucket list before I left high school forever and starting a club was on the list. I started my club in late October. I followed all of the steps I listed above and was able to make a group of carolers. We practiced ten carols and finally performed them at a holiday concert at the Montclair Residence in December. This was one of the most gratifying experiences in my high school life and I will forever keep it near and dear to my heart.

So fellow students, go out and start a club. You'll have a lot of fun!

Science Games Club

By Ramzy Manolikakis

There are many different extracurricular activities that are offered to Royal West students. These activities are meant to enhance the students' experience at the school and make it more enjoyable. There are so many to choose from that it is hard to know which one will be worthwhile.

One of the ECAs that I really enjoy is the Science Games Club. It is organized by one of the science teachers at the school, Ms. Liscio. Near the end of the school year, there are meetings held for this activity once a week at lunch on Thursdays. It is open to all grades.

Each week, there is a different activity for the students who participate in this ECA to do. There was a game of bingo but with the names of element compounds. Ms. Liscio would call out the name of the compound

and if it is present on the students' bingo cards, they cross it out and wait for the next one to be called. This game helps students remember the names of compounds that they learned in their science classes. To help students better understand how molecules join to form compounds, we created mock compounds. This really helped me learn how different compounds were formed and how many elements are required for them.

We also played some Kahoots that helped me better understand some of the concepts that were taught in class. A Kahoot is basically a quiz. It asks a question and gives four possibilities for an answer. The goal is to answer the question as fast and as precise as possible. These quizzes were either created by Ms. Liscio or found online.

A lot of other similar games are played and is a very enjoyable experience. This ECA is well run and it is a fun activity to attend with friends. It helps students who might be struggling in science but is also enjoyable for students who know the material well. With some of the activities there is a competitive spirit present which makes everything a lot more interesting. I would recommend this ECA to anyone who would enjoy playing these types of games and doing these activities.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb 27–Mar 7	Spanish Trip
Feb 27–Mar 10	Honour Band Trip: Cuba
March 4–8	March Break
March 12	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
March 14	Parent-Teacher Interviews 3:15 PM–5:15 PM 7 PM–9:30 PM
March 15–17	Spring Ski Trip
March 18	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
March 18–22	MindPOP Math
March 22	Dance Show
March 22	Pedagogical Day (afternoon)
March 24–26	Regional Science Fair
March 25–29	Social Justice Week
March 29	Dessert Concert
April 1	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
April 1–4	Sec IV Trip: Boston MA
April 1–5	Sec III Trip: Washington DC

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!

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.

RWA
News

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