

RWA



NEWS

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December 2024

Words From The Admin



*Principal Tony Pita (center)
with Vice-Principal Catherine Lumsden (left) and
Vice-Principal Lynn Bourdeau (right)*

Welcome Back! Le bonheur de se retrouver!

Here is a look at some of what has been going on between October and December:

Terry Fox Run

RWA students in Sec 2 continued the tradition of raising funds for cancer. On October 25, a beautiful fall day, students ran in the area to support this great cause. Special thanks to Mr. Bateman and Ms. O'Neil for all their efforts and thank you to all the staff and the leadership students who came out to cheer our runners on.

Secondary 1 Trip

On Monday, October 28, Secondary 1 students attended a day camp at Camp Bon Depart in Wentworth-Nord, Quebec. This initiative allows students to connect and develop their team building skills. Small groups of students participated in a variety of physical activities led by animators from Dynamix. 185 students participated at no cost to parents. Funding was provided by the school through an MEQ program. Special thanks to Mr. Aiken for organizing the activity and to all the staff members who participated.

Remembrance Day

RWA took time to acknowledge the sacrifices of our Canadian military veterans with assemblies on November 8th. Special thanks to Ms. Fogel and Ms. Goldsmith, our Personal Development and Community Involvement Animator, for organizing the event.

EMSB Educational and Career Fair

The English Montreal School Board held the annual EMSB Educational & Career Fair (ECF) 2024, to provide students with important educational information. Sec 5 RWA students were given the opportunity to gather information from different representatives of CEGEPs, universities, and vocational education centres (trade programs) in the Greater Montreal area. Such an endeavor serves to help students in planning for their future. Students were transported by bus to St. Piux X Career Centre on Thursday, October 24th.

Essential Seminars for Secondary 1 Parents

On the evening of October 29, 85 parents attending the first of 3 Essential Seminars for Secondary 1 parents titled: "Surviving and Thriving: A Parents' Guide to Early Adolescence and the Transition to High School". The seminar provided parents with insights into adolescent brain development and the potential behaviours within the Royal West experience. The seminar was given by Ms. Almeida and Mr. Mateus, who both work closely with Secondary 1 students through the RWA MindPOP program.

The second edition of the MindPOP Secondary 1 parents seminars took place on the evening of Wednesday, December 4th. It was accessible to parents virtually and was about one hour in duration. The topic is certainly of concern to parents, as social media provides them challenges in finding a balance between what children are accessing and permitting autonomy and privacy.

This seminar, prepared by a post-graduate Concordia student who is researching the relationship of social media and adolescents, provided parents with insights on the various positive and negative websites accessible to students, cited research into the effects of social media on child development, and suggested strategies on how to manage digital use.



- **MIND**fulness
- **P**lanning
- **O**rganization
- **P**rioritizing



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Home and School Painting Committee

Special thanks to the painting committee of the RWA Home and School Association. On November 2 and 3, 24 parent volunteers painted two classrooms (101 & 102), patched and painted walls after fire extinguishers were moved by the EMSB, did touch ups of blue smoke doors, and the student bench on the first floor. A special thanks to the painting committee leaders Mr. Constantine Batsos and Mr. Theo Kottaridis.

Governor General's Award

The Governor General's Academic Medal, established in 1873, recognizes students who have achieved the highest academic average. At RWA, averages 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 Cassidy E. as the recipient of the Governor General's Medal for 2023-2024.

Report Cards

Term 1 Report cards have been uploaded to the Mozaik Parent Portal. We held our first set of in-person parent-teacher interviews on November 28. Despite many problems with the Microsoft 365 platform used to book appointments, the interviews ran relatively smoothly. The second in-person Parent-Teacher will be held on March 13th. A decision on allowing parents to book appointments will be made at a later date. We appreciate everyone's patience as we work through these issues.

Here is a peek at what is happening in the coming weeks:

Tyndale week

RWA students and staff get involved in the Tyndale Week Fundraiser, held before the holidays each year. Many activities are held throughout the school and Penny Wars are especially appreciated! Since 1927, Tyndale St-Georges Community Center has provided empowering educational programming for residents of Little Burgundy from birth through adulthood!

Two holiday concerts this year!

December 11th: RWA is hosting a concert featuring (QYWE), the English Montreal Jazz Band and RWA music students.

December 12th: our wonderful Holiday concert.

Theater Play: Twelfth Night

The formal evening performances have been moved to **Wednesday, December 18 and Thursday, December 19th**. There will be an **early show (4:00 pm to 6:00 pm)** as well as a **late show (7:00 pm to 9:00 pm)** on both dates. They will take place in the **PAC (Performing Arts Center)**.



- Dec. 2-6 - Food Drive
- Dec. 2-6 - Toy Drive
- Dec. 2-6 - Tyndale Week
- Dec. 3 - Hertzl Clinic Presentations
- Dec. 3 - Biology Trip p. 3 - 6
- Dec. 4 - Sec I Parent Seminar
- Dec. 4 - Sec. 2 Geographie Beauharnois Visit
- Dec. 6 - Dress Down Day
- Dec. 9 - I3 - MindPOP Math
- Dec. 9 - Foundation Meeting:
In-person for the ALC room 209 reveal!
- Dec. 9 - Grad Photo (students absent in Nov.)
- Dec. 10 - Calculus Competition
- Dec. 11 & 12 - Music Concerts
- Dec. 18 & 19 - Theater Play Twelfth Night



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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 rwaneews@gmail.com



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The Prom: A Must-See Production by Our Talented Royal West Academy Actors

By: Sarah B.

Just like actual prom, this musical is only coming around once, so don't miss it! Every year at RWA, a group of dedicated actors, staff, and crew pull together a musical production for parents and students alike. This year, the cast will be performing *The Prom*, a musical set in the conservative town of Edgewater, Indiana. There, a female student is banned from bringing her girlfriend to prom, leading a group of eccentric Broadway actors to show up and help fight the homophobic ban. I won't spoil what happens next... You'll have to come see for yourself! The show opens Monday, February 24th. Mark it in your calendars and make sure to get your tickets early! Some might remember last year's production of *Lucky Stiff*. If so, I do not need to convince you to come to this one as you already know how incredible RWA musicals are.

The cast members pour so much of themselves into the show, spending incredible amounts of time rehearsing. Grade 11 musical veteran and lead actress Melody M. remarks that spectators don't see all that effort. It's true! They make it look so easy. The way they coordinate to master every moment, with each student doing their job to its fullest makes the final product so professional. I experienced shivers at certain points during last year's show and smiled widely the whole time. Netflix who? I seriously doubt that many schools could pull off such a level of excellence, and it is due to the insane efforts of the staff (shoutout to Ms. E. Kuch!) and all the students.

Finally, I hope parents will encourage their children to consider joining the musical as an extracurricular activity, especially if they are in a younger grade. Anyone you speak to that has been part of the show for some or all of their high school years will tell you that it's an incredibly special and rewarding experience. The cast becomes family through their collective effort and the feeling on opening night is indescribable. Ben A., a Secondary 5 student who has performed in three of our school's musicals, says: "You feel like you're a part of something important, bigger than yourself." After last year's show, I felt a twinge of regret that I never joined when some of my friends did. I'll admit, witnessing their infectious joy at being part of such a beautiful thing made me a little jealous.

The Prom runs from February 24th to 27th, starting at 7:30PM each night. Come support our incredible cast, including many Secondary 5 students performing for the very last time in our auditorium. The show will surely leave you wanting more!



RWA's musical this year is *The Prom* - and we need your help!!

We need to costume 32 young thespians for our show, and we need prom clothes: **dresses, suits, tuxes, dress shoes.**

Anyone willing to donate any of these items please contact Ms. Kuch at ekuch@emsb.qc.ca. Thank you in advance, and come see our show February 24th-27th!



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An Un-bee-lievable Opportunity!

By: Kate Y.

Royal West Academy is proud to offer an excellent opportunity to learn more about bees, honey production, and the process in which bee-related products are prepared: the Beekeeping Club.

On October 25th, the club had its first meeting in room 204: the annual honey extraction workshop! This activity was organized by Mr. Girardin and *Alvéole*, an organization that aims to improve access to beekeeping as well as to educate people on the importance of bees for the environment.

The activity was led by Colin, the official Beekeeper working at *Alvéole*. He demonstrated the process of honey production and even included honey for the participants to take home! Students were given the opportunity to extract the honey from the frames of honeycomb by uncapping the layers of beeswax. Moreover, we learned about how honey is produced, from bees collecting nectar to honey extraction. Many students, such as Nella F. in grade 11, expressed their satisfaction and were very glad they participated. Nella said, "I had a lot of fun and learned a lot. I also liked eating the honey and the honeycomb. It was wonderful".

Additionally, Colin very kindly agreed to answer some questions I had for him:

Q: Which other schools does *Alvéole* work with in Québec?

A: We work with many schools, such as John Grant High School, Brébeuf, Allion Elementary, and Twin Oaks Elementary.

Q: What is your goal with working with these schools?

A: To connect people with bees as well as to connect them to each other.

Q: Finally, what is your favorite part of the job?

A: It depends on the time of the year. The jobs vary depending on the months, so there is a lot of diversity in what we do. I like working directly with the bees, which happens during the summer, as well as doing workshops, which take place during the winter.

The Beekeeping Club is a fun, educational, and, some might even say, bee-loved opportunity to learn as well as to earn an ECA credit! A candle-making workshop is rumored to be on the horizon, so pay attention to any announcements in the Daily Bulletin! We hope to see you at the next session of the Beekeeping Club!



Royal West Academy Foundation News



We invite you to the grand reveal & dedication of the new ALC room 209! Monday, December 9th, 2024 at 7pm at school. RSVP at info@rwaf.ca

THANK YOU!

GIVING TUESDAY

Dec
3



Your support makes a
real difference for
our students!

If you haven't had a chance to
give, it's not too late to
contribute. Visit rwaf.ca today



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Vive le Théâtre! A Magical Night of a French Play Outing

By: Sumin W.

What's not to love about watching plays? The fun doubles when you're watching a French play with your friends in a nice, cozy theatre. On October 15th, a small group of sec. 4 and 5 students went on a *sortie de théâtre*, a new extracurricular activity led by Mme L. Moreau. Everyone gathered at the Théâtre Denise-Pelletier, where the play *Peau d'Âne* was showing at 7PM. Quick photos, tickets ready, phones off... and cue! The night ahead promised to be magical, filled with crazy costumes, props, and storytelling.

Peau d'Âne is a play based on the fairy tale of the same name, written by Charles Perrault. While the original story is a simple, classic tale about a princess and a prince, the play adaptation adds depth by exploring both women's roles and identities in society. As the main character, Peau, learns to find her place in the world, the play encourages the audience not only to reflect inwards, but also on their place in society.

The next day, the students gathered with Mme Moreau to discuss the play, share questions, and express appreciation. The room was buzzing with excitement and enthusiasm as everyone was eager to share their take. We exchanged views on the fabulous costumes, the actors' portrayal of the characters, and talked about how some scenes made our skin crawl. One student, Amelia W., shared that her favourite part of the play was watching Sophie Cadieux's portrayal of Peau as a child. She explained that the actress made the performance truly believable through her mannerisms and voice. "I would 100% do it again," said Amelia, expressing her gratitude for the opportunity to attend the play—and I absolutely agree. Experiencing it in French deepened our appreciation towards French/Québécois culture, making us feel more connected.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this new activity, which is why I'm glad that the next outing is not too far away. Planned for November 12th, 2024, the next play will be *Incendies* at the Théâtre Duceppe. From start to finish, *Peau d'Âne* enchanted us all, and we can't wait to return for another unforgettable night at the theatre.

**Une soirée sous les projecteurs**

De: Amelia W.

Cette année, une nouvelle activité parascolaire (ECA) a été introduite par Mme L. Moreau: c'est une opportunité pour les élèves d'assister à des pièces de théâtre québécoises complètement gratuitement! Le mardi 12 novembre, des élèves de secondaire 4 et 5 ont passé une belle soirée au théâtre Duceppe. Celle-ci était la deuxième sortie, la première étant plus tôt en octobre. Cette fois, la pièce regardée était *Incendies de Wajdi Mouawad*, et la soirée était pleine d'émotions.

D'abord, *Incendies* est une pièce connue et très attendue parmi nous, les élèves. Plusieurs personnes ont pu lire la pièce l'année passée. Alors, la chance d'aller la voir nous excitait. D'autres, comme moi, qui n'avaient pas lu la pièce auparavant, avaient le choix d'emprunter la version écrite. Selon moi, ça a vraiment voulu la peine de la lire car j'ai pu comprendre l'histoire plus profondément. Lors de la représentation, j'ai pu identifier les scènes et reconnaître mes dialogues préférés.

Le théâtre Duceppe est situé à côté de Place des Arts. Il est très majestueux, avec des beaux sièges rouges qui ajoutent un sentiment royal à la salle. Lors de la pièce de théâtre, la scène de la pièce était dynamique et interactive. Plusieurs personnes ont exprimé leur appréciation du décor et de la toile de fond. Les acteurs, l'histoire, la scène... tout était immersif et captivant! Des mots ne peuvent pas expliquer à quel point la pièce a touché aux cœurs et aux âmes des spectateurs. Annabelle H., une élève de secondaire 5 qui a assisté au spectacle, a trouvé la pièce très émotionnelle. Elle a affirmé: «L'histoire était très touchante. Ça m'a même émue aux larmes.»

Bref, je vous recommande fortement d'aller voir cette pièce épatante. Cette nouvelle ECA est une excellente opportunité de découvrir davantage l'art et de la culture de la ville qu'on habite. Comme les élèves sont quand même amenés à voir des pièces de théâtre avec le curriculum de l'école, cette activité est pour ceux et celles qui s'intéressent encore plus au théâtre québécois. Il n'y a pas de devoirs ni de stress pour cette activité parascolaire. Il y a pourtant deux périodes de dîner auxquelles vous devez assister: une période d'introduction avant la soirée et une période de discussion peu après la pièce. Les discussions sont toujours remplies d'interprétations réfléchies et captivantes. Alors, assistez à la prochaine sortie théâtre! Vous passerez une belle soirée avec vos amis!

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Senior Robotics: A Realm of Possibilities

By: David S.

On October 28th, members of Royal West Academy's Senior Robotics team attended the kickoff for TAKTIK 2024, this year's Canadian Robotics Competition (CRC). And with that, another year of robotics kicked into high gear at Royal West! This year's competition takes place over four days, from February 19th to 22nd, at the St. Pius X Career Centre. In this multidisciplinary competition, we compete not only against high schools in the Montreal area, but also against CEGEPS.

When you think of robotics, the first thing that may come to mind is robots. Don't get me wrong: while they certainly are fun and cool, there's so much more to the CRC for students to partake in! The competition includes diverse sections such as website creation, video/film making, programming, tutorial and kiosk, so there's bound to be something for everyone. I highly encourage people to join robotics and I personally enjoy it so much because there is just so much you can do to be a part of the team.

I should also mention that every year, the team collectively chooses a theme for the competition. Our theme is reflected in all aspects of the competition, so it really has to be chosen well. This year, we decided on "The Lorax," a choice which I am particularly excited about. A fellow member of our team, Miriam B. describes it perfectly: "I am quite happy that we ended up having the Lorax as our theme. I think that it's very interactive and creative and there [are] a lot of ways that we can incorporate things like the environment into it." Personally, I can't wait to see what the kiosk team will come up with. I can already imagine all the gorgeous trees spread across the kiosk panels!

While robotics is a lot of work (we even come in on Saturdays!), the rewards make every second worth it. It is really our club, and we have the chance to learn and explore new things all the time, since we are in control of what we want to build, and we make sure that it gets built. Peyton M., captain of the robot team, sums up every team members' thoughts perfectly. "I love robotics. Robotics is my passion." Even now, when I go into the storage room looking for a tool and see last year's robot, I smile to myself thinking, 'How did we even build that?'



Parade of lights

By: Juliette B.



As temperatures drop and holiday festivities begin, music can be heard echoing from the streets around Montreal West, all the way down to Cornwall, Ontario, stemming from the instruments of all 45 members of Royal West Academy's very own Honour Band.

Saturday November 16th was an important date for the band, as it marked the very first parade performed this year. The band marched for around 4 km, inserted into the array of colorful and lively holiday floats and other cadet bands. Sporting the instruments they had decorated the night before: drums ornamented with festive holiday lights, flutes wrapped in ribbon and even a sousaphone bearing a pine needle garland, as if it were a Christmas tree! In the end, they ended up bringing home the title of the best visiting band. This was definitely an achievement they are all very proud of. Clara L., the secretary of the band said "We haven't marched in Cornwall since before Covid, and they were very happy to have us back. For us to win an award was a delightful moment for us all."

The Royal West Academy Honour Band is one of the only high school marching bands in Quebec, performing at various different locations throughout the year such as Morrisburg, Cornwall and even the St Patrick's day parade downtown.

Led by Ms. Purdy, the conductor of the band, the students devote 3 days a week to this extracurricular activity, and countless hours at home practicing their pieces. Needless to say, this parade was definitely a success for the band, as well as for Royal West Academy!

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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.

Royal West Academy PPO News

The Royal West Parent Participation Organization (PPO) held an evening meeting open to all parents at the school on November 13. The main topic of conversation was safety at the corner of Ainslie and Westminster, after an RWA Sec 3 student was hit by a car there on October 28. PPO parents put together some proposals to try and make the intersection safer for all pedestrians, as well as a petition – directed to the Town of Montreal West and the SPVM - asking for changes to the intersection. The petition was approved by the Governing Board and shared with parents via email. Thank you to all those who signed! We have gathered **over 600 signatures**, and it is now being shared with Montreal West residents, before being submitted to Town Council and the SPVM.

The PPO will continue to explore ways in which that intersection can be improved for pedestrians, and we also hope to look at other issues contributing to the safety of Royal West pedestrians. We are scheduling our next meeting for January and will send it out to those of you who signed up to our email list.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions for PPO, please contact us at RWAPPO2024@gmail.com

HAPPY
Holidays!

