



Words From The Admin



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

Welcome to the final edition of the RWA Newsletter for the 2023-2024 academic year. And what a year it has been! RWA students put on shows for the community, won sports banners, hosted celebratory events, and worked hard academically. Sending a huge thank you to the RWA staff whose enthusiasm and time fostered an environment of opportunity and growth for our students. Read on to learn about some of these wonderful moments. Lastly, we would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a well-deserved restful summer.

Brain Bee

Upon registering for Brain Bee, Secondary 4 students, Sophie I. and Anya F. were given a neuroscience textbook to study on their own. The students then competed in a competition consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. Sixty-five contestants from twelve school participated, including 3 Cegeps. A big congratulations to Sophie



Dessert Concert

In early April, the RWA music department hosted their annual Dessert Concert. A special thanks to all those who baked / provided goodies to sell. Thanks to your generosity, the event collected over \$3000 to support The RWA Foundation.

Dance Show

The choreographers were creative, the dancers were passionate, and the show was spectacular. This year's dance show wowed the crowd. Congratulations to all involved. Thank you to Ms. Cayer, Mr. Zigby, and the dance executives for seeing to every minute detail. Including this year's \$12 000 in proceeds, RWA's Dance Show has raised over \$100 000 for Dans La Rue.



Classe Verte

The Green Committee, comprised of teachers, organized a Classe Verte day for Secondary 1 students. On April 18th, students had the chance to spend the day outdoors: hiking, fat-biking, or learning about local ecosystems. This initiative was recognized by EMSB as a step towards meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and was therefore awarded a \$2400 grant. Thank you to the RWA Green Committee for working together to create a greener, more sustainable future.

Canadian French National Debating Championship

In April, LCC hosted the largest Canadian National French Debating tournament to date. All debates were entirely done in French. Royal West Academy was represented by Anya F. The team of Anya F. and Shen H. (Selwyn House) competed against 34 teams from across the country. Anya's team placed 2nd team overall in the country!



Regional Science Fair

The regional science fair was held March 25-26. Royal West students did us proud earning quite a few distinctions:

- Jacob F. and Noah V. received a Great Distinction certificate and a McGill University - Faculty of Science - Geography Award
- Cassidy E. and Lauren E. received a Highest Distinction Certificate and Hydro-Quebec Energy Award
- Regan F. and Mathilda K. received a Distinction Certificate
- Sophie I. and Jake G. received a Distinction certificate and a McGill University - Faculty of Science - Chemistry Award
- Abby I. and Beatrice R. received a Distinction certificate
- Sae Ah P. and Sumin W. received a Great Distinction certificate and a McGill University - Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Science, School of Human Nutrition Award
- Eolande M. and Rebecca O. received a Great Distinction certificate and a McGill University - Department of Mining & Materials Engineering - Materials Engineering Award
- Anubhab B. and Srijith K. received a Highest Distinction certificate and a McGill University - Department of Civil Engineering Award, a McGill University - Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering Award, in addition to this they received the Super expo-Science Hydro Quebec (SESHQ) Participation award and moved on to the provincial competition.
- Srijith K. and Anubhab B. received the Minister of Transport and Sustainability award at the Provincial Science Fair at the Cégep du Vieux Montréal. They received a prize of \$1500.
- Also noteworthy, Rahul Patel, an RWA alumni from last year won a Silver Medal among other awards!

Battle of the Books

The RWA Battle of the Books team emerged as the winners after a nail-biting tie with Vincent Massey at the EMSB Board Battle. It took 4 rounds of tie breaking questions, but RWA took home the banner! At the Ultimate Battle of the Books, RWA took home second place behind Macdonald High School. Congratulations to team members: Zakary F., Annabelle H., Abigail I., Nate R., Kristiina V., Tamara W., and Kai Y.



GIPS

RWA students involved in the Global Issues Problem Solving enrichment program qualified for nationals by developing a plan with creative and viable solutions for a future scene on Autonomous Transportation. Lauren Hill Academy hosted the national competition where students competed in the presentations of their action plans. Our RWA students scored first place in the presentation of the action plans for both Middle and Senior Division qualifying for the International Competition at the University of Indiana. Sumin W. and Jake G., second year competitors in the Future Problem-Solving competitions, were special guest speakers at the national competition. Congratulations to the two RWA team who qualified to the International Competition. Senior Division: Sumin W., Sophie I., Yiran L., & Naima H. Middle Division: Rebecca O., Beatrice R. & Sparsh S.





Let's Talk Science

Two RWA teams participated in the Let's Talk Science Competition hosted at McGill as part of a science enrichment program. One of our teams took first place with their project entitled *The Bioluminescent Cells*. Congratulations to Omar Aly, Zach C., Paige F., Bella F., and Seraphina Q.



Secondary 1 Orienteering

Through the physical education program, all secondary 1 students participated in an orienteering challenge.



CRC Robotics Competition

Royal West Academy participated in the CRC robotics competition held at École Secondaire Curé-Antoine Labelle. Students worked long hours over several months to build and program a robot that could pick up and launch balls at targets. The students also created a video, website, and kiosk under their chosen theme, the RWA airport. The team had a very successful year: They made the quarter finals in the robotics component of the competition and were finalists in Robot Design, Robot Construction and Kiosk Design. Overall, they came 5th out of 25 teams!

The team also earned the following honours:

- 1st in programming competition
- 3rd in website content competition



Spring Concert



Art Vernissage

As part of the senior Visual Arts elective, students showcased some of their pieces at this year's Art Vernissage on May 23rd. The students' work was creative, thoughtful, and very impressive. Thank to the art teachers for putting on such a wonderful event.





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Celebrating an RWA Faculty Member

RWA would like to congratulate our colleague Mr. Jamal Zigby for his 25 years of dedicated service to the EMSB and Royal West Academy. Jamal was honored in a ceremony recently by the EMSB.



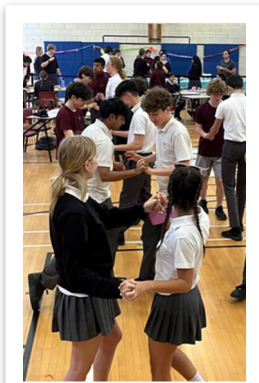
MS Walks

Twenty-five RWA students gave up some weekend time for the West Island MS fundraising walk. Prior to the walk, the students fundraised at school raising over \$1000. Workers and other walk participants were very appreciative of the time and effort of our RWA students. Thank you Mr. Wiltzer for brokering this opportunity.



Spanish Culture Day

Students from the Spanish elective class hosted a Spanish culture day in early May. Among other things, the event included lunch, dancing, and face-painting.



Zone 01 Robotics Competition

The RWA Junior Robotics team competed at the Zone 01 event accompanied by coaches Ms. Partington and Mr. Nemeth. RWA got a clean sweep for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Dino Sumo event. Congratulations to Zack C. and Max K. who received 1st place; to Abigail I., Nate R. and Masha A. who came in 2nd place; and to Omar A., Matthew B. and Alex I. for their third-place win. We are so proud of all of our competitors!



- May 31 - June 6 - Blackout Period
- June 7 - First Day of Exams
- June 20 - Graduation Ceremony
- June 21 - Last Day of School!
- June 25 - Prom

Secondary 5 EMSB Accounts

Please be advised that Secondary 5 students will lose access to their EMSB account after graduation. Only students with active registrations maintain their access. Make sure to save any files / work you wish to keep before June 21, 2024.



End of Year BBQ

A big thank you to SLA for a well-organized event. There were hotdogs, bouncy castles, games, music, and lots of sunshine!



Stop Motion Animation

Between May 14-24th, select Grade 7 English classes worked on creating Stop Motion Animation videos with the help of plasticine, creativity, and Montreal artist, Erik Goulet. Their sessions with Mr. Goulet began with a history of animations and an overview of the unique challenges and advantages of Stop Motion. After a few tips and tricks, students were all set to go, and spent several classes modeling their sets, designing their characters, and writing their scripts. On May 24th, students then had 50 minutes to film their creations. Having just finished studying *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one group worked to recreate famous scenes from the play, while another drew inspiration from the comedy's most hilarious moment (metamorphosis!). Sheep transformed to clouds, Titania fell in love with Bottom, a pimple became a butterfly, and Demetrius and Lysander just couldn't quite duke it out in the enchanted woods. Students collaborated, laughed, and had a great time with a fun activity to wind down their year. Royal West would like to thank Mr. Goulet for the experience and energy he brought to the school, and can't wait to see the finished movies!

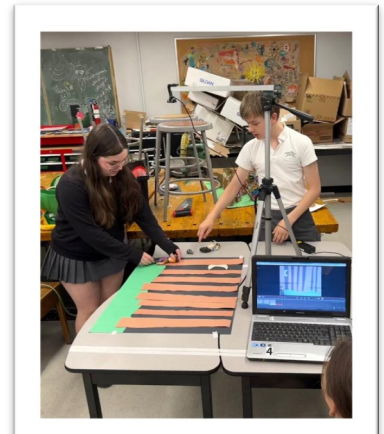
Time to say goodbye

We will soon be saying goodbye to our Secondary 5 students. In some cases, we will also be saying goodbye to some families that have been members of our community for over a decade. To the graduates: we know that your photos, achievements, murals, and mosaics will continue to populate the hallways and live to inspire younger students. Additionally, we hope that your memories allow for a special place in your heart for RWA.

Pi Day

By: Nicholas Y. and James B.

On March 14, 2024 (national PI day) statistician and epidemiologist Dr. Erica Moodie was kind enough to visit our school and give us a presentation about statistics. She was an amazing speaker who always had the crowd engaged in the presentation. She obtained her PhD in biostatistics at the university of Washington before joining McGill where she is now a William Dawson scholar and an associate professor of biostatistics. Her presentation was about epidemiology and statistics, but she kept the ground awake by referencing chocolate for the stats (also, she bribed us!). She has been published many times, but her most successful work was *statistical methods for dynamic treatment regimes*. Thank you Dr. Moodie for an awesome presentation, we hope to see you again next year!



RWA NEWS

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RWA News is published during the academic year on the school's website at www.royalwestacademy.com. Articles, comments, and suggestions may be directed to the editor at rwanews@gmail.com

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The DOs of **HOMEWORK HYGIENE**

Work Smarter, not harder!



DO have a Study Zone

- Have a desk or table
- Have access to your materials (eraser, whiteout, calculator, notebook, agenda...)
- Work in a quiet environment

DO get enough sleep!



DO limit distractions by muting notifications, limiting screens, and turning off music.



DO have a water bottle nearby.



DO use your agenda to keep track of due dates and activities

DO prioritize assignments by due date

DO break large assignments into manageable chunks

DO focus on one task at a time



DO take breaks

- Set a timer for tasks
- Take regular 5-10 minute breaks!



DO practice sustainable study habits

- Review notes and quizzes
- Identify key terms
- Create a study guide or practice test
- Leave enough time to review topics





HOMEWORK

HYGIENE

Do you have a designated homework space? 01

Is your Homework space...

- in a quiet location?
- have a desk or table?
- have all your materials readily available (eraser, whiteout, calculator, notebook, agenda...)?

Do you regularly tidy your space? 03

I regularly...

- Tidy my locker. I make sure there are no loose papers, dirty containers, or uneaten food.
- return to my locker at recess and lunch to switch out materials to keep my bag from becoming too heavy.
- pack my school bag with all of my necessary materials before going to sleep.

Do you have sustainable

study strategies? 04

When I have a test or exam I...

- review notes and quizzes.
- identify key vocabulary terms and definitions.
- create a study plan: break material into chunks and study over a number of days.
- create my own study guide and practice tests.

Do you practice sustainable homework habits? 02

My homework habits include:

- Using my agenda to mark down my homework and projects
- Prioritizing homework based on due date
- Using my home filing system to keep my binder clean and keep track of tests and assignments.
- Rereading instructions and rubrics while working on assignments.
- Taking regular breaks! Take a 5-10 minute break every 45 minutes.
- Focusing on one task at a time

Do you limit your

Screen time? 05

When I am working on school work...

- my social media notifications are on silent.
- I wait to check messages until I am on a break.
- I do not watch videos, shows, or movies.
- I am not listening to music or podcasts (If I need to block out background noise I use nature sounds or ambient noise).



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Earth week: a week dedicated to the growth of plants, and our minds

By: Julien D.

Earth Week is from April 16th to Earth Day on April 22nd, and for it, Royal West Academy organized Earth Week. During Earth Week, the school decided to organize a series of activities varying from PowerPoint presentations to challenges to help students better understand the environment around them and how it affects them. I went to all of these sessions and I wanted to write an article reflecting on what I learned as well as to inform everyone else about what they may have missed, as learning more about the environment can help plant the seeds for a better future.

To begin, I came into Ms. C. Almeida's classroom on day 1, a bit unsure as to what to expect about this new environment, but I still sat down and listened to the lesson. On the first day, a student came in and presented a PowerPoint on microplastics and their impacts on sea bodies. They briefly went over the usual negatives about having plastics in the oceans that you would expect but, they went over two statistics that caught me a bit off guard. The first one is that there are 14 million tons of microplastics on the world's ocean floors (The UN Environment Programme also estimates that 75 to 199 million tonnes of plastic is currently found in our ocean). 14 million tons is the equivalent of about a million elephants. The slightly more shocking one, however, was that the average human consumes, unknowingly, 39,000 - 211,000 microplastics each year. Although these statistics were in a way, to be expected, it made me slightly more aware of how the microplastic crisis isn't coming in a few decades, it's here now. Other students, like Romeo A., were speechless. After the presentation, there was a Kahoot to quiz students' knowledge on previously mentioned facts and to make the presentation a bit more entertaining. Rachel M., another student, stated that "the Kahoot made the presentation so much better".

After school, there was also an escape room activity that was supposedly identical to the one that the Secondary I students did for Classe Verte the week before. It was just a quiz on what substances can go in the trash, recycling and compost, as well as some physical activity. There were also challenges, like bringing a non-reusable lunch to school to promote the environment. I thoroughly enjoyed learning more about the environment. Likewise, students like Sydney S. said that she learned "so much stuff" and that the activities were "very

interactive". To conclude, I found that Earth Week was a great activity organized by Royal West Academy's Environment Committee to promote and make people more aware of the environment around them and maybe grow some ideas in their heads on how to solve the problems we are currently facing.

The Show is a Go!

By: Malina H.

For the first time in years, Royal West Academy's Variety Show took place in our very own, new and improved Performing Arts Center! The students brave enough to step up on stage and perform a talent of theirs truly shined, getting showered with applause after every act. I absolutely loved watching so many of my friends get up there and perform hobbies that they are passionate about, that I don't usually get to see them do. I also stood amongst the performers, as I performed a solo guitar and singing act, as well as being a part of the choir. There were so many incredible and diverse performances, guitar, piano, singing, poetry, dancing, and so much more. There were even some teacher performances such as Mr. A. Wiltzer chopping through wooden boards with his bare hand! Taking a deeper look into the show, let me take you backstage. Everyone was at least somewhat nervous, but our lovely music teachers, Ms. S. Macleod and Ms. G. Purdy made sure everything was set up perfectly. Everyone knew what they were doing, and they even did some breathing exercises with us to help calm us down. On top of that, all the performers were super supportive of each other, encouraging each other before going on stage and congratulating each other right after coming back off. As Clara L., a performer in Secondary IV told me, "Spending time with all the other performers backstage was a highlight, seeing others' raw talent and watching them embrace it". Overall, the atmosphere was incredible, and everyone had such an amazing time.

If you have not seen an RWA variety show yet, or if you potentially want to be in it, I highly recommend looking into and going to next year's show. The acts are always so creative and fun, and the performers are always so talented and passionate. For a couple of hours of your evening, it is one hundred percent worth it.



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Culture Craze at Royal West Academy

By: Laaibah A.

A long-awaited week of thrilling cultural activities has returned to Royal West Academy! Between April 30th and May 3rd, the Student Life Association (SLA) worked hard to bring back Culture Week in an effort to showcase the diversity of the school while encouraging students to represent their culture. It was a jam-packed week, and students were delighted to be able to show off their cultural identities in ways they normally wouldn't be able to during regular school days.

This year, Culture Week was celebrated not only by individual students, but also by each homeroom. Each room selected a culture they wished to represent and decorated their door accordingly, with cultural art, flags, fun facts, history, and much more. Additionally, a world map was posted inside the school and students were encouraged to place a pin on their city or country of origin. At the end of the week, the map had been generously sprinkled with pins all over every continent – truly a testament to the diversity of the student body.

However, the most-anticipated event was the Dress Down Day on Thursday, May 2nd, when students and staff were able to wear their own personal cultural attire or flags to school. The hallways were filled with vibrant colours, with everything from Italian soccer jerseys and Pakistani cultural wear to Vietnamese dresses and Moroccan tunics. This was inarguably the highlight of the week, as every individual shone in their unique clothing and accessories.

Finally, during lunch on Friday, May 3rd, homerooms organized activities according to the country they chose to represent.

This included a henna station for the homeroom representing South Asian culture, a buffet of Filipino food, and English treats baked and sold. A Secondary IV student, Yuan D., eagerly shared: "Homeroom 308 chose to represent my country, the Philippines, and I felt very appreciated for my culture. The food was beyond superb, and I was given a slice of home to savour." These stations were an absolute hit with students and teachers alike, and lunch was a memorable experience for all who participated.

Culture Week's goal was not only to reveal the hidden colourful cultures underneath the grey school uniforms, but also to raise money for charity, as many school events do. All funds raised throughout the week, with both the Dress Down Day and the homerooms' activities, went towards the "Centre Pour Les Victimes D'Aggression Sexuelle de Montréal."

Overall, the craze of Culture Week won't be dying out

anytime soon, as students are looking forward to what next year's event will bring. In the meantime, we'll all reminisce on the flavourful food, bright hues, and wide smiles this week brought to us.



Ateliers de Slam

By: Elliott T. et Bram L.

Récemment, les deux classes de secondaire 5 de Mme Moreau ont eu la chance de recevoir un invité spécial: MC June, un slameur, poète et musicien québécois. Il est venu pendant trois jours pour aider les élèves à réaliser leurs propres slams, une forme de poésie orale. Pendant la première séance, il nous a aidés à trouver de l'inspiration. Par la suite, il a abordé l'écriture et la performance. Durant les trois ateliers, il a pu aider tout le monde à rédiger leur œuvre en plus de nous impressionner avec des performances de slam et de guitare. Merci MC June, c'était une très belle expérience.



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Create a once in a lifetime experience!

By: Carys S.

The Royal West Academy midget girls' volleyball team made waves at this year's provincial championships! Just by attending this tournament, is marking a significant achievement for our school. The team's impressive performance this season, like their first-place win in the regional league, has earned them a coveted spot at the provincial tournament. This isn't something that happens easily; the midget girls have been working so hard for their spot since the beginning of high school and that's why their experience at provincials was so special. Realistically, the main reason to send a team to a big organized tournament like this is to compete and win, but it is really for the experience. I am a member of the team and from my first-hand experience, I can tell you that it is one I will never forget!

Our time at provincials brought our team closer together, led us to build stronger relationships and connections and established a positive spirit and team chemistry among us. We woke up next to each other, sleeping side by side in blow-up mattresses, on the floor of a classroom, waking up to each other's faces first thing in the morning, taking showers together, getting breakfast at the cafeteria and laughing together about how bad the food was! It's crazy to think how one singular volleyball tournament has impacted our lives. On the competition side, provincials is the best way for a player to improve and get better. Playing against advanced provincial-level teams can really teach a small school volleyball team many things. We learned from their skills and integrated it into our playing strategies. Competing against these types of teams really pushes us to do our best and results in individual and team improvement throughout every game.

This whole experience has taught me and my other teammates many things and gave us unforgettable memories. These tournaments are truly something not to miss out on. I hope that this brief insight will encourage people to join one of RWA's sports teams and get the chance to experience something like this because it will really enhance the high school experience. After our time at provincials, with all the fun we had, we are even more motivated to win the league next school year so we can go back. Although we, the midget girls team, didn't come home with a win, we left provincials and came back home better and stronger! Go wildcats - and let's get that trophy next year!

RWA Businesses: Entrepreneurs of the Future

By: Anastazja R.-K.

Every Royal West Academy student has recently come across a group of Secondary V students selling something or an Instagram account promoting these sales. For example, there was a used book sale, and multiple food and drink sales. Many happened at the time of the RWA Dance Show. What were the Secondary Vs. doing and why? These new Royal West Academy mock businesses are popping up due to a project in Mr. M. Wilson and Mr. J. Zigby's finance classes. Mr. Wilson explains the project as an opportunity for students to use what they have learned in class throughout the year to create their own companies. First, students have to think of and develop a product. Then, they have to market this product and urge people to buy it. Finally, they have to sell their product.

This assignment is a hands-on activity, which allows students to learn effectively through their mistakes, and experience situations they may find themselves in in their futures. As students completed this project in groups of 6-8, it fosters teamwork and cooperation. Problem-solving is another skill that students use repeatedly. They had to think of case-specific solutions and find the best ways to get stuff done. All of those just listed are reasons why this project is beneficial to RWA students in the long run, whether it aligns with their hopeful career path or not. Over the years, Royal West Academy students have gotten more and more creative with this project, and the parameters of it have consequently become less specific. The creative liberty of this project makes it a fun assignment during the students' last few months at Royal West. All the profits from this project are donated to the charity, Dans la Rue, the same charity that Dance Show profits go to.

One group's project consisted of making homemade bubble tea and selling it to RWA students for \$4. They calculated their costs and ended up making \$300 in profit. The students say that the assignment was complicated at first, but ended up helping them work together. They learned to distribute tasks evenly and communicate with each other through difficulties. According to the students, the project gave them a taste of entrepreneurship and highlighted the challenges in food sales. This project is a good opportunity for students to have some hands-on learning experience, while the proceeds go to a good cause.





Passport To Washington, D.C.

By: Noemi F.

For many years, students of Royal West Academy have had the privilege to embark on the annual Washington trip. Initially, it was a 5-day excursion divided between Washington and Philadelphia but had later evolved into the exploration of Washington alone, due to the overload of the city's rich history and vibrant culture.

This year, 148 secondary 3 students and 12 faculty members participated in this trip, commencing on April 19, 2024. They explored the National Mall overflowing with various museums where students could discover those of which interest them. Additionally, they visited the Arlington Cemetery and the Holocaust Museum which are significant historical sites. Royal West Academy holds a tradition of gathering in front of the Canadian Embassy, proudly displaying the Canadian flag and singing the national anthem, which always draws the interest of several locals. One of the trip organizers Mr. Wilson's greatest fears is leaving the flag behind here in Montreal, which thankfully hasn't happened yet.

This trip wasn't solely focused on learning about Washington's history. In the evenings, the students enjoyed various activities such as bowling and a game night at the one and only Dave and Busters. Once they had returned to the hotel after these activities, a lucky group of students got comfortable in the master suite, complete with a jacuzzi due to a booking error. Some teachers had been quite envious that they didn't receive these luxurious amenities.

At mealtimes, the students were very eager to indulge in some of America's most popular fast food joints, particularly Raising Cane's. After quite the search, the glorious sight of Raising Cane's bright red sign appeared before the students' eyes in Union Station. However, after having tried the famous fried chicken tenders, they were all "terribly disappointed". During this trip, both students and faculty encountered several celebrities. While waiting to enter the Reagan Center for lunch, eardrums had been shattered by the screams of students. Suddenly, the Singaporean-born American actor Ross Butler, best known for his roles in several Disney productions, "Riverdale" and "13 Reasons Why" appeared. Students did not hesitate to go take pictures with him. At the Vietnam Memorial, Mr. D. Dupuis had met a distinguished American pilot who had served in the 101 Airborne Division. He had been awarded a bronze star and, more impressively, a gold one.

When returning from the trip, the first of 3 buses arrived in Montreal at 8:40 pm, with the last arriving by 9:15 pm. All buses significantly beat the scheduled return time of 10 pm indicated in the itinerary, capping off the trip perfectly.



Mr. Dupuis alongside Captain Mike Ballard in Washington, D.C.

The Season of Dreams

By: Russel P.

Football... I have loved the sport since I was a little kid. I love everything about it, from watching, reading stats, and playing. I always wanted to play organized football growing up, but since I go to my cottage every weekend, it was never able to happen. This year I figured I'd try out for the school's flag football team as quarterback. I did my best throughout all tryouts, and even made it to the final one. Later that week, the team was posted, without my name on the list, but my luck would soon change. Later that day, Ms. M. O'Neil asked me if I wanted to join the team to learn from the starting quarterback, Owen. I immediately said yes. I knew it was going to be a lot of work since I was coaching the bantam football team at the same time. Due to injuries around the team, I was able to play receiver for the year. I was able to score a few touchdowns this season and was also able to throw for a conversion. We were the best in our division, only losing once in the regular season. We landed ourselves a first-round bye in the playoffs. We faced a tough team, Royal Vale, in the semifinals, but we were able to pull through making a huge stop on defense and making our way to the finals, versus Rosemere.

Although the season ended on a sad note, I was very grateful to be a part of this team. I made a bunch of new friends in many grade levels. I would like to thank Ms. O'Neil and Mr. R. Aiken for letting me take part in such an unforgettable moment and allowing me to play on such a great team.

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From Setup to Spotlight:

The dual role of band ensemble members as equipment crew

By: Myriam A.M.

On Wednesday, May 15th, and Thursday, May 16th, the winter concert was performed by the musicians of Royal West Academy. Secondary II to Secondary V music classes, RWA Winds, Jazz band, and Honour Band gave their all and demonstrated their talents and what they had been practicing for all year in our gorgeous Performing Arts Center. As a percussionist, I am automatically made a member of the equipment crew for the band. Our job is simply to set up everything needed to perform and try our best to make everything run smoothly. On Tuesday, May 14th, the twelve equipment crew students were dismissed from classes all day. We spent all of period one bringing all of the necessary percussion instruments down from the music room and setting them up properly- there exists a specific order they have to be in. Lifting these takes a lot of bodies and a lot of strength, but we got it finished soon enough. Next, we arranged the chairs and the stands and planned out the seating changes for when the musicians walked off of the stage and the next group was up. Our work during the concert was to quickly and efficiently add or remove chairs and stands depending on the number of musicians in the next band while everyone prepared to perform, including us.

There is a great deal of planning involved before the execution of the setup and the concert. We have to check the parts that every percussion player from every band and grade level has to see what instruments to bring down. Next is counting the amount of people in every band that will be performing and the order of the bands to see how many chairs and stands to add and remove- we usually remove entire rows time after time- and plan exactly how the chairs should look. Finally, we decide who does what so that it's equal. We often have to adjust to absences, changes and mistakes and we learn an entirely different schedule in the middle of a concert.

I have only been in the band for one school year, but thanks to the amazing Secondary V percussionists, who have been mentors and friends throughout the whole year, I have learned quite a lot about how our job works and I am prepared to take on the responsibilities next year. I have loved every experience and event we have had thanks to the Honour Band, it truly is a unique ECA and one that I am grateful for because of the people, the music and the sense of community.

A Promising Start to the RWA Rugby Season

By: Lucas K.-D.

The GMAA rugby season has started and Royal West Academy have started their season well. Last year they won the GMAA championship and they are hoping to win back to back titles. So far they have a 1-1 record in the GMAA season and made it to the semi-finals in the sevens tournament. The team is excited for the season and are looking forward to their next game vs Curé-Mercure, the last one of the regular GMAA season. Being one of the managers for the team, I get to watch some amazing games and help out with the team any way I can.

On April 26th, RWA played Brébeuf at the Brébeuf field. This was the first game of the season and the stands were packed with parents and students from both schools. It was an incredibly exciting game with Royal West Academy on top. Unfortunately, very early into the game, one of the RWA players was injured in a tackle, having to be taken off the field by ambulance. Luckily he is alright, but will be out for a while. RWA scored the first try in the first half, setting the tone for the rest of the game. The team did not let off after this first try and continued to score throughout the game, only letting the other team score one try late into the second half of the game. RWA won the game 31-7, a great first game performance for the team, which will hopefully continue in the season.

"I'm really optimistic about our team. Everyone's super excited and motivated for the new rugby season. We've been working hard during practice, getting our skills down pat and building up our teamwork. Even though we know there will be tough games ahead, I think we're ready to face them head-on." Says Jonathan M., when asked about the season so far. "Despite some setbacks, such as the injuries we encountered, I believe the start of the season has been going great overall. We've shown resilience and determination in the face of challenges, and that's a testament to the character of our team." The team is looking great so far and hopefully they continue to perform well and build up some confidence to take with them into the playoffs. I'm so excited to have a small part in this team and am looking forward to seeing how they do in the future.



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Some of Us Love Samosas

By: Sydney S.

On one fateful Thursday, Ms. K. Cukier, one of Royal West Academy's fabulous English teachers, made it her mission to sell samosas at recess in hopes of raising some money. After a very successful start, she decided to pursue the weekly sale and donate all the proceeds to charities of her choosing. Ms. Cukier was not only a fantastic teacher, but she also took charge of the school's Social Justice Club. With this unique influence, she used her time to educate our students and support those in difficult situations. With the immense support received by the students, the sale became a much anticipated weekly event known as "Samosa Thursdays". Depending on the topic being discussed in the Social Justice Club, the earnings were given to various charities. The passionate teacher picked her topics very carefully and delicately, matching up with what she had recently taken an interest in. This includes topics ranging from supporting Iranian women during their protests for women's rights to earthquake relief in Syria when a 7.8 earthquake struck southern and central Türkiye as well as Western Syria. After speaking to one of the Social Justice Club members, she was able to describe Ms. Cukier as nothing short of an enthusiastic and extremely passionate woman interested in justice and alleviating the many different social issues in our world.

Starting every Thursday with a creative and fun poem, samosa sales became a regular thing that has carried on into the 2023-2024 school year. A sit-down conversation with Pranav M., a Secondary IV at Royal West Academy, has allowed me to further understand the details behind the operation. It all started with the promise of a free samosa. Pranav began his volunteer job by tearing paper towels and counting money. As the weeks went by, he continued to help out until rushing to the selling stand became a part of his Thursday routine. This school year, Pranav was upgraded to two samosas per week for his help, which is an offer nobody could refuse! "I honestly loved helping. Being able to hand out good food knowing all the money was going to a good cause made me feel accomplished." When asked about his favourite thing about the job, Pranav argued that meeting new people and seeing how large our school community is was an experience he wouldn't have traded for the world. He claimed, "I would not have done it if I was not interested in genuinely helping people... and of course that free samosa."

It took a few Thursdays to truly get going, but once sales took off, there was no stopping them. Every week ended in the stock being completely sold out! Thanks to Ms. Cukier and her incredible determination, she was able to make these samosa sales an event the whole school looked forward to. It was truly an excellent way to get everybody involved in a charitable and thoughtful cause.

"I seriously cannot tolerate spice, but for these samosas, I made sure to bring chocolate milk to school every Thursday," said Rachel M.

"They were so good. It felt even better to know my money was going towards a good cause. Perfect win-win," said Jonah V. "Highlight of my week," said an anonymous RWA student.

Beyond the Classroom

By: Siena A.

Each year, Mr. J. Bateman's Secondary IV Leadership students take part in the "Beyond the Classroom" project. Each student must choose an activity, sport or event to help lead, plan, organize and execute. Whether it's a DIY club or the school's basketball team, the leadership class gets involved in all of it! Mr. Bateman teaches his students how to properly manage large groups and be a leader. They then take these skills and apply them to the activity of their choice. For example, when his students learn how to make lesson plans, they can then take that skill and apply it to real-life situations by making practice or drill programs.

The goal of this project is to better the Royal West Academy community. The school leverages the student coaches and event planners so that they can then offer a broader variety of activities. At the same time, it also helps its leadership students put into practice everything they learn throughout the year and allows them to become better leaders. It's a win-win situation! Like Mr. Bateman always says "Always take initiative and be in control".

One of the larger activities organized by two leadership students for the "Beyond the Classroom" project was "Penny Wars". Not only did they successfully lead this initiative, the rest of Mr. Bateman's leadership students also participated by walking around with the buckets, counting the coins, and encouraging people to donate. Mr. Bateman teaches us that a true leader is meant to motivate people through challenges, give people someone to follow and empower the communities around them.



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RWA's Spectacular Dance Show Takes Center Stage

By: Anushka C.

The 2024 Dance Show at Royal West Academy has just wrapped up! Under the guidance of Ms. J. Cayer and Mr. J. Zigby, and with the most effort from our student executive team, consisting of five Secondary V students and four Secondary IV students, this year's show was a great success, showcasing the school's wide range of dance talents and strong community spirit!

This event is a key part of our school's cultural activities, giving students from every grade a chance to perform while also earning extracurricular credits. "The energy backstage was amazing, everyone was so excited and encouraging to one another!," said Paige L., a Secondary V student and one of the executives. "Seeing how much the audience enjoyed it made all our hard work worth it."

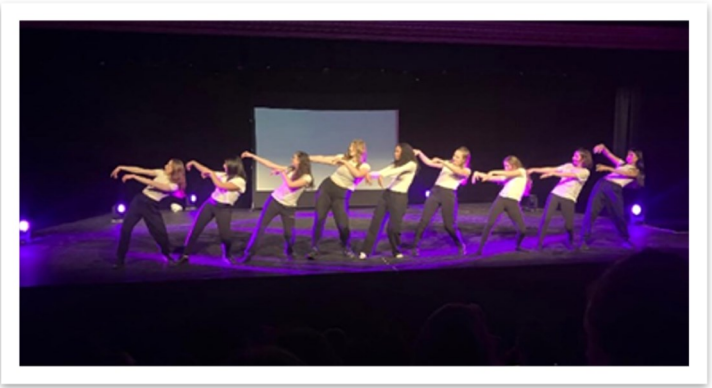
One of the standout performances was by Scott C., a Secondary IV student, who was in the school show for a second year. His energy and skill really stood out! "Taking part in this year's Dance Show was an awesome experience. It was a great way to meet people and get along through a fun sport," he said. His performance mixed traditional and modern dance moves and really got the audience excited!

This year's performances covered everything from contemporary to hip-hop, and so many more styles of dance, displaying the creativity and effort of our students! The choreography, which was all done by students, managed to tell stories and express emotions that really connected with the audience. The theme of the show portrayed two opposite "universes". Utopia defines a perfect society in which people work well with each other and are happy. Dystopia defines an imagined state or society in which there is great suffering or injustice. The scenes before intermission represented Utopia, while the scenes after intermission represented Dystopia.

Continuing our tradition of helping others, we donated all the proceeds from ticket sales to Dans la Rue, a charity for at-risk youth. What's incredible is that both 6 PM and 9 PM showings sold out completely, raising more than twelve thousand dollars! "It's more than just dancing; it's about making a difference, while doing something we love," explained Sierra P., a senior executive.

Ms. J. Cayer, who oversaw the event, praised the students for their hard work and professionalism. "Every year, I'm impressed by how well the students handle both the creative side and the behind-the-scenes logistics," she said.

Now that this year's show is over, the experiences and memories it created are sure to inspire and shape the next one! The Dance Show is more than just an event; it's a reflection of the community, creativity, and leadership at Royal West Academy. Looking ahead to next year, the executive team is already excited and full of ideas. "We're just getting started on next year's show. There are so many possibilities," Olyvia C.-B., a Secondary IV executive shared, capturing the excitement of everyone involved!



Royal West Academy Home & School Association News

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.



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RWA Sports:

The evolution of volleyball at Royal West Academy

By: Xanthe Q.

The Midget Girls Volleyball team just came back from Trois Rivières from competing in the Provincial championships after having a GMAA undefeated season. In honour of the 2023-2024 volleyball season coming to an end, I'd like to talk about the history of volleyball at Royal West Academy and how it has evolved. I spoke to Mr. J. Mateus, who runs the Girls Volleyball Program here at RWA, to get an insight into the changes and experiences that the volleyball program has gone through over the past 30 years. Here are some fun facts that I gathered, including our paths to Provincials, our trips to the US, uniform changes, traditions and volleyball's popularity! Like this year, former volleyball teams at RWA have gone to Provincials. At one point, we had a streak of 16 years of GMAA undefeated seasons and making it to Provincials!! During this streak, RWA was the team that every team aspired to beat. On the plaques that were until recently hung in the hallways, some of you might've seen that some of the teams were called "Varsity" and "Junior Varsity", and not "Midget" and "Juvenile". This is because, at that time, the teams played more American teams than they did Quebec teams. Every August, after the training camp held in our gym for volleyball players to train, they used to travel to New Hampshire to play against high school teams there. They got to experience the American high school crowds that are competitive, very passionate and have lots of cheering. That tradition lasted 25 years!

A former star of the RWA team was Ms. J. Fogel, our current science teacher. She was a co-MVP and a co-captain for her team, and she was on the juvenile team from Secondary III to V. She had all her teammates' respect and was a true star amongst the athletes and coaches for her talent and hard work. Six former players in total have moved on to university-level volleyball after starting at RWA, including Victoria Iannotti, who was MVP on the McGill team, and Kaiva Mateus, who played at RWA about 15 years ago, was a McGill MVP, played with the Canadian National team, and played professionally in Europe.

The uniforms for the teams have also evolved. For many years, our symbol was the tiger from *Calvin and Hobbes* spiking a volleyball. They had black/maroon short-sleeved jerseys with the Hobbes tiger symbol and the team members' numbers on the back. Now, we have a Wildcats tiger on a blue long-sleeved jersey.

A tradition that the teams used to have was having medals handed out to individuals at the end of the season, including one for "Most Valuable Player" or "Most Improved Player", and they had a dinner at the end of the year with table setups in the school building. There are many traditions today amongst the volleyball teams, such as writing in black sharpie our jersey numbers on our thighs on the day of the Finals. Volleyball at RWA has gained immense popularity over the years, having around 60 students try out for the teams recently. Spectators have become more numerous and more passionate, and with that, the volleyball teams have gained more respect and relevance within the school community. With that being said, I want to congratulate the volleyball teams at Royal West for having such an amazing season. Like Mr. J. Mateus said, "In 50 years, volleyball is what you will remember from Royal West. Not the winning, not the medals, but the memories and community that we build along the way. Being responsible for the program, and the community that the students build as a team is what makes me most proud." As a member of the Midget Girls Volleyball team, I am grateful to be a part of such a supportive, hardworking, and close community, and I can't wait to see what the next season holds for us. Go Wildcats!!

Royal West Academy Foundation News

We are thrilled to share that we are nearing the completion of Phase 1 of our Active Learning Classroom Campaign! Thanks to your incredible support, we are close to reaching our goal.

However, we still need to raise \$12,885 (15%) to fully fund the redesign of Ms. Cayer's History and Ethics class. Achieving this milestone will ensure the completion of the first three classrooms in this exciting project. Your generous contribution can make a significant difference.

Please visit rwaf.ca and donate today. Thank you for your continued generosity!

