

RWA



News

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MARCH 2017

A Word From The Administration

Mr. Tony Pita, Principal

Ms. Chantal Juhasz, Vice-Principal

Mr. Steven Manstavich, Vice-Principal



On March 1–8, the Royal West Academy Honour Band travelled to Cuba (*see page 4 for details*). Students and staff enjoyed an amazing week in the sun while also taking in the cultural sights and sounds of Cuba. Honour Band members also had the opportunity to perform with students at two local schools as well as perform for a local community and cultural centre. Thank you to Ms. G. Purdy, Ms. S. Macleod, Mr. J. Bateman, and Mr. T. Pita for giving their time during the March Break to chaperone our students.

On March 17, forty-one students in Secondary IV and V participated in the annual Senior Ski Trip to Mont-Sainte-Anne and Le Massif. The students enjoyed great conditions over three days on the mountains. Special thanks to all the chaperones as well as to Ms. D. Colannino and Mr. J. Zigby, for their efforts in organizing this activity.

On March 24, RWA presented its annual Dance Show, entitled *Hour 24*. It was a fantastic event that showcased a variety of dance styles performed by students from all grades. Over 100 students prepared all year for this exciting display of dance talent. The

profits from this year's show will be donated to the RWA Foundation and Dans La Rue. Thank you to Mr. Zigby and Mme J.-A. Cayer for their hard work, and congratulations to the dance executives for an amazing show: Alex Harboun, Hope Burko, Alex Belitzky, Amanda Kaplan, Alexa Levine, and Tashiah Roper-Mungal.

On March 26–29, eleven winners of the RWA Science Fair (*see page 4 for details*) represented our school at the Montreal Regional Science & Technology Fair, held this year at Concordia University, and came away with a variety of awards. Congratulations to all our winners and good luck to the three RWA students who will present their projects at the provincial Super Expo-sciences Hydro-Québec: Leia Khairy, Roxana Barin, and Lia Loebenberg. Once again, we would like to thank our Science Department, led by Mmes A. Dillon and J. Fogel, for their incredible work in preparing our students for these competitions.

In the coming days, parents of students in Secondary III and IV will be receiving a course list that represents the tentative academic load for their children in the 2017–2018 school year. This list is based on the student's indicated preference, course availability, and academic results to date. Please be aware that this academic load is subject to change based on final marks and/or any scheduling constraints. Final marks for Secondary IV and V students as well as the marks 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 their 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 choice, note that this acceptance is conditional. In the past, we have seen students have 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.

As we approach the end of year, we are preparing for the end-of-year exams. Parents are reminded that students must be in school for exams. The official exam schedule will be available at the end of April 2017. Many exams are already scheduled in May 2017; 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 and cannot be rescheduled. We appreciate your cooperation.

The date for the Graduation Exercises has been confirmed for June 1, 2017. The Pedagogical Day tentatively scheduled for June 2, 2017, will be confirmed only after April 15. As well, due to the snowstorm and snow day that occurred on March 15, the Pedagogical Day tentatively scheduled for April 28, 2017, will be a regular school day—as per the school calendar, it will be Day 6.

Please remember that on April 12–13, 2017, RWA will be presenting our Staff/Alumni production entitled *An Appointment with Death* (see page 2 for details). This production is in support of the RWA Foundation *Sharing The Stage With You* campaign. The Foundation launched a \$2 million capital campaign to enhance our auditorium—which absolutely needs improvements, as the current facility is inadequate for the scale and quality of productions being mounted. The auditorium plays a central role in the complete academic life of the school and in the wide variety of extra-curricular learning opportunities at Royal West Academy. We would invite everyone to purchase tickets for either evening. It will be a very entertaining event.

We would like to remind everyone that the EMSB offers cafeteria meal cards for families. These meal cards, offered through the EMSB Cafeteria Services department, offer ten meal deals at a cost of \$4 per

meal—the 11th meal is counted as free. This means students can receive a 11 meals for \$40. Interested students can find the meal card brochure and order form in the main office.

Royal West Academy would also like to welcome several new staff members:

- Ms. Caitlin O'Brien, Special Education Technician
- Ms. Allison Holloway, Teacher
- Mr. Jonathan Frenette, Teacher
- Ms. Stephanie Germain, Librarian
- Mr. Dave Laurie, Caretaker



The RWA Honour Band participated in Montreal's 194th St. Patrick's Day parade on March 19.

SHARING THE STAGE WITH YOU.

An Appointment with Death

By Ms. Pat Barillaro & Ms. Sydney Westlake

Everyone should put the RWA Staff and Alumni play production of Agatha Christie's *Appointment with Death*, directed by Doug Floen, in their calendars: April 12 and 13, 2017 at 7:30 PM at Royal West Academy. Tickets for both evenings are \$10 for students and \$20 for adults. Students can purchase tickets for your family starting at lunch hour on April 3, 5, and 7, 2017 in the foyer. Tickets will also be available at the door or online: <https://rwaf.ca/> (be sure to specify which night you prefer).



Why selling raffle tickets is so important to Royal West

By Madison White, Secondary IV

For the past four years I have watched my father, Mitchell White, lead the charge at the Royal West Academy Foundation to raise funds for our school, where every student is benefiting from the work that is done by the school's foundation board. During this time, the RWAf has installed an unbelievable sound and lighting system that I saw in full action at last week's Dance Show—and let me tell you, it was awesome how it enhanced the show. The only problem was sitting in those horribly uncomfortable chairs and how hot the room was, even in the winter.

For the past few months, the Foundation has now been gearing up sales for their HABS raffle, which is our school's single biggest fundraiser. The absolute craziest thing is if each and every RWA student had their family buy or sell just *three* raffle tickets, we would sell out the raffle and raise \$125,000 for our school. It is so easy to sell *three* raffle tickets!

The funny thing is that while many students understand that we all benefit from the renovations, they don't want to pitch in and help out. I don't know why they have decided that they are too busy with other things than to try and push the raffle, so I went to my father and asked him if I could challenge the other students to a competition and if the Foundation could offer us an incentive—he complied.

So as of now, the homeroom that sells the most raffle tickets will win a pizza lunch! And when the lunch is brought to us by the RWAf, they will raffle off to one student *two Via Rail Economy Class return tickets from Montreal to Quebec City!*

In order to improve the environment of our school, each student needs to participate in this simple and beneficial fundraiser. We have the support from the RWAf, of which a member, Emilio Travisano, said, "It is a very simple task to do and it can be accomplished by every student at the school if each student puts some effort." Emilio has already sold over 200 tickets so far to benefit us, the students, so let's emulate him and put in similar efforts.

For the grand prize, by buying the tickets, you and all those HABS fans out there will have the chance to win one of ten amazing prizes, including a grand prize of ten pairs of Montreal Canadiens hockey tickets in the Desjardins "all you can eat" section next season. At each game you will get unlimited free food and amazing seats to watch your favourite hockey team play. Even if you are not a hockey fan, you can resell the tickets and profit more than a few thousand dollars, since a pair of tickets is worth over \$400 per game.

Lastly, every student that sells their minimum three tickets is entered to win a pair of tickets to Osheaga! These tickets are worth at least \$300 and you only need to sell three raffle tickets to have a chance to win them. If you sell double the amount of tickets asked, you double the chances of winning this prize. This is in addition to the contest I mentioned earlier in this article!

It is simple to sell three tickets since you can buy a ticket yourself, or ask family members, neighbours, and friends—it takes only ten minutes! The deadline to sell three tickets is June 8, 2017. Royal West Academy, the Foundation, and I (a RWA Secondary IV student), are asking each student to make an effort in order to have a better school auditorium for all students. Therefore, every student should participate to help RWA reach the goal of \$125,000.

A new way to stay informed

Next time you are at the school, check out the two new monitors near the foyer for a list of upcoming

Foundation events as well as the names of everyone who has donated to date. Thank you!

How can you play a part?

We are always looking for volunteers to join the RWA Foundation. No matter your experience or time available, everyone can play a role. Our focus for the coming year is on organizing more special events and fundraisers so anyone with an interest or expertise in that field would be a very welcome addition to our team. If you have any questions or fundraising ideas, contact Mitch White, President, RWA at rwafoundation@gmail.com or visit <https://rwaf.ca>.

Make a donation!

Just go to <https://rwaf.ca> and give what you can. Every donation takes us closer to transforming our 80-year-old auditorium into a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Centre for our children.

Another Successful Science Fair

By Jennifer Pevec, Science Fair Coordinator



Nearly 400 students from Secondary II through Secondary V participated in the 28th annual Royal West Academy Science Fair. Once again this year, all the projects were housed in the New Gym where judges from both the academic and professional worlds evaluated the students' work during the morning. In the early afternoon and evening, the RWA Science Fair opened up to visitors and students from two nearby elementary schools. The day ended with the awards ceremony. A full listing of those awards can be found on the RWA website.

Congratulations to all of this year's participants! Congratulations also to the following students who participated in the Montreal Regional Science & Technology Fair on March 26–28 at Concordia University:

- Zachary Dahan & Peter Delis (Great Distinction; McGill University – Faculty of Engineering Award)
- Yuan Ding & Alexandra Spyridakos (Champlain College Science Award; Great Distinction)



- Alexandra Matos-Gerko & Emma Ranalli (Highest Distinction; The Order of Chemists of Quebec Award)
- Lia Loebenberg (Bronze Medal – Senior; Cercles des jeunes naturalistes Award; Concordia University Faculty of Arts and Science Award; Concordia University Faculty of Arts & Science Entrance Bursary; Highest Distinction; Super expo-sciences Hydro Québec (SESHQ) Experimentation & Design Award)
- Michael Diouskine & Bhuvan Manojh (Concordia University Science College Award; Distinction)
- Leia Khairy & Roxana Barin (Gold Medal – Junior; Highest Distinction; McGill University Faculty of Science Award; Super expo-sciences Hydro Québec (SESHQ) Experimentation & Design Award).

Honour Band Cuba Trip

By Edward Mendelson



After many months of planning and fundraising, the RWA Honour Band travelled to Cuba on March 1–8. This experience was one that none of the 47 band members on the trip would ever forget.

With our two amazing guides, we had the privilege to learn about the history of Cuba and appreciate the architecture through a tour of Old Havana. We embraced the Cuban culture and really got to know the city as well as its breathtaking nature on a rewarding hike.





As for the musical component, we were exposed to the richness of Cuban music almost everywhere we went which, considering how much we all love music, was amazing! We performed at arts schools and a community centre. The Cubans enjoyed the pop repertoire we prepared for this trip. Although we had practiced the music many times, performing it for Cubans in a completely different environment—as they clapped and cheered along—was so cool, and was definitely one of my highlights from the trip.

We were also exposed to new music. Following our performances, the Cubans would play for us. We were amazed by their talent and understanding of music. After one of their formal performances, percussionists, guitarists, and vocalists were jamming together, creating impressive beats. It was enjoyable watching them have so much fun with music.

On top of the performances, we attended a percussion workshop where we played with typical Cuban

percussion instruments, followed by an acapella performance which was quite extraordinary.

I cannot forget to mention Salsa dancing! Every single one of us danced and even those who were initially reluctant to do so loved it! We had the opportunity to receive several lessons and later showed off our skills on the last night at our dinner with our Cuban friends.

Another wonderful part was the beach! We were lucky to have our hotel situated right on the beach, and spent many hours enjoying the waves. The weather was perfect and the ocean was crystal clear.

This trip was also excellent because it allowed the band to bond. I became a lot closer to many people to whom I had previously not talked much. During our free time, we hung out in the lobby of our hotel and played different games.

Overall, we are all so grateful for this experience. As Katya Kredl (Secondary V band member) said, “I loved every bit of the trip! It really opened my eyes to a

different culture and made me appreciate music and friendship in a whole new way.”

I couldn't agree more. This band trip taught all of us so many things and enriched our experience in Honour Band. A special thanks to Ms. G. Purdy and all the chaperones for this trip of a lifetime!

Debate Team News

By Ms. Catherine Holloway



The Royal West Academy Debate Team has had a successful season of debate this year, thanks to the diligence and hard work of our more than 25 active members.



McGill Winter Debate Bonanza in February (from left): Stella Eleftheriotis, Fotini Nikolettos, John Valerio, Amanda Lupu, Annalies Smith, Abiraami Vijayathas, Calista Piccolo, Romy Shoam, Aliya Behar



QSDA Provincials in February (from left): Daniel Mendelson, Josephine Campbell, Alexander Rona, Dylan Gharibian, David Shemie, Yimaj Baharun, Arthur Ayestas Hilgert, Jamie Fabian, Asghar Taqvi, Keith Moussa

We began the year by hosting a senior level debate tournament in the month of October. Our debaters represented RWA in tournaments hosted by Dawson College, Loyola High School, and McGill University as well as at the provincial tournament at Selwyn House School, where two of our teams qualified for the nationals.

At the junior level (Secondary I to III), Secondary II debaters Dylan Gharibian and Yimaj Baharun secured a spot in the Quebec delegation. Representing RWA at the senior level are Daniel Mendelson and Josephine Campbell, both in Secondary V. The Canadian National Debate Championships take place in Vancouver, BC from April 20–23, 2017.

A special thank you goes to former RWA debaters Leiandros Kaklamanos (graduated 2014), Isaac Harris (graduated 2015), Caleb Foster (graduated 2016), and Logan Stack (graduated 2016) for volunteering their time to work with the team.

We are incredibly proud to be among the teams representing Quebec at the nationals and look forward to an incredible experience in Vancouver!

Positivity Beyond The Classroom

By Paula Rossi

“Leadership is not about a title or a designation.

It's about impact, influence and inspiration.

Impact involves getting results, influence is about spreading the passion you have for your work, and you have to inspire team-mates and customers.”

Robin S. Sharma

Leadership and Leisure Studies is an elective course option for Secondary IV and V students. This course touches subjects along the lines of tournament coordinating, all the way to first aid training. One of the major assignments in this class is the *Beyond the Classroom* project. The requirement of this project is to assist with the coaching of an athletics team at the school. This consists of either taking on the role of manager or team coach.

The team I assisted with was the bantam boys' soccer team last fall. My role was more in a grey area, as I did not hold a specific position, but would help in whatever



way was necessary. After school, two to three times a week, I would pick up the bag of soccer balls and make my way to the front field, ready to either run a practice or attend a match.

This experience was truly unique. After attending the numerous practices and games, you really begin to develop an attachment to the team and its players. A bond is formed amongst players and staff, because they are drawn together by the common goal of taking home the banner.

Coaching also allows leadership students to learn how to properly handle responsibility. This is assured by the fact that, in failing to complete tasks, a whole team must deal with the repercussions. It builds a sense of selflessness within the people involved. In adopting new values and responsibility, students are able to develop good character traits that are extremely valuable for the years to come. From the perspective of a fellow leadership student, Lily Puterman-Salzman, “The *Beyond the Classroom* experience allows you to become a more well-rounded and confident person. The skills you acquire in this experience will be relevant for the rest of your life.”

Lastly, the leadership students’ guidance and support allow younger students to ease into their new position in the school. Older students are excellent tools to help younger peers settle themselves into a new environment. This comfort is achieved with simple interaction that may very well help them get over any typical newcomer butterflies.

Due to its array of positive effects throughout the school, the *Beyond the Classroom* project and the Leadership course itself are extremely beneficial and allow a consistent renewal of positivity every year. This

is done by instilling the true sense of leadership in students. After reflecting upon my experience doing this project, I can sincerely say that the soccer boys have had way more of an impact on me than I could have ever hoped. Their drive and dedication has inspired me to be a better leader and an overall better person.

Canadian Improv Games

By Jordan Morris



On February 28, Royal West Academy’s senior improv team was given the honor of competing at the Canadian Improv Games. The Games are an annual event in which different schools come together to perform and compete in four different events:

- **Story.** Teams ask the audience for an element of their choosing (e.g., object, place, song title, etc.) and create a story incorporating that element in the form of a cohesive story.
- **Life.** Teams ask the audience for an element of their choosing (e.g., dramatic line, crisis in a teenager’s life, etc.) and create a scene using that element in a sincere and honest way.
- **Character.** Teams have to come up with a scene revolving around a certain character with a trait chosen by the audience.
- **Theme.** This is the one event where the team does not get an element from the audience. Instead, the judges have already chosen themes in advance. The teams are given a selection of vessels, each containing a theme (e.g., control, spread, etc.). Once they have selected one, they must come up with as many scenes as possible that can be associated with that theme.

In short, the Canadian Improv Games is a very fierce competition in the most friendly and encouraging environment. As a member of the senior improv team, I was very excited to take part in this tournament. I had never been to the Games before. The team, under the leadership of my English teacher, Mr. J. Dufault, had been practicing all year long for these games. We met once a week after school and practiced very hard. During these practices, we would warm up with the junior improv team. We would do multiple games and exercises to get our energy levels up as well as sharpen our synchronicity as a unit. Afterwards, we would divide



ourselves into the senior and junior teams and practice with each other.

The senior team consists of Henry (Secondary V); Isabella, Bronwyn, and Arielle (Secondary 3); Maella and Noah (Secondary I), and me (Secondary IV). Our rehearsals consisted of practicing the different events described above. We would use different things to ask the audience to figure out what we would ask them the night of the games. We would often perform for the junior team, and vice versa. This gave us the opportunity to practice in front of an audience as well as get feedback to make our performances even better.

The first night of the Games, RWA was up against four other schools: Beaconsfield High School (our hosts), Macdonald High School, Lower Canada College, and St. Thomas High School. The competition consisted of four rounds. In each round, the teams would do one of the four events assigned by the referees. I was very nervous—we all were. We felt a little uncomfortable and intimidated to a certain degree. As a team, we had never performed in front of such a large crowd.

During our first event (character) in round one, we were a little tense. However, a little while into our scene, we began to loosen up, and our energy levels boosted. The cheers and laughs we were getting from the amazing audience allowed us to regain our confidence, relax, and have a good time. At the end of the night, we finished in second place, scoring 659 points! Not only

that, we advanced to the finals that took place that Saturday.

In the finals, unlike Thursday night, we were up against only two schools: St. Thomas High School and Lower Canada College. This time, the crowd wasn't as big as Thursday night's crowd, but the people were just as enthusiastic and energetic. At the end of the night, we once again landed in second place, losing to St. Thomas. I believe we didn't win because we were missing one of our teammates, so our energy level was a little off that night.

Despite this, I had an awesome experience! I got a chance to meet so many amazing people, and perform with an amazing team. I am so proud of what we accomplished and I can't wait to compete next year!

Secondary I Quebec Trip

By Noa Rollansky

I remember walking into Royal West Academy as a Secondary I student—I wouldn't want to do that again! When I first made the transition from elementary school to high school, I was pretty terrified. I wasn't familiar with the simple concepts of just being free to go out for lunch, moving from class to class between periods, or having students as tall as my parents at my school! Everything seemed so intimidating to the younger me. Who was I supposed to talk to? What was I supposed to talk about? Those things seemed hard to figure out when I was in school trying to find my next class before the bell, but not when I was in Quebec City, waltzing around with the fun and outgoing counsellors.

The Secondary I trip happens during the second week of school. The timing for this trip could not be more perfect. With the trip so early on in the high school experience, students are really able to get to know one another before choosing people with whom they want to develop a friendship with. The few weeks before the trip feel fairly stressful and somewhat lonely but after spending so much quality time with so many new people, everything seems so much easier! Every year the Secondary I students go to a camp where they participate in outdoor activities and stay in rooms with a bunch of people they do not yet know, who can potentially become their best friends.





My adventure began when we were asked to pick rooms of seven or eight people. I only knew one girl coming to this school, so naturally, we roomed together. This seemed to be the case for quite a few people. My bunk ended up being a group of strangers who were familiar with only one or two other people in the room, which was great. Throughout the three days, we were able to bond and form new friendships with each other as well as with each other's friends. When we weren't in the groups we had picked for our rooms, we were in our designated groups which was yet another way to familiarize ourselves with our peers.

The trip wasn't only great because of its opportunities to meet people, but also because of the activities we had the opportunity to participate in and simply the experience of being away from home for three days. We went rock climbing, swimming, zip lining, and had some time to explore the city on our own. When I went on this trip in 2013, we went to Quebec City. Now, the students go to Camp de Bienvenue in Lac-Supérieur, in the Laurentides region of Quebec.

I spoke to a few Secondary I students who attended the trip this past year, asking if it allowed them to meet new people who they would later be able to form stronger bonds with. Max Moghrabi answered, "Yes, because I spent time with new people at different activities since the teachers split us into groups." He also added that this helped with his transition from elementary school to high school because he was able to meet people that he spoke to and had classes with later on at school.

I also asked them what their favourite part of the trip was and if they'd like to say anything about it. Jasmine

Behar responded, "My favourite part of the trip was the variety of activities which allowed me to get my mind away from the stress back at school. I thought it was a good way to get to know people in my grade and it was very fun. It allowed me to make new friends and become closer to the ones I already had by getting to know them better."

Another Secondary I student who already knew quite a few people coming to RWA said that his favourite part was being with his friends.

Though I remember the fun activities I participated in, they were certainly not the most memorable parts of the trip for me. I don't necessarily remember the art in the beautiful church that we visited, but I do remember being a Secondary I student who was no longer intimidated by her school.

Used Uniforms Needed

Home & School Association

Donations of any used Royal West Academy school uniforms may be dropped off at the school store (at lunch time) or at the school office no later than June 9, 2017. Thank you!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 3	Home & School meeting @ 7:30 PM
Apr 3-7	Secondary III trip: Washington DC
Apr 5-7	Secondary IV trip: Boston MA
April 10	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
Apr 12-13	Staff/Alumni production: An Appointment With Death
April 14	Good Friday
April 17	Easter Monday
Apr 18-20	Earth Week
April 20	Free Dress Day
April 20	Nuit Verte
April 20	Governing Board meeting @ 7 PM
April 21	Pedagogical Day
Apr 21-22	Robo Junior Competition
April 22	Earth Day
Apr 25-29	Marine Biology trip
May 1	RWA Foundation meeting @ 7 PM
May 2-3	Book Fair

The RWA Foundation "Sharing the Stage with you" – Capital Campaign
proudly presents

Agatha Christie's

An Appointment With Death

Wednesday, Thursday,
April 12-13

7:30 – 10:00

Tickets:
\$20 adults / \$10 students
available at the door

RWA Auditorium: 189 Easton Avenue, Montreal West, QC H4X 1L4

Facebook Event: <https://facebook.com/events/695006563992251/>



LOST AND FOUND POLICY

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

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

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

In the meantime, please label all your belongings!

RWA



News

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