

# RWA



# NEWS

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January 2024

## Words From The Admin



*Principal Tony Pita (center)  
with Vice-Principal Steven Manstavich (right)  
and Vice-Principal Catherine Lumsden (left)*

## Home & School Volunteers rebuild Park n' Lot Shed

RWA staff and students would like to extend once again our thanks to the parents who came to work in the garden over a weekend in early November. A special thank you to the shed builders who drilled screws and bolts in the dark until 6 pm.



## Governor General's Award

The Governor General's Academic Medal, established in 1873, recognizes students who have achieved the highest academic average. At RWA, average includes all secondary 4 and 5 courses listed on the student's official transcript of grades issued by the Ministry of Education. On behalf of the Governor General of Canada, RWA is proud to announce Dominic L. as the recipient of the Governor General's Medal for 2022-2023.

## Food Drive



## Tyndale Week

Congratulations to all the RWA students and staff involved in the Tyndale Week Fundraiser held before the holidays. RWA raised a total of **\$8,251** this year for the Tyndale St-Georges Community Center. This increases our total amount raised since 2007 to an incredible **\$133,171**. Since 1927, Tyndale St-Georges Community Center has provided empowering educational programming for residents of Little Burgundy from birth through adulthood!

## World Scholar's Cup

In November, Anya F. set off for the World Scholar's Cup Tournament of Champions hosted at Yale. Representing RWA, Anya's team was comprised of a student from the Study and Selwyn House. As a team, they placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall (out of over 500 teams and 1600 senior students). The team won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Bowl Trivia portion of the tournament. Out of all of the senior scholars, Anya came in 9<sup>th</sup> overall, placing her in the top 0.5% of all seniors competing from around the world! Congrats to Anya!



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## Vending Machine

A big thank you to Ms. Cristina Capela and the Home & School Association for their vision and hard work with the totally reimagined school co-op store. The latest addition includes a vending machine, stocked with some essentials, including school supplies and snacks. The vending machine is accessible at all times, even when the school store is closed.



## RWA Alum in Paris

Deux diplômées de RWA, Anna Molins et Magali Shimotakara font partie d'un groupe d'une dizaine d'étudiants du collège John Abbott en France cette semaine pour participer aux délibérations qui vont couronner [Le Goncourt des lycéens](#). Des jeunes de 15 à 18 ans de la Francophonie ont relevé le défi de lire les 16 livres en lice pour ce prix littéraire prestigieux, en moins de deux mois.

## RWA Debating Duo at Nationals

At the BP National Debating Tournament in Winnipeg mid-November, RWA students Anya F. and Victoria B. were the youngest team in the senior division against students from across Canada. They made a valiant effort: Anya had laryngitis throughout the tournament, but even that didn't deter these two passionate debaters. They learned a lot and made new

friends. As a team, they ranked 36<sup>th</sup>. Individually, Anya ranked third amongst the Quebec students behind the two grade 12 students whose team won the whole tournament.

Congrats to Anya and Victoria! And a big thank you to the tournament chaperone who doubled as a judge and ensured these students could participate in the tournament.



## Robert Alfred Peck Prize for Excellence in French

Robert Alfred Peck was an employee of the former Protestant Board of Great Montreal. He served as a Teacher, Department Head, Superintendent of French and was a Vice-Principal at Riverdale High School before retiring in 1970. Mr. Peck co-authored the textbook for the teaching of French as a second language called "Le Francais pratique" which was mainstay in Protestant schools in Quebec for over 20 years. He is described by a long-time educator as "one of the best French teachers they have ever known". At the request of Mr. Peck's family, an award was created in his name. Mr. Peck was in attendance December 2002 when the prize was first awarded. Mr. Peck passed away in 2006 at the age of 92. The award continues to be given out annually to a graduating student or students of the EMSB who achieve the highest mark in French Secondary Language.

On behalf of the Secretary General, Nathalie Lauziere, we are happy to announce that the RWA students listed below have been awarded the Robert A. Peck Prize for Excellence in French. They all achieved a 100% on their exam.

Hanna A.  
Eve B.  
Victoria C.  
Cassidy E.  
Emily G.  
David H.  
Gaelle L.  
Simon M.  
Alessia M.



## Sec 1 Music Concert

As the end of the Secondary 1 Arts Rotation nears, Ms. Macleod and her students invite parents and guests to catch a glimpse of what it is like in a Secondary 1 music class. Over the span of 12 weeks, students choose from one of four instruments, learn to play that instrument, read music, and play as an ensemble. Congratulations to all Secondary 1 music students and enjoy your next Arts course.





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## Wrestling

On Monday November 13th, the Royal West Academy Wrestling Team played host to a training camp for three other schools. Loyola High School, Royal Vale School and Vincent Massey Collegiate participated in the clinic which was hosted by a guest clinician; Gia Sissaouri, a three time Olympian and Olympic Silver Medalist and former Coach of the Canadian National Team.



On Saturday November 25th, three Wrestlers competed at the Quebec Open held at l'Altitude high school in Pierrefonds Quebec. Daegun T. and Dylan B., competing in their first tournament, showed great promise, narrowly missing out on a medal as they would both finish 4th. Team Captain Yuan D. showed that hard work pays off, beating a game opponent from New Brunswick to capture Gold!



## Brass Quintet



## Voices of Olympia Canada

RWA's newly renovated Performing Arts Centre hosted this year's [Voices of Olympia](#) – a school competition that empowers girls to solve gender inequality issues. Under the tutelage of Ms. Bateman, RWA entered three teams. A huge congratulations goes out to all the participants for their creativity, passion, and hard work. RWA participants include Team A: Yedda B., Anna J., Paige L., Anaya R., Olivia Y., Team B: Tulip H., Lucy J., Annika P., Anna Maria R., Anastazja R., Team C: Laaibah A., Chloe B., Sae Ah P., and Sumin W. See more about this on page 8.



## Debaters Offer Workshop to John Grant Students

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, members of the RWA debate team held a debate workshop for John Grant students.



## Calculus Competitions

Secondary 5 students in the accelerated math stream continue to participate in The Canadian Math League competitions held almost monthly.





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## Winter Concert

All music students and ensemble members regaled the crowd in the evening of January 17 & 18. A tremendous congratulations to all students who participated. And a big thank you to Ms. Purdy, Ms. Macleod, and Mr. Bowles for the magic that they produce with RWA's music students.



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### **Lucky Stiff Underway at Royal West Academy**

By: Brendan J.

It's that time of year again folks! Royal West Academy is preparing for this year's musical, a production of *Lucky Stiff*, written by American author Lynn Ahrens, with music by Stephen Flaherty; The musical is based off of the book *The Man Who Broke the Bank* by Michael Butterworth.

*Lucky Stiff* is an award-winning play that has been performed off-Broadway in New York, the West End in London, and other great theatres around the world. This year, Royal West has the privilege of working with industry professionals on this production: director Jordan Gasparik and music director Chris Barillaro who is an RWA graduate, contribute by advising, choreographing, and teaching students who will be performing in the musical. Earlier this year, I had the chance to interview Eva T. and Eve B., two grade eleven students who are the co-lead performers in this year's musical, in order to learn about *Lucky Stiff* and what goes into building the production:

#### **What is this year's musical about?**

Eve: "It's about a man who works at a shoe store who learns about his uncle's death, and a race for his inheritance-in Monte-Carlo."

#### **Is there something that makes this year's musical unique or special?**

Eva: "The comedic style of this production makes it my personal favourite out of those that I've done [with Royal West Academy], I'd also say it has my favourite score."

#### **What do students contribute to Royal West musical productions?**

Eve: "A lot. A crew of actors, stage managers, set builders, ticket sellers, costume crew, makeup crew, lights and sound crew, ushers, and probably more I'm forgetting, but basically everything. Teachers and directors are there to keep us on track and help with smaller things, but after a certain point it's up to students to make sure the show goes on."

#### **What is the best part of musicals in your opinion? What are the biggest challenges?**

Eve: "The best part is definitely doing something you enjoy with your friends, because it creates a really tight community for all students involved. The commitment for after school and week-ends is the biggest challenge to me."

Eva: "I agree, but memorizing lines is probably the biggest challenge to me!"

#### **Do you have anything to tell those eagerly awaiting the show?**

Eve: "Be prepared, it's longer than last year, and more eventful too. We can't wait to finally perform at Royal West again in the new Performing Arts Centre."

Thank you very much to Eve and Eva for being very open and kind during our interview. I can't wait to watch the show, in case you're interested, they are credited as Annabel and Vinnie respectively. Remember to look out for posters around school, RWA's website, or Facebook page for ticket sales, prices, and showtimes for February 19th through 22nd inclusive at 7:30PM - all in school this year!

Special thanks to Ms. E. Kuch for facilitating this article for publication.

Check out the poster for the musical on the next page.

### **Behind the scenes of Lucky Stiff**

By: Josephine R.

This year, Royal West Academy is back with a new musical: *Lucky Stiff*. Thanks to many fundraisers, and countless hours of planning and construction, the musical this year will be performed in RWA's very own Performing Arts Centre. The entire production team and cast are super excited to be working in this new center.

Lights and Sound, an extracurricular activity, has been presented with its very own booth above the seating in the new Performing Arts Centre. Since September, the members of Lights and Sound have been busy familiarizing themselves with the new booth and the new equipment that comes with it. This includes a brand new light board, to control the many new lights, and an up-to-date sound system, connected to the preexisting soundboard.

In addition to testing out the new equipment, Lights and Sound have also been present at many school-wide events. The biggest one, however, is yet to come. It's the musical. Taking place the week of February 19, the RWA musical is one of the biggest events of the year, and Lights and Sound has a lot to prepare for it. Members of Light and Sound have been present at the latest rehearsals, to start understanding the atmosphere and stage directions of each specific scene so that they can plan the lighting accordingly, and how the sound can be changed to best benefit the audience's viewing of the performance and other necessary measures needed to put on *Lucky Stiff*. The members of Lights and Sound are passionate about the work required to put on a great show. Yedda B., one of the senior members of Lights and Sound, said that she is "so excited for everyone to see the musical. It's always one of [her] favorite parts of the year". It *sounds* like a great musical performance is underway. Hope to see you there!!





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**Royal West Academy and Manga**

By: Massimo F.

Recently, the consumption of manga as a form of entertainment has greatly increased especially in the Western world. Royal West Academy is no exception to this growing trend. You can find students browsing the manga section in the library each morning, during lunch and even at the end of the day after classes have ended. To discover more about the interest level of manga at our school, I interviewed Ms. S. Germain who works as a librarian at Royal West Academy.

In terms of the different genres of manga that our library offers, it seems to be quite broad. From adventure and action to romance and sports, different genres appeal and accommodate different audiences depending on their preferences. To be blunt, the library's manga section has a series for everyone to enjoy. Whether you're younger or older, new to manga or used to it, there is a manga that you can find at the RWA library that will appeal to you. Although the school has a wide variety of selections in terms of manga, our librarians still consider student recommendations for future purchases and additions to the library. *Spy X Family*, *Alya Sometimes Hides Her Feelings in Russian*, *Dandadan*, *Blue Lock*, *Chainsaw Man* and *Attack on Titan* are just a few examples of student recommendations that have been taken into consideration for future additions to the library's manga section. But what does it take to have your recommendation taken into account as a valid option? An account for the age appropriate levels of these books. As long as it is age-appropriate for high school students, your suggestion for future additions may be taken into account if it hasn't already been recommended before.



With how quickly the interest in manga is expanding amongst students, Ms. Germain stated that the manga section of the school will probably require more shelf space to properly display all the manga that will likely be added to the library in the future.

## ROYAL WEST ACADEMY PRESENTS

A PRODUCTION OF:

BOOK AND LYRICS BY:  
LYNN AHRENSMUSIC BY:  
STEPHEN FLAHERTYBASED ON "THE MAN WHO BROKE THE BANK AT MONTE CARLO"  
BY MICHAEL BUTTERWORTHORIGINALLY PRODUCED BY PLAYWRIGHTS HORIZONS INC.  
OFF-BROADWAY IN 1988

FEB. 19TH (STUDENTS \$5) 7:30 P.M.

DIRECTOR: JORDAN GASPARIK

FEB. 20TH 7:30 P.M.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: CHRIS BARILLARO

FEB. 21ST 7:30 P.M.

CHOREOGRAPHER: JONATHAN PATTERSON

FEB. 22ND 7:30 P.M.

PRODUCER: ERIKA KUCH

STUDENTS \$10, ADULTS \$15  
AT THE DOOR OR ROOM 216  
CASH OR CHEQUE ONLY

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### An Afternoon at the Movies

By: Alinna D.

Royal West Academy students learn about resilience and community through a film about the Vietnamese-Canadian experience. In December, the two Secondary V classes of Français Langue D'enseignement went on a unique school outing to the Cinéma Beaubien. The students, accompanied by French teachers Mme L. Moreau and Mme S. Ferland, attended a screening of the movie *Ru*, adapted from the 2009 novel of the same name by the Vietnamese-Canadian author Kim Thúy. The film follows the story of a Vietnamese family who fled their country at the end of the Vietnam War and immigrated to Granby, Québec. Like the more than two million other refugees who escaped Vietnam by ships and boats, they became known as "Boat People." The film is told through the eyes of Tinh, the daughter of the family. The scenes jump between her memories in Vietnam, her experiences during the escape, and her family's new life in Canada. *Ru* depicts the many struggles met by Vietnamese immigrants throughout their journeys and the challenges they faced once they arrived in Canada. Furthermore, the film beautifully portrays the importance of family and community among immigrants like Tinh and her family.

It is fair to say that many students were touched by the film and its characters. "*Ru* offered a unique perspective on how hard it can be for immigrants to adjust to a new country," said Esther D., a Secondary V student at Royal West Academy.

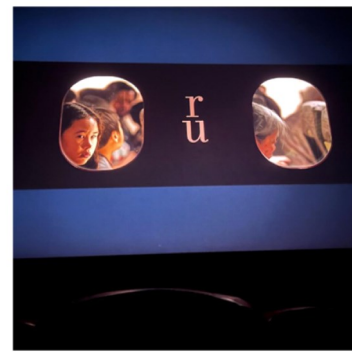
Hannah A., another student, noted "This movie was very moving; it showed how tough and discouraging immigration can be." Tinh's journey allowed the students to experience the many emotions that accompany immigration, her story left a major impact on most of the audience.

Overall, the outing was an unforgettable experience. The actors did an amazing job and the story itself was beautifully told. Given the success of the event, hopefully, Royal West Academy will plan similar trips in the future.

### Sortie Cinéma

Par: Lauren et Cassidy E.

Le 6 décembre dernier, Mme Moreau, notre enseignante de français, a organisé une sortie au Cinéma Beaubien avec nos classe de français langue maternelle 5e sec. Nous avons assisté à la représentation du film "*Ru*", adapté du roman de Kim Thúy (lauréat du Prix du Gouverneur général en 2010). Ce livre est un best-seller au Québec et à travers le monde.



L'histoire raconte la vie d'une jeune Vietnamienne qui fuit son pays avec sa famille lors de la prise de pouvoir communiste en 1975. C'est raconté du point de vue du personnage principal à travers plusieurs vignettes. Tinh passe d'une vie normale et aisée dans le sud du Vietnam à la saisie de sa maison par les soldats et à l'évacuation en tant que "boat people". Dans une scène émouvante, le père distribue des pilules de suicide au cas où ils seraient capturés par des pirates. Après avoir survécu à un camp de réfugiés, Tinh est finalement accueillie à Granby, dans les Cantons de l'est. Sa famille d'accueil se révèle très sympathique et gentille et, malgré les défis liés à l'apprentissage d'une nouvelle langue, la famille fait de son mieux pour aider les réfugiés à s'intégrer. Dans l'une des dernières scènes, le personnage principal rassemble toutes les personnes qui ont marqué sa vie et réalise que, malgré un parcours traumatisant, elle peut envisager un avenir dans cette terre étrangère.

Madame Moreau et de nombreux étudiants avaient déjà lu ce livre basé sur la perspective d'une jeune fille dont la vie est bouleversée. Ce film a dépassé nos attentes! Beaucoup ont ressenti une forte connexion visuelle avec l'histoire, comprenant l'expérience de la protagoniste et son arrivée inattendue au Canada. Les décors du film ont enrichi l'expérience, donnant l'impression que l'action se déroulait réellement dans les années 1970. Dans l'ensemble, ce fut une expérience excitante!

Sur une note personnelle, quatre des jeunes filles réfugiées dans le film ont été jouées par nous et nos deux sœurs. Nous étions présentes dans plusieurs des scènes du film, ce qui a surpris nos camarades de classe. "*Ru*" a été une expérience inoubliable.



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**Voices of Olympia Empowers Royal West Academy Students to Combat Poverty**

By: Anna Maria R.

In a display of unity and commitment, Royal West Academy hosted the 6th annual launching ceremony of the Voices of Olympia of Canada (VOOC); this function is only the first step to an ongoing competition for female students. The event aimed to address the pressing issue of poverty faced by women and highlight the innovative ideas put forth by the students to develop feasible solutions to assist women in poverty. The function saw female high school students from nine different schools from Quebec and Ontario with grades ranging from 10 to 11 gathered to express their thoughts, concerns, and potential solutions to combat the feminization of poverty.

RWA students brought to light the root causes of poverty in women and the urgent need for preventive measures to combat deeper topics such as the lack of resources, insufficient opportunity and choices, poor ability to exercise one's human rights, restricted decision-making, and the need of human security that could address poverty at its core.

A prevailing topic was to combat the disparities that persist within digital literacy. A skill linked to information, communication, and technology, digital literacy has become indispensable. However, research consistently shows gender inequality in this culture, with women facing numerous barriers to engaging with technology effectively.

"We found that a problem that we identified that hasn't been touched upon is the lack of digital literacy among women, and we want to touch on and find solutions to help," said Anaya R, a secondary V student from Royal West Academy.

The Voices of Olympia Competition launch ceremony at Royal West Academy not only provided a platform for students to voice their concerns but also reinforced their belief in the power to create a safer world for women. By openly discussing the barriers faced by women, Students emphasized the power of compassion, to foster a culture of understanding and acceptance within the school community.

By the time the event ended, it was clear that the students at Royal West Academy wanted to see positive changes. Their ambition and hard work showcased their motivation to build a community free of violence against women.

**Royal West Academy's Very Own ASL Club**

By: Emma N.



The ability to communicate is something that everyone in this world has in common. However, not all people communicate vocally. The question is, how do you communicate?

For all of those who don't know what ASL is, it stands for American Sign Language which is a language used by mostly deaf communities. It allows the deaf to communicate visually, using hands, body language, and facial expressions, rather than orally. Royal West Academy is now hosting its very own ASL club, run by our beloved teachers Mr. N. Rafael and Ms. V. Gagliano. This club allows for students to learn to communicate with people who don't have the ability to do so vocally or who have difficulties hearing. Spread your phoenix wings and try learning something new! Not only will joining this club expand your communication skills, but it will also allow you to make new friends that you can share similar interests with and it looks amazing on your resume for all of you undergrads looking for a job to make a little extra money!

Last year, Royal West Academy hosted a drama play called *Inside Out* where one of the main characters of this production could only communicate using sign language, and that was the inspiration and motivation behind the ASL club.

On the first day, Mr. Rafael and Ms. Gagliano received 54 students that were eager to learn and appreciate American Sign Language. Today, many students continue to come and learn new words and increase their speed as they go. Don't be scared to try something new and consider joining the ASL club. Between the Royal West Students, we all share the need to aim for the stars and achieve the impossible. Adding ASL to your knowledge can be very beneficial and definitely something to brag about.

R W A in ASL:





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**Oolong Live Tea Club**

By: Hannah A.

Bernard Paul Heroux once said "There is no trouble so great or grave that cannot be much diminished by a nice cup of tea." Royal West Academy's tea club would certainly agree. Thanks to Mme. L. Moreau, up to 20 students per session come together every Tuesday at lunch in her classroom, room 108, to sit down, chat, drink tea and snack on some kind of homemade confection. While Mme. Moreau is there to supervise these gatherings, Tea Club is a student run organization, with three students taking the lead in tea and dessert distribution, those three students being Fred C., David H., and Ben A. Using the classroom's supply of charming tea cups, at least one different kind of tea is offered each week ranging all the way from cinnamon chai, to raspberry hibiscus, to mint. Some teas are brought in by students, while others come from Mme. Moreau's classroom tea reserve. As compensation for a weekly cup of warm tea, each member is encouraged to bring in some kind of sweet treat for the collective to enjoy with their hot beverage.

Each different tea comes with a small introduction about its background, where it came from, how it was made, and at the end of the meeting, students rate and give their opinions about that week's tea. This allows students to be exposed to a large range of teas from many different cultures, with diverse flavors, and gives them an opportunity to try new snacks and drinks from all over the world. As Gabriella S., a dedicated member, elegantly put it: "My favorite part of tea Club is just getting to try new tea. You don't have to spend the money on buying a huge box of these teas because it's free, and you get to try a different



one each time so you get to try all different kinds and you see which ones you like and which ones you don't and I feel like we're getting a little bit of different cultures as well which is just lovely."

Tea club is also a completely tech free zone, with a strict no phone rule enforced by Mme. Moreau, allowing its members to be more aware of their surroundings and live in the moment. Anna D., a secondary five student and an active member of tea club remarks that "it's refreshing to disconnect and have real organic conversations and genuine connections with others while at tea club, giving the meetings a real sense of community." When asked about her favorite part of tea club she said "I love that every week, we come together and one person makes a sweet little treat. I like the baked goods, the candies, it's like a reward you know for getting to Tuesday. It's just a wonderful environment where everyone feels welcome and we all get to bond over a shared love of tea and food. And I love David's little fun facts about the teas."

The real star of the club are the various desserts and teas. This year's highest ranked teas have been the cardamom tea, a delicious herbal tea and the sweet raspberry hibiscus tea, a tangy blend of rosehips, orange peel, hibiscus etc.. Equally important are the sweet treats tea club has enjoyed over the last year, some notable ones being jelly thumbprint cookies, peanut butter mochi, chocolate chip cookies, and even pumpkin, cinnamon, doughnuts! Tea club also had a holiday potluck on the last session before the holidays which had many delicious goodies for students to feast on, most notably a scrumptious red and white rice salad provided by David Hernandez. If reading this is making you hungry, head down to 108 next Tuesday at lunch and sit down with a nice cup of tea and a snack, we'd love to have you!



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## Our Athletes Choose You!

By: Noah G.



Supporting our sports teams is one of the best ways to get into that school spirit. Not only will it keep you in the loop with what's going on with our school's teams, but it'll make you proud to call yourself a Royal West Academy student! I can guarantee that most of you have been intrigued when hearing about games or sporting events happening at our school, and have wanted to come check some out! Don't be shy, our athletes love having the support of their peers, and it even helps motivate them to play at their best! Our school's very own Cameron L. stated in an interview that, "Hearing the crowd cheering on proudly as we play is one of the best feelings I've had throughout my high school career, and their memories I'm going to relish for my entire life". And it doesn't end there! Not only does it create everlasting memories for our athletes, but for you too! Do you want to look back at your high school years and think to yourself, "I should've been more involved in my school." No! If you choose to come and support our athletics with the rest of your peers, you'll have no regrets and form memories that you'll cherish forever. Not only does coming to games help raise our school spirit, but it helps give the school an even better reputation. If word gets out that Royal West Academy's teams are high-level and exciting to watch, we won't just be known as the "smart school", but as the school that can do it all!

## Winter Survival

By: Naima H.

Pour le carnaval d'hiver cette année, j'ai choisi de faire le cours de survie en hiver. C'était une merveilleuse expérience, et ce que j'ai appris va rester avec moi pour toujours. Nous avons appris comment identifier les traces d'animaux variés dans la neige, un talent qui n'est peut-être pas nécessaire dans la vie de tous les jours mais qui donne certainement lieu à des promenades plus intéressantes dans les forêts. Nous avons appris les principes de construction d'abris, puis on en a fabriqué en utilisant les objets de l'environnement. Ce qui était peut-être le plus excitant était la création du feu. Nous avons appris à utiliser des bâtons de ferrocérium et comment former les bases des feux, et nous avons réussi à créer cette substance sacrée si cruciale à la survie hivernale. Finalement, nous avons dû travailler en équipe pour créer des étincelles. C'était un travail intense, mais le résultat en valait la peine. J'ai terminé la journée avec un vrai sentiment d'accomplissement.

## Wildcats Rugby

By: Owen S.

The Royal West Wildcats Boys' rugby team has begun preparations for another busy spring season. The program, run by Mr. W. Lapierre, is famous for having one of the most rigorous training regimes of any sports team in the school, reaching a peak of an astounding eight practices a week during late April. This typically includes 3-4 morning fitness sessions and 4-5 technical sessions after the school day. Players gather in the gym in the morning to ensure their fitness levels are the best in the GMAA, and at the backfield after school to cement the rugby skills learned under the tutelage of the experienced coaching staff. This intense training is not for nought, as the Juvenile boy's team saw a perfect undefeated 5-0 season last spring, ending with a 26-12 win in the Championship game against Monseigneur-Richard at the Concordia Stadium. The team finished their regular season with a shocking 159 points scored and only 17 points scored against. With a new season readily approaching, the group is expected to rise to a higher division level, which could impose a more challenging season, but captain Brent S. is hopeful. "It's been one of my favorite aspects in all of Royal West Academy and I'm just looking forward to this promising season ahead of us." The team is mostly composed of well-experienced returning 3rd-year players, but this year, many new recruits are slated to join the ranks after witnessing the team's success last season. The large number of practices also helps to build good team chemistry, as the players end up spending a large portion of their time together, this creates good team camaraderie and forms many good friendships among players. "Joining the rugby team gives you the opportunity to create lifelong friendships all while under the tutelage of expert coaching," adds Brent. The consensus among players is that they are excited, and hope to share another successful season culminating in the year's end.





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### RWA Rocks NYC

By: Hannah A.

**I**♥**NY** In the early morning of Tuesday, February 6th of the New Year, a large group of Grade 11 students at Royal West Academy will be departing for New York City! The trip will last three nights and students will come back on the 9th. Thanks to the dedicated teachers of RWA, Grade 11 students will have the chance to discover the Big Apple, learn all about its vibrant culture and create lifelong memories.

During our visit, we will stay at the Four Points Hotel in Midtown Times Square. Every day will be spent exploring various parts of the city as well as taking in tours and activities. We will experience iconic New York City landmarks such as the Top of the Rock (the Rockefeller Building), walking the Brooklyn Bridge, and more.

The New York trip has not taken place since 2020 due to COVID restrictions. As a student attending this school trip, I feel very grateful to be part of the first group able to embark on this adventure since the pandemic. I am not the only student to feel this way. A fellow Grade 11 student, Alinna D. expresses her excitement by saying "I'm so happy that we're able to go on this trip and I can't wait to spend time with friends in such an amazing city!". This trip guarantees a memorable time for everyone, students and teachers alike cannot wait for this experience. This is our last year of high school and we will soon be parting ways. The NYC trip is the perfect way to celebrate our five years together!

### Royal West's Jazzy Best

By: Jonah V.

You read that title right! Royal West Academy has its very own Jazz Band, generously run by Ms. G. Purdy. The Royal West Academy Jazz Band is an ECA offered at the beginning of the year to those who are compatible, as well as willing to partake in this year-long journey of music and fun. Any of the Secondary III-V students are welcome to join the jazzy ensemble. Luckily enough, Royal West Academy even offers spots for clarinets, considering their abundance in our school. There's no shame in picking up a new instrument and learning it along the way. Lucas C., a former member of the Jazz Band can confirm this: "I usually play the French horn but last year I played the trumpet for a jazz band." Almost, if not everyone who chose music as their art course has a free passageway into RWA's world of jazz.

If all goes to plan, the Jazz Band partakes in all three concerts of the year. Jazz, rock 'n roll, and many more styles will fill your ears if you decide to check out one of the concerts that features this spectacular ensemble. Outstanding performances and solos will undoubtedly impress you. Take Moondance, for example. Played in the 2023 Spring concert last May, where eleven solos were performed during this piece. Saxophones, trumpets, bass — you name it, and we probably featured it! "The performance was truly breathtaking," said an anonymous parent who attended the concert.

You may be asking yourself: "Wow! This sounds like an amazing experience. Was there a lot of rehearsal involved?" No. Only once a week, for a mere 60 minutes after school on Thursdays, Ms. Purdy brought the band together in the music room and conducted an efficient, well-thought-out, and overall excellent rehearsal. Lots of commitment is required from the students at home to practice, which is why attending one of their concerts is a must-do.

### The Juvenile Girls Volleyball Team Wrapped

By: Zoe M.

The Juvi girls volleyball team is composed of 11 members. These players are Dolores D., Capri R., Sierra P., Alyssa R., Sierra B., Charlotte E., Mia F., Zizhao M., Emilie W., Talia L., Esther D., and Zoe M. This team was formed at the start of the school year in 2022. The coaches, Melina Montzenigos and Zoe Rabinovitch were on the Royal West Academy volleyball team and graduated in 2017. This team generally has two practices a week and has had many games since the end of September. The team participated in the GMAA against College Notre Dame, St-Thomas High School, Villa-Maria High School and McDonald High School. Unfortunately, the GMAA season was over for the team at the end of October but they now participating in the French League (D3). The girls are playing against ten different French schools including College Notre Dame again. So far in the French league, the Juvi team lost the first game to College de Montreal but came back strong and beat École Secondaire Antoine-de-St-Exupery with 3 sets to 1. One of the coaches, Melina, says this about the team: "This team has so much passion, ambition and personality. Each player is so unique, but when they come together in the gym it is so beautiful to see the teamwork and support. Every girl is so different, in their interests, skills, abilities and attitude but one thing they all have is heart. They are all so compassionate and sweet. They will blossom into such beautiful young women and it's an honour coaching them!". The team is very excited to learn, grow together and play in some more games!



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#### **A Battle to the End:**

#### **The Wildcats Juvenile Boys Flag Football Team's Championship Game**

By: Cameron L.

The Royal West Academy Juvenile Boys flag football team's journey to the Division 4 championship game was a testament to their hard work and dedication. In a thrilling and intense final game, the team fought fearlessly but unfortunately, lost in a very close match. The game was a display of true sportsmanship and determination, leaving a lasting impression on the players, spectators and school community.

The opposing team, Rosemere High School, shined in their hard-earned victory, as the Royal West Wildcats put up a fierce fight, keeping the game intense and unpredictable until the final whistle.

Ending the first quarter with a score of 15-6, for the opposing side, the Wildcats fans were instrumental throughout the rest of the game ensuring the players knew their hard work was not unnoticed. The support and encouragement from the school, the coaching staff, and the fans were crucial for the success of the team.

Beginning the second half of this highly anticipated championship game, the Wildcats came out stronger than ever, as Aidan R., RWA star rusher, sacks Rosemere's quarterback. The team gained all momentum following this critical moment, as the offense bolted to the opposing team's goal line. Fans jolted in disappointment, after a heartbreaking fourth down, ending the team's best drive of the game.

Spirits on the bench stayed high, as veteran Grade 11 superstar wide receiver, Pierce K., motivated his team, ensuring their heads were still in the game. He led his team with a passing touchdown, a receiving touchdown, a two-point conversion, and 5 receptions for a total of one-hundred-thirty yards all in the second half, but it was not enough to edge out a lead, as the Wildcats lost 35-28 in a thriller of a championship game. Pierce K. expresses that his team "played their best game of the season and there was not much more they could've done, but above all, it was a great season and he wouldn't have wanted it any other way"

As the season comes to a close, the Wildcats can look back on their accomplishments with pride and use this experience as motivation to come back stronger in the future. The final game may not have ended in victory, but the team's journey and their display of sportsmanship have made them champions in their own right.



#### **Upcoming Wrestling Finals**

By: Erik Z.



Royal West Academy's wrestling team will be attending its next meet at John Rennie High School on January 26, 2024, in preparation for the GMAA finals that are coming up on February 15th at Howard S. Billings High School. The team is training restlessly under the guidance of coach Mr. J. Chen, who has this to say for the coming days: "This year promises to be a very challenging final, as the league looks bigger than it has been in nearly 30 years, and we look to see about 13 schools with much larger teams, a good crop of young, enthusiastic coaches producing promising athletes. For our Royal West Academy athletes, we have a very good chance as they have worked very hard, and I hope to see them at their absolute best." Interviewing our team's athletes shows promise, as all that I have questioned have pledged to try their hardest in the coming meets and practices.

Whether you want to come and show support for our teams, witness what the best from each school has to offer, or want to watch for the love of the sport, any spectators are welcome and appreciated! As a proud team member, I can attest that we are determined to put in the work to bring the banner home, and we want you to come with your school spirit and cheer on our athletes! If you walk past our practices in the cafeteria every Monday after school, show your support, and we hope to bring home the banner this year.





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**Spike and Strive:**

**The Royal West Academy Wildcats' Volleyball Performance!**

By: Antonia D.

In an exciting display of athletic skill, the Royal West Academy girls' volleyball teams showcased their talent in a fantastic game held at College International Marie de France on Wednesday, January 17th, 2024. The engagement between these two formidable teams unfolded in a series of 4 intense sets, as RWA gave everything they had to hopefully take home a victory for their team. Despite their best efforts, the game brought unexpected twists and turns resulting in a hard-fought loss. Let's dive into the highlights of this exceptional volleyball showdown and discover the team's determination in the face of a challenging outcome.

In the opening set of the game, the Royal West Academy Wildcats showcased their skills, securing a victory with a score of 25-17. The team demonstrated their ability to work together as they had amazing coordination, powerful serves, and well-executed spikes earning them a great advantage. Emilie W. dominated the first set with a series of serves, earning the team numerous points and creating a great lead for the Wildcats. Despite RWA's initial success, the second set took an expected turn as the opposing team's audience introduced loud horns, creating a distracting atmosphere that disrupted the focus of the players. Even though the Wildcats tried their best to overcome this distraction, the opposing team was able to secure a victory with a score of 25-19.

Undiscouraged by the challenges posed in the second set, Royal West Academy went into the third set with resilience and determination. Holding the lead for the majority of the set, their performance showcased a deserving comeback. Alyssa R., who plays power and Zoe M., who is a setter displayed great communication in strong plays that earned them crucial points. However, despite their best efforts, they ultimately fell short by just three points, resulting in a score of 25-22.

In the tense fourth set, the players from RWA felt the pressure to even the score, but they struggled to hit effective hits over the net. The stress and pressure to execute successful plays unfortunately led to a loss in the set with a score of 25-20. Even though the players faced challenges throughout the sets, they tried their best and gave their best efforts throughout the match. Although they lost, the team found encouragement in the close scores of each set. Reflecting on the game, they expressed their happiness with their performance and acknowledged areas for improvement, as they will continue to work to succeed in the future. "It was a very close game and I'm happy with how we

played. We now know what we have to work on to get better", Alyssa R. said when the game finished.

In the end, RWA's volleyball match, not only showed the team's skills but also their spirit of sportsmanship. With their positive mindset, the Wildcats can certainly bring home a victory for Royal West Academy in future competitions!

**The RWA Honour Band Returns To Marching**

By: Emily G.

For the first time in 4 years, the Honour Band has begun marching again! Royal West Academy's Honour Band is an extracurricular concert and marching band led by Ms. G. Purdy. We perform many times throughout the year, including at the Holiday concert, the Winter concert, Spring concert and many others.

Unfortunately, the Honour Band had to quit marching when Covid hit. We were left with a lot to learn this year with this big gap in the marching history. However, we didn't let this discourage us. The Honour Band students devote two lunch periods and one after-school practice each week to prepare for performances and marches this year.

Lauren E., the president of the RWA Honour band, shed some light on the club and her role in it. "Being a part of the Honour Band demands considerable commitment, but I'm always prepared to invest the effort, especially in my role as President... Each week, we marched through the streets near the school, braving the cold. Initially, there was a lot of disorganization and I could sense the overwhelming feeling enveloping us like a blanket. However, after a few weeks, I observed a significant improvement. We learned how to march in sync and play beautifully simultaneously. It turned out to be a great learning experience for everyone."

If you happen to see rows and rows of students marching down the streets of Montreal West during your lunch break, do not be alarmed. The band is simply practicing. Feel free to cheer them on!

The Honour band marched in their first parade last December in Morrisburg, and will be marching in the St- Patrick's day parade this March!



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### Wet Feet, but Warm Hearts in Morrisburg

By: Stella A.

On December 2, 2023, the Royal West Academy Honour Band marched our first parade since the pandemic in the small, charming town of Morrisburg, Ontario. This was an incredible opportunity that taught us many things, most importantly how to play our instruments even when it's so cold we can't feel our fingers.

The first practice that we started to prepare for the parade, we attempted to play while simply marching in place, yet even this was harder than we had anticipated. Before we knew it, people started moving forward and the first three rows of us quickly became squished together. The lucky trombonists in the first row had their faces flat up against the wall, barely able to play their instruments. After that fateful evening, we all knew a whole lot of work awaited us.

The next couple of lunch rehearsals, we took the first intentional steps forward, marching on the streets of Montreal West. As challenging as it was to stay together, we eventually improved and were ready for the parade. My favourite moments during these practices were the smiling residents standing outside listening to our beautiful Christmas carols.

Finally, after months of preparation, the day of the parade had arrived. The weather was far from ideal, with light rain and slush everywhere. This wasn't only unpleasant for us, but it posed a greater threat to our beloved instruments. Woodwinds (clarinets, flutes, and saxophones) can be completely destroyed if they get wet, making rain their archnemesis. In order to protect them, we had to MacGyver ourselves some waterproof armor for the instruments using only garbage bags and rubber bands. Thanks to the help of Ms. G. Purdy's husband, Mr. Cox, the woodwinds marched with their instruments safe and stylish. Now that my fingers are no longer numb, I can say that it was a heartwarming experience to see all of the families gathered to watch the parade. Many young children in pajamas were nestled in the trunks of their cars (some with full snack bars!). Their smiling faces and waving fudge-covered hands made all of the hard work worth it. What a great way to start the holiday season!



### Holiday 'Bandemonium' in Ontario!

By: Alexander L.-K.

On December 2, 2023, the Royal West Academy Honour Band attended and performed in the Morrisburg Santa Claus Parade in the small town of Morrisburg, Ontario. 38 Secondary III-V instrument-toting students proudly continued the quarter-century-long tradition of marching around the city with Santa hats and smiles, sandwiched in by dozens of festive floats. Numerous carpooling parents tagged along to watch the event unfold. We had been warned of Mother Nature sprinkling some Christmas joy over Morrisburg that fateful morning. True to her promise, she came through, but as the Honour Band's motto proudly states: "We'll make it work."

Each of Mother Nature's woodwind victims brought a garbage bag to cover their instrument and poked two holes for their hands. Unfortunately, some had a more troublesome time than others. One particular clarinetist seemed to be riding on a rollercoaster of anxiety and desperation. Yep, that was me. I watched, slowly and painfully, as the immense garbage bag I had brought began to slide off my clarinet. As I held on for dear life, the holes in the bag grew exponentially. I was quite 'trebled', swimming in my garbage bag and unsuccessfully attempting to locate my instrument. As Ms. G. Purdy would say, it was definitely a "me problem" - but the show must go on! And go on it did, so much so that the band's Vice-President, Francis Q., said: "What I admire about the Honour Band is that when these musicians have to step up to a challenge and do something they've never done, they'll do it like they've been practicing for years!" We were all proud of this accomplishment! It was heartwarming to see so many families on the street beaming, listening to us play Christmas carols. It eased me into joyful suffering. Once the event concluded, we found ourselves beaming, too! We stayed true to our motto, especially since it was our first marching escapade. Hopefully, Mother Nature will be more merciful to the future marching musicians of Royal West Academy's Honour Band!





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### Attending RWA

By: Pierce K.

#### Attention grade 5 and 6 students and parents, here's why Royal West Academy is the right school for you!

Picking the right high school with your child may seem like one of the most important decisions of their childhood lives, so why not help you with your decision by adding a school to your list that is sure to help your child succeed in the long run? The high school that I am referring to is Royal West Academy.

For starters, let's just look at the numbers to truly show you how excellent this school is in every category. RWA is ranked as the number 5 public school in Quebec along with being ranked 2nd in English high schools (both public and private) in the province. Well, you might think "Oh a school of such high caliber must cost a fortune," but no, RWA is free for all students who get in, while still being as one of the best schools in the province.

RWA isn't just known for its high standards for academics, but also for its hundreds of extracurricular activities (ECAs) for students. These ECAs are divided into four sub categories: Sports, Environmental, Community and Cultural. With all these different sports teams and clubs, Royal West Academy gives students the sense that they're welcomed at the school as early as their first day on campus! There is something for all interests. Moving along to our programs, Royal West Academy offers extremely advanced programs that are very hard to find in any other high school in Quebec, let alone in a public school. They offer advanced math that is a year ahead of everyone else as well as French immersion courses and French mother tongue courses, which are the highest-level French courses in the province.

Along with these advanced courses that will surely put your child ahead of the curve, RWA offers many elective courses that you can take when reaching higher grade levels to keep your schedule interesting and diverse. Just to name a few, they offer Biology, Leadership, and Spanish in Secondary IV, Physics, Chemistry, and Sound Engineering in Secondary V, and more. All in all, Royal West Academy is one of the best all-around schools in the province due to its prestigious academic reputation, hundreds of extracurricular activities and all-around fantastic school spirit and environment. But don't just take that from me, let's look at what one RWA student had to say about their school. Ryan W.: "Royal West Academy is such a diverse school with such kind people that you can go into Secondary I knowing no one and leave in Secondary V while being friends with almost everyone in your grade! RWA does a great job at preparing students for CEGEP by giving students a CEGEP level amount of work so that when they do make that transition, it will be much smoother compared to other schools."

### Royal West Academy PPO

Parents: did you know that RWA is in the process of drafting its educational project? Every four years, each school in Quebec is mandated to produce an educational project, a strategic roadmap for the school that deals with policy orientations and priority actions, with input from stakeholders such as students, parents and teachers as well as community members.

The RWA Parent Participation Organization (PPO), since its inception in the fall, has been working to fulfill its purpose, laid out in Section 96.2 of the Education Act: "The purpose of a parent participation organization is to encourage the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing and periodically evaluating the school's educational project and their participation in their child's educational success." To this end, the PPO put forward a motion at the Governing Board's January 10<sup>th</sup> meeting requesting that all parents be surveyed via email, as we know has been done recently at 18 other EMSB schools. Unfortunately, the motion failed to pass. The PPO is now looking at other ways in which they can fulfill their mandate as per the Education Act. We look forward to hearing any ideas or suggestions you may have! You can email us at: [ParentParticipationOrgRWA@gmail.com](mailto:ParentParticipationOrgRWA@gmail.com)



- Jan. 27 - International Holocaust Remembrance Day
- Jan. 29 - Action against Islamophobia Day
- Jan. 31 -Feb. 2 - Sec. 2 Ski Trip
- Jan. 31 - Feb. 2 - Sec. 4 Ski Trip
- Feb. 1 & 2- Grad Photos
- Feb 2 - Grad Photos
- Feb. 2 - Term 2 Ends
- Feb. 5 - RWA Foundation meeting - 7 pm
- Feb. 5 - Term 3 begins
- Feb. 6-9 - Sec. 5 New York Trip
- Feb. 7 - Piece De Theatre Sec. 4
- Feb. 21 - RWAHSA Virtual Meeting - 7 pm
- Feb. 19-22 - RWA Theater Production: Lucky Stiff



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Royal West Academy Home & School Association

Royal West Academy Foundation



The Royal West Academy school store (RWA CO-OP) began in 2023. It is a volunteer run enterprise, open daily at lunch, which serves as a second hand uniform shop, school supply store and swag/spirit wear boutique. This may be a store, but it is so much more! Students can volunteer on their lunch hour to earn ECA credits and referrals for summer job applications. Students create art pieces for decoration and signs for the store, they create "spirit wear" through tie-dye workshops, they express themselves on our "chalk-wall", they stock shelves, do inventory, work the cash, triage the donations, lead the merchandising of our display case, stock the vending machine, all while collaborating with a parent volunteer as well as their peers. Staff and students alike have been influential in what we carry and sell. From art pencils, locks, and science boards to popcorn and RWA tuques, the store is more than a fundraiser for the school. It is a space where students can purchase items, recommend items, donate items, and be a part of their school store.



**ROOM 301: Math and Science**

Dear members of the RWA Community:

Thank you for answering our call for support. **We are excited to announce that the RWA Foundation has raised the funds required for the redesign of its first classroom, room 301.** The classroom, which is dedicated to the teaching of Math and Science, is expected to be completed in the coming weeks.

Modernization of classrooms, to accommodate different learning styles and facilitate movement and collaboration, will increase student engagement.

The Foundation is still looking to raise funds for the redesign of Room 313 (History and Ethics) and Room 209 (English and Drama) and that's where we need your support. Your donation will make the redesign of classrooms a reality.

**If you have not done so already, please make your 2023-24 gift to RWA Foundation's Active Learning Classroom Campaign today. Thank you in advance for your generosity and for supporting our teachers and students!**

Join us February 5 @ 7:00pm virtually or in-person for our next RWA Foundation meeting. We look forward to seeing you there! Email [info@rwaf.ca](mailto:info@rwaf.ca) to confirm your presence.

To get involved with the Foundation, visit [info@rwaf.ca](mailto:info@rwaf.ca).

**Give Today!**

**rwaf.ca**

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