

RWA



News

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MARCH 2016

A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

Mr. Steven Manstavich, Vice-Principal



On February 13–March 3, twenty Secondary III students travelled to India as part of a cultural exchange (*see page 3 for details*). As many of you already know, Royal West Academy offers students an opportunity to participate in an exchange program beginning in Secondary I. The three-year program identifies a sister school overseas and initiates a journey that will see RWA families host a foreign student in Secondary II and then travel to the visiting country in Secondary III. This year's trip was reported to be a life changing experience for many of the students and staff. We would like to thank our host school, Venkateshwar Global School, located in Delhi, India, and our chaperones, Ms. Westlake, Mr. Diacoumacos, and Mr. Vamvakas. Stay tuned for news about next year's exchange group that will be travelling to Taiwan, China, in November 2016!

On March 11, thirty-eight students in Secondary III, IV, and V participated in the annual Senior Ski Trip to Mont-Sainte-Anne (*see page 4 for details*). Students enjoyed great conditions over their three days on the mountain. Special thanks to all the chaperones as well

as to Ms. Colannino and Mr. Zigby, for their efforts in organizing this activity.

The annual RWA Musical Production was held on March 14–17 at Marymount Adult Centre (*see page 5 for details*). **Vegas Bound** is an original production written by our very own Mr. Floen. Congratulations to our talented actors and singers! Special thanks to Ms. Kuch, Mr. Bateman, and M. Leblanc (caretaker at Marymount), for their dedication to this event and for their flexibility in putting on this production off-site.

On March 18, RWA presented its annual Dance Show (*see page 6 for details*). **Underground** was a fantastic event that showcased a variety of dance styles performed by students from all grades. Over eighty students prepared all year for this exciting display of dance talent. As in previous years, staff performed a surprisingly great dance routine. The profits from this year's show will be donated to the RWA Foundation and the Dans La Rue charity. Thank you to Mr. Zigby and Mme Cayer for their hard work, and congratulations to the Student Executives for an amazing show: Alex Belitzky, Hope Burko, Tali Friedman, Emma Lalonde, Alexa Levine, and Gen Shemie.

On March 13–15, ten winners of the Royal West Academy Science Fair represented our school at the Montreal Regional Science and Technology Fair held at Concordia University and came away with a variety of awards. Congratulations to all our winners and good luck to the five RWA students who will present their projects at the Provincial Science and Technology Fair: Sean Giacobbe, Jaad Van der Wee, Jude Victoria, Carl Miller, and Thomas Giacobbe. Once again we would like to thank our Science Department, led by Ms. Dillon, for their incredible work in preparing our students for these competitions.



In recent days, parents of students in Secondary III and IV received a course list that represents the tentative academic load for your children for the 2016–2017 school year. It is based on your child's indicated preference, course availability, and academic results to date. Please be aware that this academic load is subject to change based on your child's final marks and/or any scheduling constraints. Final marks for Secondary IV and V students as well as those of several courses (accelerated Math, PPO, and Art) for Secondary III students will be printed on the "Résultats des apprentissages sanctionnés" sent by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur to your home address in early July.

A word of caution to parents of Secondary V students regarding their placement in the CEGEP program of their choice. As you know, many CEGEPs can only accommodate a fraction of the students that apply every year. If your child is admitted to the CEGEP program of their choice, then that acceptance is conditional. In the past, we have had students see their acceptance revoked in July because their grades dropped below a standard acceptable to the CEGEPs. We encourage all students with the support of their parents to continue the practices that have ensured their success to date.

On March 23, at the EMSB Council of Commissioners meeting, five RWA students who graduated last year—Jessica Muha, Charlotte Ouimet, Alexandra Paquette, Ashley Saad, and Massimo Vatisas—were presented the Robert A. Peck Award for earning the highest grade

in the English Montreal School Board on the Secondary V French Second Language Ministry Examinations. Congratulations to them and the French Department staff, particularly Mme Prachar, who was their teacher last year.

As we approach the end of year, we begin to prepare for the end-of-year exams. Parents are reminded that students must be in school for exams until June 22, 2016. The official exam schedule will be available at the end of April. Many exams are already scheduled in May; therefore, parents should avoid making appointments for their children during this time. Any absence for an end-of-year exam must be supported by a medical note. We appreciate your cooperation.

Parents should note that April 29, 2016, originally listed as a tentative Pedagogical Day, is now confirmed. The date for the Graduation Exercises has also been confirmed for June 2, 2016. The tentative Pedagogical Day scheduled for June 3, 2016, will only be confirmed after April 15.

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

By Ms. Erica (Muffy) Brown, RWA Foundation

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change with the Royal West Academy Foundation is a perfect way to celebrate Mother's Day!

Join the RWA Foundation and friends at the Segal Centre on May 9, 2016, for a special advance performance of the musical by Tony award winning writer Joe Dipietro. Love and romance from first dates to the nursing home have never been so funny.

Each year, the RWA Foundation hosts a popular evening at one of Montreal's theatres as a special fundraiser. Timing this year is perfect to celebrate Mother's Day, so come to the Segal Centre on May 9 at 8 PM and enjoy the second-longest running Off-Broadway musical along with coffee and cake after the show.

Tickets are \$65. The best part? For each ticket that you purchase, you will receive a tax receipt for \$30, as a



portion of the ticket price returns to RWA for the auditorium campaign. A limited number of tickets are available, so order yours today at <http://rwaf.ca>.



The Royal West Academy Foundation

The RWAF is run by volunteer parents and is currently focused on transforming our over 80-year-old auditorium into a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre for our children. The auditorium plays a central role in the academic life and extra-curricular activities at Royal West Academy.

If you have any questions, would like to volunteer, or have any fundraising ideas, contact the foundation at rwafoundation@gmail.com. You can also make a donation at <http://rwaf.ca>.

India Exchange

By Mr. Andre Vamvakas



Royal West Academy just wrapped up its latest International Student Exchange.

Along with present faculty members Mr. Vamvakas and Mr. Diacoumacos, and retired faculty member Ms. Westlake, twenty Secondary III students traveled to New Delhi, Rajasthan and the Mumbai, Maharashtra regions of India, on February 12–March 2.

The students and staff were billeted with Indian families of Venkateshwar Global School of Rohini, New Delhi, who had visited Canada a year ago. For eight days we experienced Indian life, first hand. The town of Rohini is approximately 25 km from New Delhi, India's capital and one of its most exciting and vibrant cities.

The entire Canadian entourage was received with a rousing heartfelt reception when we arrived, attended by all the Indian families at the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

A few days later we were received at the school with a formal welcoming ceremony that included traditional and modern dances performed by the student body and many other splendid artistic performances.

Our itinerary included visiting one of the Seven Wonders of the World—the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Qutub Minar, the Chhattarpur Temple, and the Gandhi Museum in New Delhi. We took in a spectacular India-style musical at the Kingdom of Dreams in Gurgaon and the impressive Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple Complex where we experienced many facets of Indian spiritual origins and customs.

The program was culminated by a trip to the Pratapgarh Farm for a day of fun and recreation for the students.

Leaving New Delhi after eight days was very difficult for many of us after spending time with our host families of Venkateshwar Global School. We got to experience exquisite Indian food, hospitality, and kindness. Living with the families was an experience unlike any we could have experienced in a classroom, and we sincerely thank Ms. Kavita Soni (Principal), Ms. Shweta Poddar, Ms. Sarita Thakral, and Ms. Preeti Phutela, our hosts, and all the wonderful staff and students of the



Venkateshwar Global School as well as the administration and staff of the other sister Venkateshwar International schools who welcomed us in Dwarka.

We continued our journey to Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in the state of Rajasthan for two days. The safari into the reserve did not yield many tiger sightings but nonetheless we did witness many protected local wildlife and spectacular scenery. We then ventured to Jaipur (the Pink City), the capital of Rajasthan, to take in the Jantar Mantar, an elephant ride at Amber Fort, and shopping at its world-renowned bazaars. Khimsar sand dunes and the Khimsar Fort were our next stops where the weather was ideal and the scenery breathtaking. Then on to Jodhpur (the Blue City), and the Mehrangarh Fort.

We departed from Rajasthan after seven magnificent days and flew to Mumbai, Maharashtra, for the last leg of our trip.

Mumbai was an experience for the senses; India's capital of commerce and home to Bollywood and

glamour. The students got to enjoy the sights and sounds of a truly unique and exciting city with visits to Elephanta Island and the many landmarks such as the Gateway of India, the Taj Hotel, and a Bollywood studio in the heart of Mumbai.

As the students and staff bid farewell on our last day, many tears were shed for the great friendships forged with our Indian hosts and their families, with the promise that we would meet again.

It was truly "The Adventure of a Lifetime."

View some of our students' reflections at www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZHDfTB4F7M.

Mont-Sainte-Anne Ski Trip

By Jamie Fabian

This year's Secondary IV and V ski trip took place March 11–13 at Mont-Sainte-Anne ski resort. We arrived at our condos at 11:30 AM via coach bus, where we dropped off our bags and were told what the plan of



day was, when to meet, that we must stay in groups of at least two people, and ski with friends that are at our level. We then got changed and immediately hit the slopes. From that point on, we had free skiing until 6:30 PM, when we checked in with the teachers at the designated meeting point to ensure that everything was okay. Afterwards, we proceeded to go night skiing until 8 PM before returning to our condos.

Back at the condos, we made our own supper. Students were responsible for preparing two lunches, one supper, and two breakfasts. The cooking materials were provided and students were responsible for coordinating the ingredients for the meals with their roommates in advance. In case of any problems, the teachers' condo was right nearby. I have to say that my friends and I felt 100% secure at all times. After cleaning up dinner, it was time for some good old-fashioned pick-up hockey. Then it was lights out at 11:30 PM to ensure we were well rested for the next day.

The next morning, we woke up around 7:45 AM, got dressed, and made breakfast. We got on the shuttle bus to get to the hill at 9:30 AM, where we hit the slopes. We then checked in for lunch at 12:30 PM and continued skiing until 4:15 PM. It was during this time that my good friend Chris Aguiar said, "I don't know what is better: the conditions or the view."

After skiing, we got changed and headed over to a sugar shack for some traditional Quebec food and some good old-fashioned Quebec-style music and dancing.

Afterwards, we had some maple taffy. Once we were back at the condos, we had another game of shinny followed by some hot cocoa by the fire, compliments of Matthew Kis.

The next morning, we cleaned up and packed up, and were back at school Sunday afternoon. All in all, it was an amazing experience and I am looking forward to doing it again next year!

Musical: Vegas Bound

By Anna Chuprun

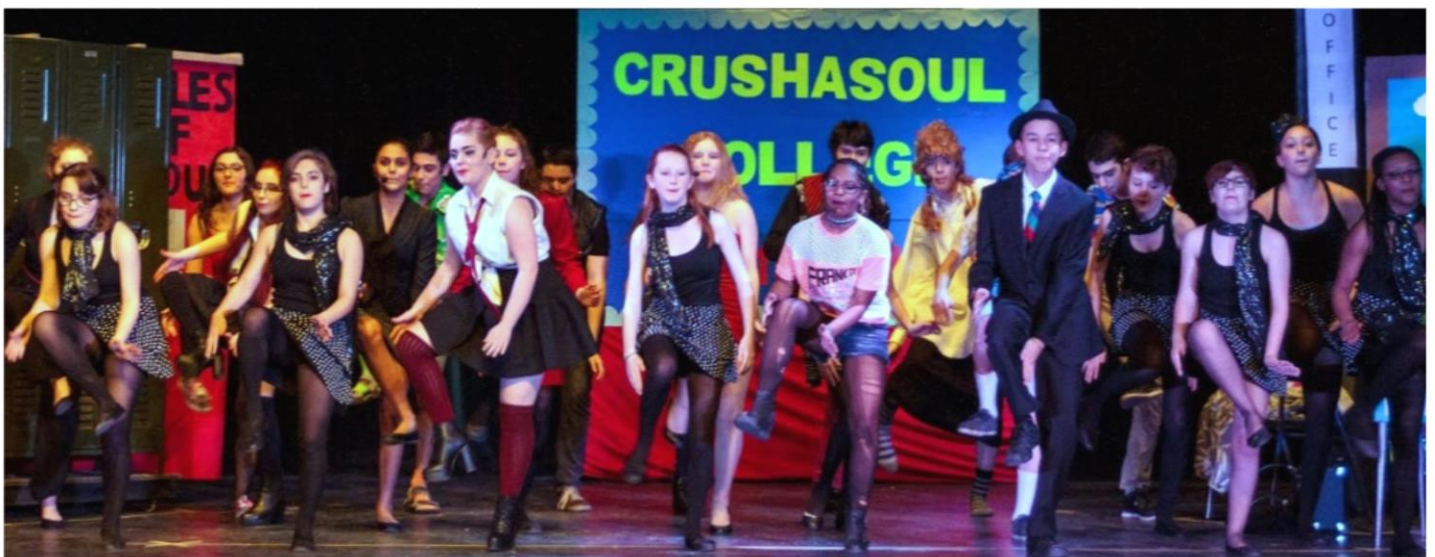
Director: Douglas Floen

Musical Director: Chris Barillaro

Dance Choreographer: Jonathon Patterson

When you say Vegas, you're saying love. Ah, Las Vegas. Although what happens there might stay there, its reputation is known worldwide.

In his newest play, **Vegas Bound**, Douglas Floen shares the story of two comedians and their backup dancers who, along with a mature rocker running away from his casino debts, seek employment at Crushasoul College, a school for the performing arts right outside of Las Vegas, and find that things there aren't quite as they seem. A cheque for one million dollars arrives at the school for "the most deserving" and everybody has a different idea of what to do with it. As everybody fights for the million-dollar cheque they discover what it really means to be *Vegas Bound*.





Putting a musical together is always a lot of hard work and effort. It requires dedication from everyone involved and we all love doing it. This year, due to the labour situation, our musical was threatened—but we were having none of that! We decided, as a group, to keep the troupe together, rehearse as much as space and time would allow, and hope that we would still be able to put on our show. By January we were ready to start rehearsing back at school and, with many extra rehearsals, we were ready to perform!

The week of the performance was amazing. Since the show was performed at the Marymount Adult Centre, it was a new experience for all of us to do the show at a new venue. Despite all the late nights, the cast would show up every day and put on another great show. The audience loved the amazing songs, the fun dances and the jokes that made everyone laugh and smile. I had a fantastic time being on stage with the rest of the cast and putting on the show that we had worked so hard on.

This was my second year in the musical and I hope to continue being in it until I graduate. When I first joined

in Secondary II, I was worried that I wouldn't fit in with the incredible performers—but I was welcomed into a cast of amazing friends who are so dedicated and hardworking, and I've made so many amazing memories with them. The cast of musical is like a second family to me now and I wouldn't have it any other way.

During the past two years I've had so much fun in the musical and it has helped shape me into the person I am today. It's a huge commitment but it's 100% worth it. Even though I've only been in musical for two years, I know that it has changed me for the better. I've learned how to sing, dance (although I still have two left feet), and especially that committing to something you believe in pays off in the end. After all, we're *Vegas Bound!*

Dance Show: Underground

By Benjamin Vigny-Pau,
Choreographer



Every year, students from all grades are brought together by an exhilarating and enduring sport: dance.

At the beginning of September, all dancers (and students wanting to learn to dance) eagerly await the posters and sign-up sheets for the Dance Show. Not only is it an activity that allows students to show their creative side, but it is also a very important fundraiser for Dans La Rue, a charity for homeless teenagers and young adults. However, this year, the posters never went up. In fact, no ECA posters were put up at all.

Due to the labour situation, Dance Show could not have anything to do with the school. There were no teacher supervisors, no practice space, and no stage to even have a show on. After the six students in charge of the show—the Execs—met together, they decided that the show had to go on and that they would find new ways to get the needed resources independently of the school. According to Secondary V Exec Tali Friedman, “There were a lot of challenges we had to face and new factors we had to take into account.”



The Execs turned to the Montreal West Curling Club and to the Saint Ignatius of Loyola Parish for auditions and practice space. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, most of the auditions had to be held in the park during heavy rainstorms. Once the cast had been selected, practice schedules were put up so that the dancers could learn the routines in the basement of a church or in a small emptied out dining hall. Since the show—appropriately titled **Underground**—had no affiliation with the school, participants had to sign liability forms, which was another difficult process due to a larger than usual need of parental consent.

When school resumed after winter break, the ban had been lifted and Dance Show was able to continue its practices at school with teacher supervision and

support. As performance day quickly approached, stress levels rose rapidly and choreographers worked on wrapping up their scenes.

On the night of the big day, there were two shows: one at 6 PM and another at 9 PM. It was a very emotional and exciting experience for all the dancers, especially the Secondary V students. “It was definitely a mix of relief and sadness,” said Tali. “We all felt really proud of what we accomplished, but also sad that it was over.”



After another wildly successful Dance Show, the Execs would like to thank Mr. Zigby and Mme Cayer for running everything behind the scenes, the teacher supervisors for staying late after school to let the dancers practice, and everyone who donated to the GoFundMe page. They would also like to thank the Montreal West Curling Club and the Saint Ignatius of Loyola Parish for renting out practice space, all the sponsors, and especially the cast and choreographers.

RWA Alumni Association

By Ms. Sarah Goblott, RWA Foundation

Reunions for the classes of 1991 (25 years), 1996 (20 years), and 2006 (10 years) are still in discussion. More information will be available in upcoming editions of RWA News, including dates and contacts. To be kept up to date, contact alumni@rwaf.ca and/or join the MWHS-RWA Alumni Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MWHS.RWA.AlumniAssociation.



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

April 1	Dessert Concert
April 4	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
April 4–8	Secondary III trip: Washington DC
April 5	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
April 8	Pedagogical day
April 8–9	RWA Hackathon
April 15–17	Honour Band trip
April 18–22	Earth Week
April 19	Rice and Water 24-hour fast
April 21	Nuit Verte
April 21	Secondary III vaccinations
April 22	Earth Day
April 22	Free Dress day
April 25	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
April 26–30	Marine Biology trip
April 29	Pedagogical day
April 29–30	Junior Robotics Competition

RWA



News

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RWA News is published during the academic year (from September to May) on the Royal West Academy website at www.royalwestacademy.com. Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at rwaneews@gmail.com.



Make It A Habit!

The role you can play in protecting yourself and others online and offline

Make it a habit **ONLINE** to:

- ✿ Always add this line when sharing pictures electronically: "I do **not consent** to this picture being shared with anyone else."
- ✿ Get consent from a person before posting or sharing their picture (even if you are in the photo too).
- ✿ Ask to be untagged and to have posts taken down if you do not want the image online.
- ✿ Respect requests from others to be untagged or to take down posts.
- ✿ Avoid oversharing private information that you do not want shared with others.
- ✿ Carefully handle information others share with you. If it wasn't intended to be shared, don't share it.
- ✿ Consider yourself and others before sharing.

When a person is being mistreated by others:

Online

- ➔ Do not 'like' or forward harmful messages.
- ➔ Challenge hurtful messages with messages, such as "That's not cool" or "I think s/he is awesome," etc.
- ➔ Send a message to the person to see if they are okay and to let them know that how they are being treated is wrong.
- ➔ Message the person who is posting harmful content or images and let them know that what they are doing is not okay.
- ➔ Save a copy of the harmful correspondence of content and go to an adult who will help.

Offline

- ➔ Refuse to participate and remove yourself from the situation.
- ➔ Be kind and include that person in school groups, what you are doing at lunch, etc.
- ➔ Privately go to the person who is being mistreated and tell them that you don't agree with what is happening to them.
- ➔ Go to an adult to let them know what is going on.
- ➔ Anonymously report your concerns to an adult.



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