



# Kells Academy Newsletter

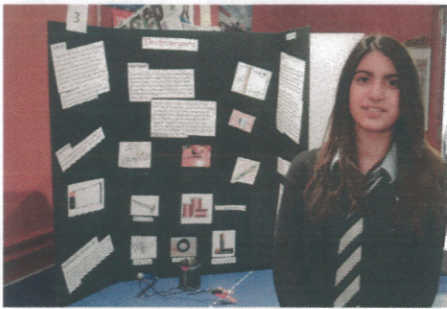
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## Science & Technology 2013 Fair!



The Science Fair is an annual event at Kells. This year, it took place on the 8th of February. Students in various grades started working on their projects early in September. They went through three stages some projects were experimentation and design and were planned, executed at home or school or in an acknowledged research lab before getting to the final stages of being presented in front of the students and presence of supportive parents. As part of the Kells' mission to develop scientific curiosity in students, guide them on how to apply scientific methods and relate science to everyday life our goal was to expose the students to both local and regional competitions where they would have an opportunity to excel and be active participants in the dynamic science students' life in Montreal. The top three projects, school wide, were selected by the judges according to the age group in both design and experimentation domains. Trophies were awarded at school together with honorable mentions and certificates of participation. The winners represented the school in the annual Montreal Regional Science and Technology Fair where they spent three days exhibiting their work, competing with other students from local private and public schools and collecting awards at the final stage. As in every year, with no exception this year our students came back with great distinction, distinction and honorable mentions. Congratulations to all our Kells' participants!



Ms. Ghanem,  
Science Department Head



## Congratulations to Kells' students

### Montreal Regional Science & Technology Fair!



#### Project Titles

Electric Circuits  
Get Hot!  
Moisture- Wicking Fabrics  
Insects: The Next Biofuel  
Nicotine: Friend or Foe  
Wireless Electricity

#### Participants

William Paltin  
Simon Ahn  
Huy Hoang  
Soufia Trabelsi  
Caroline Abi Azar and Supriya Gadigone  
Tristan Sigurdsson-Morris

### Kells Local Science Fair Winners:

#### Junior Level

1st Place: Simon Ahn  
2nd Place: William Paltin  
3rd Place: Ryan Shapiro and Alexandre Mahutte

Honourable Mention Layan Ziad

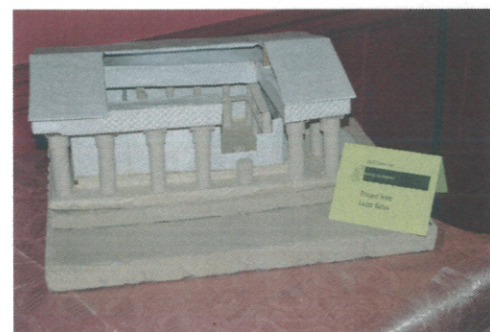
#### Senior Level

1st Place Caroline Abi Azar and Supriya Gadigone  
2nd Place Christina Papagiannis and Yasmine Dabbous  
3rd Place Duc Huy Hoang

Honourable Mention : Soufia Trabelsi and Christos Karatzas

### Social Science Fair Winners

1st Place Naim Abboud  
2nd Place May Aldakhil and Joanna Ngan  
3rd Place Takarihwaiehne Delaronde



## Kells Library Club

Are you looking for a way to become involved in your school? Do you like reading? Ever wonder how a library works? Want a little something extra for your CV? Here is your chance! Ms. Elaina, your school librarian, is looking for assistance in the library. You will get to help out with loans and returns during lunch, be a part of making some decisions for the library (such as what kind of activities and programs to have), and give your opinion on what kind of books to buy, etc. If you are interested in being part of the library club, please contact Ms. Elaina at [dellaporta@kells.ca](mailto:dellaporta@kells.ca).

## Meet OPALS, Your Gateway to the World

As the librarian here at Kells, I am delighted to announce that Kells has acquired a new catalogue! OPALS, a web-based catalogue, goes far beyond searching for documents in the library. It will be the gateway to a world of information in a variety of formats. Students will be able to scroll through images of new items, add their own ratings and reviews to books, read previews on Google Books, find educational web resources, access databases and eBooks, view class reading lists, and much, much more. Whether on campus or at home, OPALS will be the place to do research for a history paper, find a great recommended website for a science project, or discover a great new book, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! OPALS, a modern catalogue for a modern library.

Elaina Della Porta, MLIS



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## Resource room – a great new space

Kells Academy's new resource room is a welcoming and multi-functional space painted in bright, modern colours, with student artwork displayed prominently. Large, floor-to-ceiling windows look out over beautiful Trenholme Park, filling the room with natural light. Part of the room is set up as an informal gathering area, where comfortable chairs allow students to relax or collaborate in a quiet space. When required, a moveable wall at one end of the room can be opened, which combines the resource room and the library into one large open space for meetings or presentations.

Tables, desks and chairs allow students to work either individually, in small groups or in larger classes. A brand-new Smart Board permits us to access and share a variety of multimedia and online material, as well as providing an interactive platform for recording notes that can be instantly shared via email or the Kells Portal. Around the room, colourful posters remind students to apply strategies when they are working on writing, studying, note-taking or reading-comprehension tasks.

Many students spend time in the resource room. In each grade, groups of students have been hand picked to attend regular Learning Support classes, which are designed to build independent learning skills while providing support for academic assignments throughout the year. Students in these classes learn to apply a

variety of strategies to keep themselves organized, motivated and successful. Since all students have iPads or laptops, they also write personal strategy blogs and learn to use different types of assistive technology programs and apps, such as mind mapping and text-to-speech software.

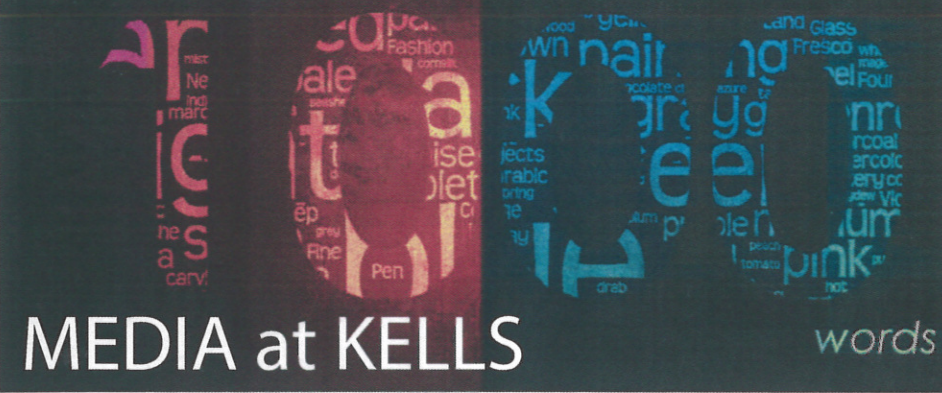
Other students use the resource room to work during recess, lunch or regular class time. Students can work independently to complete projects, write tests, or meet with the Resource teacher to work on organization, project planning, goal setting and reflection.

The resource room is a key component of Kells Academy's approach to individualizing education to meet the needs of all our students.



Rebecca Morris, Resource & French Teacher

A picture is worth



# MEDIA at KELLS

words

If they say a picture is worth a thousand words, then Ms. D'Amato's grade 11 Media class had a heck of a lot to say! After studying various photographic techniques and terminology, students were assigned a photography project in which they had to creatively capture four shots: a simple object; their spiritual heritage; their safe haven; and any representation of their choice. They were required to incorporate their new knowledge and understanding of the camera. Some chose to ma-

nipulate the lighting and contrast while others controlled the focus and exposure; all succeeded in producing artistic and captivating pieces. Their work is proudly exhibited throughout Kells' hallways.

Donna D'Amato, Media Teacher



**Conquer the World**  
by Sara Gifuni



**The Lovers**  
by Juanita Giraldo Bueno



**Paradise**  
by Megan Jutras



**Eh!**  
by Megan Jutras

## The Roots of Soul

Preparation for the Kells Academy annual Spring Concert is in full swing. This year's theme is The Roots of Soul and will feature the iconic music of Motown, Tax/Volt, and New York's legendary Brill Building.

The concert will take place at Oscar Peterson hall on April 25th, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. and will feature some very talented students from both the elementary and the high school. An extremely gifted group of vocalists, instrumentalists and dancers will undoubtedly provide a great evening of entertainment that will pay homage to one of the most exciting and influential periods in popular music.

Mark Kennedy, Music Teacher



## Kells Takes Second Place

Congratulations to Yasmeen Dajani for placing second in the Quebec Public Speaking Competition held at The Study on November 30th, 2012. This entitled her to compete in the Canadian National Public Speaking Championships, hosted by St. John's-Ravenscourt School in Winnipeg in February. This prestigious event took place over three days, and included multiple events including Persuasive Speeches, Interpretive Reading, Impromptu Speaking, and Parliamentary Debate. Only the top four students in each province, having qualified at the Provincial Championships, were invited. Yasmeen, a grade 10 student, spoke beautifully in all four categories and received high scores across the board. Although she did not qualify for the World Championships, she had a wonderful experience and learned a great deal from the top young speakers in Canada.

Jillian Derby, Public Speaking Coach



## Debate Team

## Kells Debate Team Places 4th at QSDA Debating Competition

Congratulations to grade 10 students Yasmeen Dajani (left) and Clarisa Rengel (right) for placing 4th at the Quebec Student Debating Association competition held at Vincent Massey Collegiate on February 18th. Twenty teams competed and the top five go to the Nationals in April. Yasmeen also placed 7th, as individual debater.



## Off to Halifax!

Yasmeen Dajani, Federico Lacasia, Clarisa Rengel and Tristan Sigurdsson-Morris are off to Halifax to compete for the 2013 Donahoe Cup at Sacred Heart High School on April 13th and 14th. This annual invitational debating tournament is held in what is both the oldest girls' school and youngest boys' school in Canada.

## 2013 Canadian National Debate Championships

This, the fourteenth Canadian National Debate Championship for senior students (hosted by the Alberta Debate and Speech Association) will take place in Alberta from April 25th to April 29th. We wish Yasmeen and Clarisa every success in this competition and also want to thank coaches Campbell and Chung for their support!





The International Club revived an old Kells tradition by celebrating International Day and honouring multiculturalism, a prominent feature of the school's community.

Students who originated from various countries participated by bringing posters representing their countries, by wearing their national dress and by sharing their traditional food.

The event took place on the fourth floor of the school with rooms representing Canada, Native Canada, Europe, South America, China, Korea, the Middle East and South East Asia.

Students and teachers visited the different rooms and shared traditional food, music and fun. Flags of various countries and posters

reflecting the countries' tourist attractions, famous citizens and distinct traditions were on display helping to promote understanding and appreciation of cultural differences.

Pizza lunch was awarded to the two most interesting and well-organized rooms; China and the Middle East earned the prize this year.

A big thank you goes to all participants and to their parents who generously contributed to the success of a "day to remember" – yet another of the many special days at Kells.

Nicoleta Ungureanu  
The International Club



## Viva España! Culture, Cuisine and Castanets

During the March break, 14 students ventured on an excursion to Spain. The trip would take them from Barcelona to Gibraltar while touring the Andalusia area and the Alpujarras mountains. In Barcelona, students took in the unique works of the famous architect Antoni Gaudi which included the incomplete Sagrada Familia, la Pedrera and the majestic Park Guell.

After visiting the Moorish castle of Alhambra in Grenada and learning the basic steps of flamenco dancing, students traveled through the twists and turns of the Alpujarras mountains to stay in a secluded eco lodge. They were treated to a once-in-a-lifetime cooking workshop in Narilas, a town with a population of about 80 people, where they were welcomed with open arms by the inhabitants of this beautiful region.

Then there was Seville, a city fuelled by the joy of living and full of Andalusian hospitality. After visiting the Alcazar castle and the Catedral de Sevilla, home of Columbus' tomb and the Giralda tower (which gave them a superb panoramic view of the city from up high), they stopped in the park for a picnic and a soccer match that got everyone's legs ready for a walking tour of the historic neighborhood surrounding the Alcazar. The night ended elegantly when the students visited the world's only flamenco dance museum. The visit was crowned by a one-hour live flamenco show. The energy was palpable on the way back to the hostel as hands were clapping, feet were stomping and Kells' voices were resonating in the streets of Seville. Thankfully, as the Spanish enjoy dining late, very few were woken up from their sleep.

As the students made their way back towards Barcelona for a final day of shopping and fun, they got a chance to experience a little more of Spain's hospitality for one last time. The plane ride back seemed unexciting after a routine of delicious Spanish cuisine and cultural discoveries. The only thought that consoled the travelers was the knowledge that their memories would be forever engraved in their hearts and would be shared with their peers on returning home to Kells Academy.

Sara Campbell  
Michael Chung  
John Nahas



# ESPAÑA



## Keeping Up With The Pace



Many of us in the education community are asking questions about the pace at which technology is transforming the classroom, and quite likely the student's home environment. The benefits to the students are obvious: access to information; networking in the both the classroom and

across the world; and of course, the capacity to motivate students by permitting them to work both on their own and at their own pace. Many of our concerns relate to the challenge that technology presents to educators and parents. How do we keep up-to-date with the rapid pace of innovation? What is multi-tasking in this high-tech environment doing to our (and our students') brains? How do we ensure that our students maintain a balance in their lives?

At a conference last year in Washington, DC, I had the honor of attending a session given by Dr. Larry Rosen, an internationally acclaimed expert on the psychology of technology who has regularly been quoted in magazines and been interviewed on both T.V. and radio.

As I listened to what Dr. Rosen had to say, I felt that the Kells Community could not help but benefit by hearing about the research he has done. What particularly inspired me was hearing about the generational differences in the use of technology and, as well, the impact of multi-tasking on the brain.

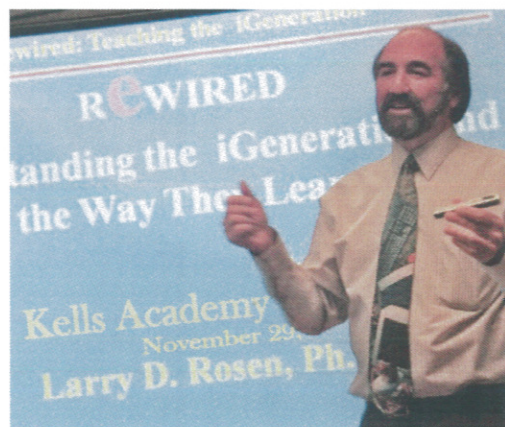
Subsequently, I invited Dr. Rosen to Montreal to make a presentation to the Kells community as well as to the professionals who support the school. In November of last year, a large audience made up of parents, support professionals and invited guests listened attentively as he spoke about his work. The message was clear: Technology is not only here to stay, but the pace of technology will continue to increase. Furthermore, it is not enough for parents, teachers and support professionals to be aware of this reality. It is imperative that they also adapt to it. (I know, easier said than done!)

But even while we use and benefit from the advantages of technology to the fullest, let us also realize that increased technology also comes with additional responsibilities on the part of all of us – parents, teachers and support professionals - to ensure our children/students maintain good physical, mental and emotional health.

To the students, Dr. Rosen offered a humorous look at the internal distraction of "thinking about technology." Students had the opportunity to view scanned images of the brain dramatically illustrating differences in the part of the brain engaged when using technology as compared to when it was engaged in reading. He explained that our brains are not wired to multi-task efficiently when tasks are complex, yet most of us believe we can.

So I think the evidence is clear. As the Director of Kells Academy, in spite of real and perceived challenges, I am determined and committed that we embrace all aspects of new technologies impacting on our educational environment. And not only for our students, who of course are our primary concern, but also for the betterment of all of us in the Kells' family. It is the way of the future and we will definitely grow with our students and be a part of this ever-changing environment.

Irene Woods  
Director



## Principal's Message



At this point in the school year, I think it would be timely to share my reflections on what has been going on at Kells, along with my perspective on the academic challenges and opportunities that we strive to provide for our students.

Kells prides itself on being able to provide a unique learning experience that is

geared towards the individual needs of each student and towards providing the basis that allows the teachers to access and explore a variety of teaching and learning skills that make this approach possible. We have made big strides in the implementation of the most up to date technology in both the classroom setting and in the student's home learning environment. It is amazing to see how quickly the student body has responded to the on-line op-

portunities and it is encouraging to see that this has established an incredible responsiveness and an almost instantaneous feedback for them with their teachers and the school. We live in a world where technology does and will continue to be a dominant focus and it is critical that our students learn to deal with the new information highway.

With the use of individualized technology (IPads), the students are able to research, collaborate and communicate with one another on different educational initiatives and projects, whether they are in the classroom or at home. When a thought or question arises, they are able to do the necessary research on-line or seek the opinion of another student. Such technology provides instant gratification and along with the support provided by the teaching staff, the scope of learning possibilities is almost limitless.

We live in an exciting and challenging time and we at Kells are equally challenged to provide a diversity of learning skills and up to date technologies that will ensure that our students are given every possible tool to meet the challenges of the modern world.

J.L. Aitken