

The Trailblazer

Winter 2024

Queen Margaret's School

qms.bc.ca

Finding Your Path through Career Day



Entrepreneurs Darcy Lalonde and Kristin Jarvis were among the special guests on Career Day. /Photo by Jason C. ('25)

BY FLORENCE L.-S. ('25)

If any QMS high school student is looking for a way to expand their horizons, meet cool people and plan their future, look no further than Career Day. For the 10th year, Career Day has been an event that allowed students to explore careers through various industry experts. The day revolves around exploring the unfamiliar, keeping an open mind, and putting yourself out there. QMS brings in speakers from different sectors to give presentations on their experience and to answer any questions students have.

We had some very engaging speakers this year such as Chelsea Y. ('22), a QMS alumni who gave a very helpful look into her life after graduation and offered some valuable advice.

"I liked learning new things and learning about people's experience in their industries and I liked the advice that they gave us," said Ella L. ('25), a boarding student from the UK.

Cynthia Turgeon, a Cowichan District Hospital representative, said this was her first Career Day and would do another if given the opportunity. "I wish that I had had this same opportunity [to learn about the healthcare sector] when I first started [high school]," shared Cynthia. "The amount of enthusiasm and the interests of the students was fantastic."

"It's always been meeting the new faces on campus and learning about the different jobs that exist out there. I've hosted athletic therapists, military contractors, veterinarians, geological surveyors,

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Royals to Take on International Rugby Teams

BY JASON C. ('25)

For the first time in QMS history, the girls' rugby team will travel across the pond to compete with other rugby players in England and Scotland.

"For us in the program, the decision to go to the UK – the birthplace of rugby – is massive," said Tim Van Vliet, the Head Coach of Rugby Programs. "It's the school's first international athletics tour abroad, and people are investing in every way possible to make this the best tour it can be."

"Touring is a huge part of the Rugby experience," said Coach Van Vliet. "Travelling together as a team, meeting new people, playing hard but fair, celebrating each other's skill and effort in the after-match social, and singing songs are all parts of the experience."

The team has been working diligently in preparation for the March tour. "We have practice every Wednesday morning and Friday after school," shared Jordan H. ('25). "For the morning practices, it's hard sometimes because I miss out on wellness Wednesday, not to mention the lost time for schoolwork," continued Jordan. "But knowing the that value the tour will provide drives me out of bed in the morning and become a better rugby player."

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Italian Culinary Event Impresses All

BY ISABELLE W. ('26)

Parents are getting a taste of the QMS Culinary Arts Program at the Inaugural Italian Food Sampling Night. Organized by Culinary Arts teacher Tina Chung, students prepared an extensive selection of dishes for parents to enjoy. Through their hard work, guests were treated with delicious Italian food, including tiramisu, spaghetti, bruschetta, gelato, and more!

"I wanted to teach the students about different cultures through cuisine, [of] how food can bring people together," said Mrs. Chung. "I was very proud of the students. Not only did they know how to interact with the guests in a respectful manner, but they also planned it out very well and represented their dishes excellently".

Parent Jody Hall was especially impressed. "The children appeared enthusiastic and self-assured about their culinary creations," said Hall. "It was a delight to witness firsthand the culinary skills the students have acquired in their cooking class. Lots of delicious



Preparing dishes for the event was a collaborative process. /The Trailblazer photo

Italian food, great presentation, and the children were very informative about their dishes!"

The students were also pleased with how the event went. "I think the event overall went pretty successfully. I noticed that the parents really enjoyed the chance to eat and socialize while being able to observe what their children learn in culinary class", shared Chloe T ('26).

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Royals went through training at a Rugby Canada facility alongside Brentwood (BCS) and Shawnigan (SLS) players. /Courtesy of Rob Jones

NEWS

Hughs Wins Again: Another Successful Spirit Day



Hugh's House is the winner of the latest Spirit Day, including the cooking competition judged by the faculty panel led by Mr. Robertson. /The Trailblazer photo

BY SERENA K. ('27)

Recently, Hugh's Spirit Captains hosted an exciting Spirit Day for the entire QMS community. To strengthen connections between students, the morning

started off with senior-junior school buddies' activity. The Intermediate junior school students played Kahoot with their buddies, while the Primary grades made bracelets in their house colours.

For the rest of the morning, senior school students were presented with many options for activities, including arts and crafts, karaoke, board games, and video games.

One of the most exciting activities included a pieing game, where students could pie their teachers or peers if they beat them at the popular game, two truths and a lie. In terms of athletics, students were encouraged to cheer on the Junior Girls' Basketball team in the Royal Baller Tournament.

Students were also invited to dress up as a cartoon character with their house colors and to enter a costume contest. Every house point mattered at this Spirit Day, due to a novel award: Civies Day for all members of the winning house. "I really liked the civies day

prize," said Emily K. ('25). "I enjoyed expressing my house spirit by dressing as Fiona from Shrek." At the end of the Spirit Morning, there was an exciting cook-off between the houses. Each team was given only 90 minutes to create a main dish and a dessert, before presenting their creations for a panel of judges.

At the end, the judges declared the Hugh's cooking team as the winners.

This spirit day was got great reviews from students. "I really liked how we could alternate through stations as we pleased," said Clara L. ('27). "It was definitely my favourite spirit day so far."

Paulina D. ('27) agreed. "It was very creatively organized. With the many options for activities, everyone was able to find something they enjoyed." Hugh's house won this Spirit Day and were rewarded with a civies day for the following week.

Italian Culinary Event Impresses All



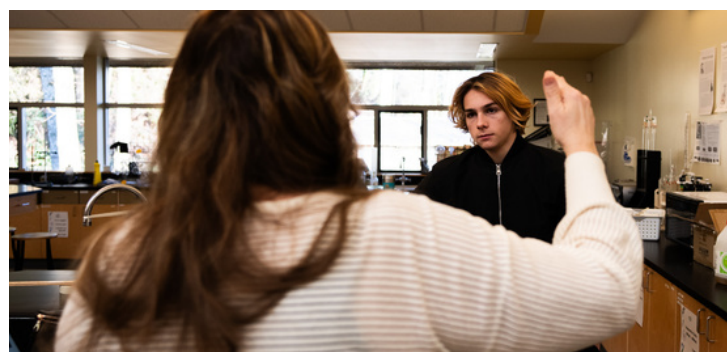
Tina Chung, Culinary Arts Teacher, proudly holds up the poster for the Italian Food Sampling Night. /The Trailblazer Photo

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"My favourite part was getting the opportunity to work collaboratively to create a fun experience for our parents," said Colbie H ('26). "I learned how to improve my social skills and work better in different team dynamics".

When asked what kindled her idea for the Italian Food Sampling Night, Mrs. Chung shared the impact that culinary had on her life. "As someone who came from Taiwan a long time ago, the first thing I connected to people with was food," said Mrs. Chung. "I think it's very important for the kids to learn about where the food came from and the culture that the food originated from as well.

Finding Your Path through Career Day



Kristen Jarvis shares her professional wisdom with Yuri K. ('24). /Photo by Jason C. ('25)

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and more. I'm surprised by the wide range of professions that exist on Vancouver Island," said Mr. Wang, Department Head of Math. Janis Brooks, a former QMS student, now a consultant and entrepreneur, was thrilled to see the great turnout. "I really appreciated getting to hear some of the questions from the students and to feel the energy that they have," said Brooks. "A lot has happened since I was a student here," reminisced Brooks. "I enjoyed seeing all the changes at the school."

We bear much gratitude to our counsellors, Ms. Barzo and Ms. Ingledew, for coordinating such an inspiring event.

NEWS

The Australian Exchange: Developing a Global Mindset



QMS students experienced an authentic Australian surfing experience. /Courtesy of Sadie W. ('26)



The QMS exchange trio welcome the four Australian exchange students at Victoria International Airport on October 9, 2023. /Photo by QMS Parents

BY SADIE W. ('26)

QMS launched an exchange program last year, providing Gr. 10 students with an enriching opportunity to connect with students from the other side of the world. For our exchange, QMS partnered with two Australian schools: Knox Grammar School and Abbotsleigh School.

I can still remember the day we welcomed the Aussies like yesterday. It was a typical, rainy, Westcoast day. I distinctly remember us standing at the airport with our "Welcome to Canada" sign, excited but nervous, having no idea what would happen. It was full of the unknown: we had never met any of these students before, and they would be each be staying with one of us.

Despite not knowing each other before, all of us become close with our exchange partners: Lachie M. and Ben K. from Knox Grammar School, and Emily C. and Selena G. from the Abbotsleigh School.

"The school was very good about finding people we could get along with," agreed Kailie M. ('26).

The four Aussies fit right in. They went right into the QMS routine, tried out different classes, and met new people.

"I enjoyed experiencing the different schooling life and getting to know people from a different country," said Emily C. "I really liked Med Sciences and Culinary Arts."

On the weekends, we showed the Aussies what our beautiful Island is about. We ordered them their first poutines, took them to see the rooftop goats at Coombs, and ran with them on the Tofino beaches under the freezing rain. We also explored Vancouver together. We woke up before dawn to catch the ferry, walked around downtown until we couldn't feel our legs, and spent too much money on Sephora.

The time we got to spend together was almost too short. Five weeks of school had always sounded like such a long time to me, but those five weeks that they were here felt like two.

The day that they had to walk back into those airport gates, it was hard to not shed a few tears. Those great memories we made together made it so much harder

to say goodbye. However, we all knew we would see them again in just a few months.

After counting down the days, it was finally our turn to go to Australia. On February 5th, the QMS Trio, Kailie M. ('26), Matthew R. ('26), and myself, Sadie W. ('26), packed our bags and boarded a very long flight to Sydney Australia.

The cool thing about Australia is that their seasons are the opposite of ours, meaning that it is currently summer there.

We had been prepared for a good dose of heat, but definitely not for the 40 degrees weather we were greeted with the minute we stepped off the plane.

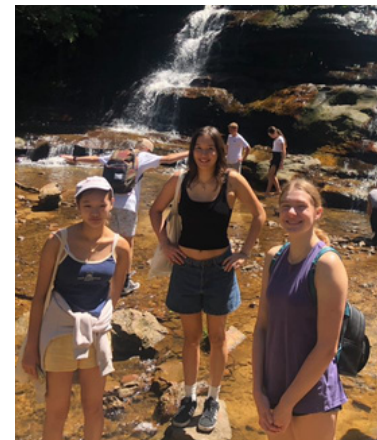
The roles were now reversed. The Aussies were now the ones taking us around, showing us places, and introducing us to new people. Everyone I've met at their school have been very welcoming. While not in school, we took advantage of the summer Aussie weather and went sightseeing. We went to many beaches, such as Manly, Kiama, and Bondi. We hiked, we surfed, we got sunburnt, and we even saw a Shakespeare play in the

iconic Sydney Opera House.

We are already on our third week in Australia, and it's already going by too fast. I'm not ready to leave yet.

This exchange trip has been such great opportunity for all of us, and I am so glad I got to meet so many new people, and that I got to venture to a new place that I had never been to before.

If you ever have the chance to go on exchange, I think you should.



Sadie (middle) enjoying her time with exchange partner Selena G. and Kailie M. ('26) in Australia. /Courtesy of Sadie W. ('26)

NEWS

Carving Connections: John Marston's Legacy at QMS



John Marston stands with his completed salish harbour canoe – The Killer Whale and the Thunderbird. /Ashley Marston photo

BY ZHUOLA S. ('26)

In a touching ceremony, students from the senior school Indigenous Studies class, senior art class, and a select group of junior school students gathered to bid farewell to Coast Salish carver, John Marston. This gathering was a heartfelt expression of gratitude as students shared the invaluable teachings gained from this project. "We are incredibly grateful to have hosted the finishing of this canoe, and to have held

it in our space before it permanently joins the Museum of Anthropology's collection and new display in Vancouver," expressed Tim Sailor, Senior School Indigenous Studies Teacher. We were also excited by the unveiling of the blueprint for a special art project called 'I C(see) U(you)' by John that will grace our junior school library as a permanent seating fixture in the future!" Special recognition was extended to Colton

B. ('24) and Jay L. ('24) from the senior school, who shared their learnings from John's presence and craftsmanship. They presented him with personal gifts that symbolized their learning and growth. Heartfelt thanks were extended to all attendees. "Thank you to all our attendees, our Khowhemun guests, and especially John for this meaningful and memorable moment," said Mr. Sailor.



Jason C. ('25) presents John Marston with a photograph gift. /Ashley Marston photo



Colton B. ('24) shares his learnings from the canoe's residency. /Ashley Marston photo



The "I C(see) U(you)" project by Marston will become a permanent fixture in the TLC Student Library. /Ashley Marston photo

NEWS

Servite Fortiter: Giving Back to the Cowichan Valley

BY JASON C. ('25)

Organized by Head Prefect, Maia C. ('24), Senior School students were thrilled to find 12 volunteer organizations with myriad service opportunities right here on campus. "Big waves [of students] came in," said Shaylee M. ('24). "Everyone was very eager and were all mulling around, which was really nice to see. It's wonderful to see so many different programs here to share their info with students and just to connect and to build our community."

Maia said that she was inspired to curate this fair after seeing constant volunteer shortages around the valley. "I work for a nonprofit, Volunteer Cowichan, and so I've been all too familiar with the lack of volunteers for them," shared Maia. "I felt like students at our school were pretty unaware of all those opportunities, so I wanted to [create a platform] to connect them." Kathleen Erickson, an ambassador for the local organization Literacy Now

Cowichan, was pleased with the exposure the fair provided. "It was really cool for us," said Erickson. "The students were interested in what we were doing, and we were able to get our name out to the community."

Coordinating dozens of booths was no easy task. "[It took] lots and lots of emails going out to coordinate this event, from working out the transportation details to securing the venue," said Maia. "The Service Club was of great help," continued Maia. "They've been wonderful with helping with setting up and assisting [guests on campus]."

As an outgoing Senior, Maia has great hopes for the fair to continue on in her absence. "Hopefully, I'll be able to find a younger student to mentor to take on the responsibility of organizing it next year," she said. "I would love to see that legacy continue on, and for it to get bigger and better every year."



Kathleen Erickson of the Literacy Now Cowichan Society introduces volunteering opportunities to a group of students. /The Trailblazer photo

Gala Fundraiser to Determine Future Head-for-a-Day



Arjun J. ('32) assumes his Head of School duties under the guidance of David Robertson, the adult Head of School. /Photo by Hayley Picard

BY ALEX D. ('25)

Every year at the Queen Margaret's School Gala, there is a much-coveted auction for a unique opportunity: be the Head of School for a Day. The process, however, is a mystery to many.

Head for a Day is awarded to the top bidding families at the Annual QMS Gala and can be bid on behalf of students of any

Grade, including senior school students. As QMS is a non-profit, all funds raised will go right back into the community, providing opportunities for facility improvements and fund various student enrichment endeavours.

On their special day, the Head for a Day recipient receives numerous special privileges. For example, it is up to them to decide what lunch is served in the cafeteria, what complimentary snacks are served, any uniform modifications (or lack thereof), and organize a fun activity of their choosing. This year, there are a record-breaking three heads for a day. Hanna M. ('30), Arjun J. ('32), and Elsa L. ('35) have the

honour, privilege and responsibility of running QMS for a day each.

Most recently, on February 2nd Arjun J. ('32) was Head for a Day, and brought back a much missed, and much beloved bygone QMS tradition – desert at lunchtime.

People from Grade 1 to Grade 12 were thrilled and grateful to Arjun for their cup of vanilla ice cream with sloppy joes and potato chips – the perfect mid-day pick-me-up. Arjun proclaimed that there will be an extra five-minute of recess in the junior school, a movie and snack of M&M for his Grade 4 class, a game of capture the flag, and most importantly, he raised \$291.35 for the Hockey Fights Cancer Foundation by inviting all Grades to wear sports clothing in lieu of uniform for a \$2 fee.

Keeping up with the Head for a Day tradition, Arjun was also invited on a Grand Tour of the QMS campus on the golf cart. With the success of the 2024 Gala, we eagerly await the announcement for the future Head-for-a-Day.

NEWS

Model UN: A Season of Hard Work and Grit

BY SAOIRSE M. ('28)

The QMS Model United Nations (MUN) Team, fondly referred to as the MUNsters, have been raising funds for their upcoming trips to Vancouver and New York. Their recent bottle drive proved to be a success, giving funding towards these exciting excursions.

For those unfamiliar with the concept, Model United Nations is not just any ordinary extracurricular activity - it is a thrilling fictional diplomatic sport that engages students from across the globe. It offers an exceptional platform for young minds to hone their skills in representation, research, and the art of making a difference on a multitude of global issues. At its core, MUN revolves around discussions and resolutions, allowing participants to immerse themselves in the complex world of international problem-solving.

Since the recent absence of the wonderful Ms. Chapman, we spoke with Mr. Pienaar, one of the new supervising teachers who has become an instrumental figure in the journey of these ambitious MUNsters.

"VMUN offers a way for newcomers to 'level up' their MUN game and for seasoned vets to refine their skills," said Mr. Pienaar. "Now that some students have attended their first conference (Global Goals at Shawnigan Lake School), they are looking for an opportunity to dig deeper and explore all the benefits that come from participating in Model United Nations."

"The conference takes place over three days and will really challenge the students' stamina and quick thinking," continued Mr. Pienaar. "Regardless of performance at the event, students will come away with a greater appreciation for collaboration, problem solving, and nuanced discourse."

Together with Mr. Pienaar, new Grade 8 humanities teacher Mrs. Faber said, "They had been prepping, debating and fundraising for a long time for this much anticipated event. The students organized a bottle drive on Friday, January 12, and had a good turnout of donations, raising a total of \$175."

"While this may seem like just a drop in the bucket, the funds helped out with some of the trip-related expenses," Mrs. Faber said with a smile.

We have many graduating students in MUN, but to speak on their experiences is Kieran D. ('24) and Maia C. ('24).

Kieran ('24) has had many wonderful experiences in MUN starting in Grade 7. One impactful experience in Model UN was the trip to the Secondary School's United Nations Symposium in Montreal.

For Kieran, it highlighted the commonalities between different committees and emphasized the importance of public speaking, quick thinking, and negotiation in achieving success in diplomacy. During last year's iteration of VMUN he faced conflicts by considering compromises that aligned with his delegation's values. The key to his success of winning best delegate came from allocating the resources to a delegation in need.

Maia ('24) has had many successes in Model United Nations, but a memorable experience was Secondary Schools United Nations Symposium in Montreal. Representing the International Press Corps, she witnessed debates on a wide range of topics, displaying the versatility of Model UN in addressing global issues.

A difficult challenge she had faced was representing the Conservative House Party Leader in the House of Commons at Vancouver MUN, finding common ground with other parties was crucial to navigate conflicts and create effective solutions. Collaboration proved essential amid debate and competition.

As the Model United Nations Team continues to garner support through their recent fundraising efforts, they wholeheartedly express their gratitude to the community for their generosity. The funds raised through the bottle drive will undoubtedly contribute to the success of their upcoming trips, enabling the MUNsters to explore new horizons, gain invaluable experiences, and be an active part



The QMS MUN Team boasted students from both Junior School and Senior School, from Grade 7 to 12. /Courtesy of Marcus Pienaar



QMS MUN Veterans Cadan R. ('24) and Kieran D. ('24) at their final VMUN. /Courtesy of Marcus Pienaar

of global problem-solving. The MUNsters, fueled by their passion and determination, are poised to make their mark on the Model United Nations stage. With the support of dedicated teachers such as Mr. Pienaar and Mrs. Faber, their journey promises to be nothing short of exceptional.

arts

The Eclipse Enlivens QMS' Music Scene



Rose W. ('25) performs with her band "The Eclipse" at the October Cowichan Youth Festival of the Arts (CYFA). /Ashley Marston photo

BY JASON C. ('25)

Many returning students may well be familiar with the legendary Senior School Band "30ft". For band founder & lead guitar player Rose W. ('25), a scene from her favourite childhood anime is no longer a dream. "I remember watching a Japanese anime about five high school girls who made the band, and I got inspired by that," shared

Rose. "Last year, I thought, if I don't create a band, my high school life will be incomplete."

Since its creation last school year, the band has received overwhelming support in the community. "We were really surprised that it actually worked out really well, especially seeing the performance turnout during [last year's] Spirit Day," said Rose.

The 2023 to 2024 school year is one with many changes. For Rose, with departing grads and band members moving away, this meant a new start was imminent. At the start of this school year, Rose launched a new band: The Eclipse.

The new name – The Eclipse – commemorates the new-found connection between the day and boarding students in the band. "As a [predominately] boarding-based band, we've never had day students on our team," explains Rose. "The name really symbolizes, just like solar and lunar eclipses, the day and boarding students who have finally come together to form this band."

"It's the second mission," Rose said with a smile.

Since the band made their first appearance under the new name at the Inaugural Cowichan Youth Festival of the Arts (CYFA) in October, the community is still waiting for the next show.

When asked about the recent hiatus of The Eclipse performances, logistics have proven to be a headache. "This year, we didn't really get to practice that much because of the piano lessons in the boarding house music room every day," said Rose. "The TLC Music Room is also constantly occupied with lessons until 5 pm, which is when Day Students depart. As we now have both boarding and day students, we'd be missing half of our band even if the rooms become available after 5." Despite the hurdles, Rose promised that The Eclipse would soon make a return. A concert dedicated to just The Eclipse is on the band's agenda. "We're practicing six songs right now, so that we could show up with full preparedness," shared Rose. "That will probably be after spring break."

QMS Students Shine in "Matilda the Musical" Debut

BY SAOIRSE M. ('28)

Three talented QMS students, Riley C. ('30), Julian L. ('28), and Charlotte W-M. ('28), wowed audiences with their performances in the recent production of "Matilda the Musical" at the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre. Charlotte took on the lead role as Matilda Wormwood, while Julian portrayed the character of Bruce Bogtrotter. Reflecting on their experiences, Charlotte shared, "I really liked the experience and it was really fun. I made new friends and enjoyed every moment of it." Julian expressed his gratitude to Cakes Essentials for generously donating a new cake every night for the show, emphasizing the sense of community support behind the production. Both students echoed their enjoyment of the performing arts experience and the camaraderie within the cast. For Julian, the experience of

performing on stage was particularly fulfilling as he felt a strong sense of support from his friends throughout the production.

The young actors' dedication and passion for their craft were evident in their memorable performances on the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre stage. The success of Julian LaPointe and Charlotte Wedderspoon Martin in "Matilda the Musical" serves as a testament to the talent and potential of young performers in the community. With their enthusiasm, hard work, and positive attitude, these Grade 8 students have left a lasting impression on audiences and peers alike, marking the beginning of what promises to be a promising journey in the world of performing arts.

Julian and Charlotte had mixed feelings about performing. Charlotte, despite starting early in fifth Grade, felt nervous but ultimately fine when performing Matilda. She had to



Julian L. ('28), Charlotte W-M. ('28), and Riley C. ('30), act their heart out at the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre. /Irwin Killam photo

audition multiple times but found the experience rewarding, especially making new friends. Julian, on the other hand, had more experience in singing and theatre but felt nervous about his first musical role as Bruce. However, he found performing rewarding and enjoyed the support from the audience. Both expressed a desire to return to the stage for more musicals and possibly other plays in the future. Overall, they both found the experience fulfilling and enjoyable.

arts

First QMS Concert of 2024 Achieves Unrivaed Success

BY SAOIRSE M. ('28)

As we step into the fresh year ahead, nothing is quite as magical as a flawlessly executed Christmas concert to spread joy and set our spirits ablaze. When such an event is brimming with the collective talents of the incredible QMS bands, string orchestra, and choir, it becomes an unforgettable experience. This remarkable group of gifted musicians presented us with a heartfelt celebration of the season, blending their musical talents in a truly enchanting display. At the helm of this splendid musical journey was our immensely talented and dedicated music director, Mrs. Alison Hounsom. She once again graced us with an exceptional ending to what was a year filled with beautiful melodies. The strings, led by soloist Kieran D. ('24), wove a colourful spell with their rendition of Do You Want To Build a Snowman. The soulful notes of this performance

showcased Kieran's mastery of his instrument, captivating the audience. Next, we were transported to a world of yuletide festivities as the resounding voice of Cadan R. ('24), in Santa the Barbarian, reverberated throughout the gym. Supported by our exquisite band, the students highlighted their tireless dedication and commitment to perfecting this piece. The audience was left in awe as the music enveloped them in the joyous spirit of Christmas.

Logan K. ('28) and Angus P. ('28) captivated the crowd with their phenomenal musical talents during their solos of Christmas is Coming. Angus skillfully played the trumpet, producing mesmerizing melodies, while Logan bewitched the audience with his enchanting saxophone performance. Their seamless collaboration left the crowd exhilarated and yearning for more. The lovely Senior Choir took the stage, embracing us all with their rendition of Christmas Lullaby. Their



Logan K. ('28) graces the audience with his saxophone at the 2023 Christmas Concert. /Photo by Hayley Picard

ethereal voices harmonized beautifully, evoking a warm and joyful feeling that only the holiday season can bring. It was a performance that perfectly encapsulated the magic of this time of year.

It is truly awe-inspiring to witness the immense dedication and preparation that goes into these annual concerts. We owe a debt of gratitude to our incredible IT team, whose expertise ensured flawless sound quality and an overall memorable experience for performers and audiences alike.

The collective talent, commitment, and passion demonstrated by our music department have set the stage for a wonderful year of melodies and harmonies.

Madison W. to Represent QMS for Poetry In Voice



Madison W. ('27) is this year's QMS Poetry-in-Voice champion. Julian L. ('28) came in a close second. /Courtesy of Katie Colosimo

BY SERENA K. ('27)

Inspired by Maia C. ('24)'s ground-breaking win at the 2023 National Poetry-in-Voice Competition, poetry was a beloved humanities unit in the Grad 8/9 PBL Program this year. To carry on the newfound QMS legacy, students explored the Poetry-in-Voice website, and each chose a poem that stood out to them.

After analyzing, memorizing their poems, and getting some helpful advice from the reigning PIV Champion, Maia C. ('24), PBL students presented for their class competition.

Everyone performed at their best, but at the end of the day, only a select few could go on to present in chapel as class finalists. Grade 8 contestants were Ian N., Supriya P., Felo B., Julian L., and Katie, S. From grade 9, Clara L., Emma M., Keyu W., Madison W., and Georgia A., were also among those qualified.

Performing in front of the chapel can be nerve-wracking, but each performer handled the stress with an incredible amount of grace.

Competition remained stiff at the chapel finals. After several stunning performances such as Emma M. ('27)'s "The Ghosts of Women Once Girls", Keyu W. ('27)'s "Blow Winter Winds", and Georgia A. ('27)'s "Forgiving My Father", Madison W. ('27) prevailed as the Grade 9 winner with her heartfelt

performance of "Invitation to Love" and "You Didn't Fit". At last, she took home the title of the 2024 QMS Poetry-in-Voice champion after a close match with Julian L. ('28), winning by only two points. With her nail-biting win, Madison will be representing QMS in the national competition.

Regardless of the competitive results, students learned many valuable skills that apply beyond the realm of poetry. "I found it to be a wonderful experience that truly allowed me to come out of my shell and perform in front of people, which I had been terrified of before," shared Clara L. ('27).

"If I could give any advice to next year's contestants, I would tell them to forget anyone is around and stop caring what people might think," continued Clara. "Perform like you have never performed before and give it your all."

Congratulations to Madison, who did a wonderful job, and we all wish her the best of luck in the online competition.

arts

BY FLORENCE L-S. ('25)

From February 5th to 12th, QMS's morning chapel sessions followed the theme of compassion.

Visual art students shared some of their art that they felt represented compassion, whether that was self-compassion or compassion for others.

The showcase was moving and meshed well with the equally inspiring talk of Alison Bowden, our wonderful QMS school counsellor.

To name a few of the inspiring artists I joined in submitting work, we have Naomi Godard ('24), Madi K. ('24), Jade C. ('24), and Emily K. ('25), who all showed unique and original pieces that came from the heart.

My art, Looking Glass Perceptions, is something that I did to showcase coming into myself as well as feeling of self love and being reborn.

I hope that this visual showcase will help inspire people to be a little bit kinder to themselves and others.



visual arts showcase

COMPASSION

arts



Self Expression

BY EMILY K. ('25)

The feeling of creativity and expressing myself through art.



Harsh Words

BY MADI K. ('24)

Sometimes we can love people dearly, even though, at times, their words can be sharp and hurtful

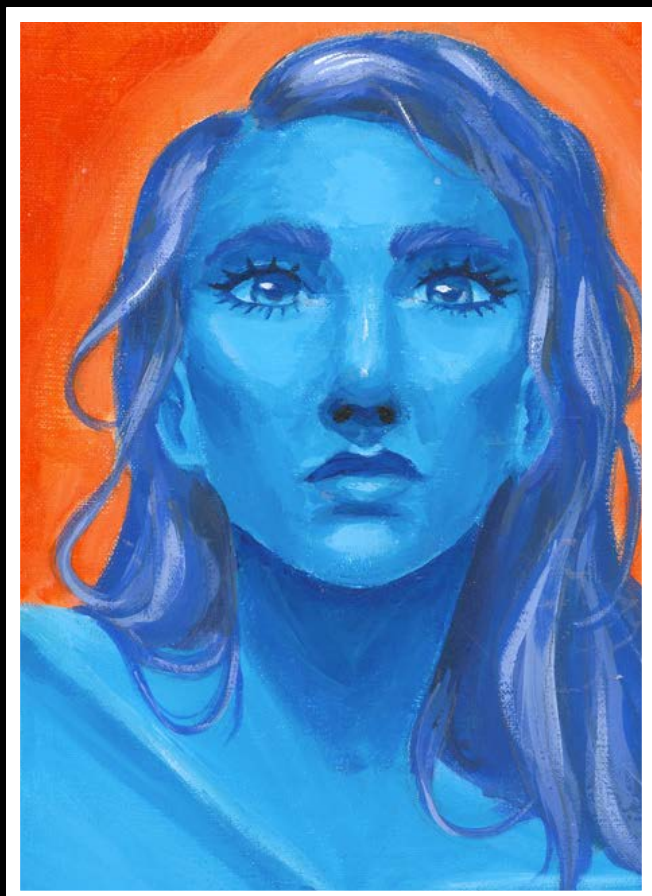


Resilience

BY MADI K. ('24)

While society may judge you its important to stand against the gaze and stay true to yourself.

arts



Contrast

BY MADI K. ('24)

Feeling judged by others and trying everything to be liked



Hearts Whisper

BY JADE C. ('24)

This piece represents empathy and being with others that support you



Two Hearts

BY EMILY K. ('25)

arts



Troubled love

BY NAOMI G. ('24)

The man's face is blurry, showing uncertain feelings, but the woman is clear and attached, expressing her deep connection to a love that's both captivating and harmful...



Inner Dragon

BY EMILY K. ('25)

This painting represents learning to stand up for myself and express boundaries...the dragon represents strength, and the scales represent patience. This was painted on top of a painting I did when I was feeling small and insecure and represents growth and new beginnings.

arts

reach

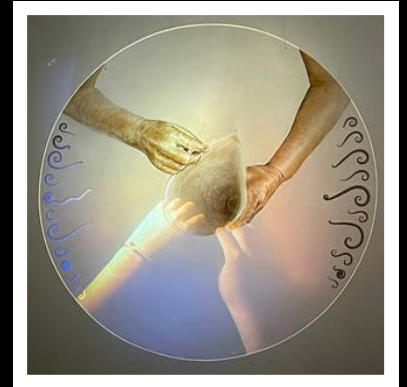
an art installation by Mrs. Loretta Paoli

Through images of their hands at work, this series of four interactive media installations honours four women who have inspired or nurtured me.

The series consists of 4 pieces that feature oil paints, mixed media, drypoint and plexiglass to create an original visual experience.

This, combined with a projector and live video footage of the pieces, allowed the viewers to not only be a part of the art but participate in it.

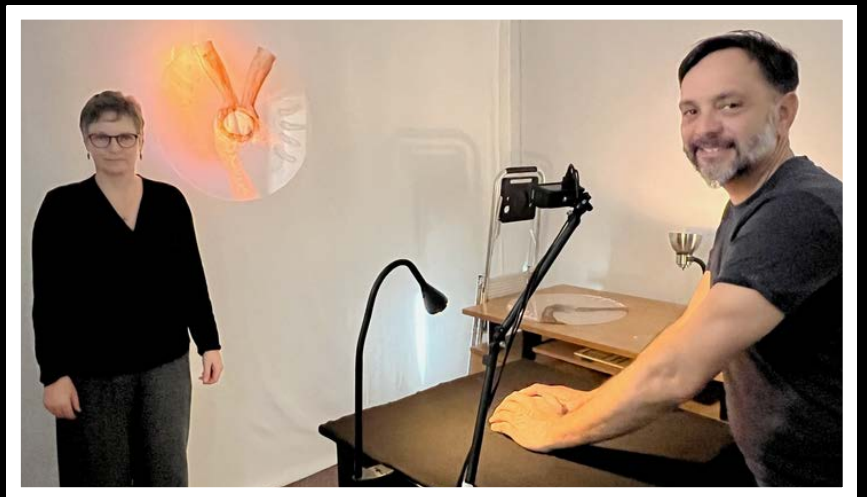
Mrs. Loretta Paoli is a Fine Arts Teacher in the Senior School



"For many years, my art practice has explored communication and connection through questions about the boundaries, spaces, and bridges between us. When people interact with one of the installations by placing their hands under a live video camera, the image of their hands is projected into the suspended painting. When this happens, I love how the light from their hands fills the painting, bringing it alive, making it glow, and making it complete."



A close up of one of Mrs. Paoli's pieces. /Courtesy of Loretta Paoli



Loretta Paoli (left) stands next to her interactive art with Salish Artist John Marston. /Courtesy of Loretta Paoli

SPORTS

Royals to Take on International Rugby Teams

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Coach Van Vliet agreed that the team has a lot on their plates. "The girls are stretched really thin, most training for a competitive sport in term 2 already, while also meeting their academic and other extracurricular goals. Still, they recognize the opportunity in front of them and have been giving us everything they have to ensure they are prepared for March," he added. Nevertheless, this momentous tour does come with its own set of financial challenges. To get 25 girls across the Atlantic and back certainly comes with a hefty price tag. "It is very, very expensive, and it is a lot for athletes to cover while committing to other things," said a member of the team. Director of Rugby Programs Tim Van Vliet shared the same concern and has been busy hosting fundraisers to keep the costs down.

"We've been running various fundraising events as many of our families need help to make something of this scope happen." "More fundraisers are coming your way," said coach Van Vliet. "Our next fundraiser will be a massive quiz night in Founders on March 1st to bid our players farewell. Our hope is to fill the hall with teams of 6, with some great prizes and bragging rights on the line!" Despite the obstacles, team member Delphine K. ('25) remains fully committed. "The Tour will provide me with opportunities to strengthen my relationship with my teammates," she said. "It is a rare opportunity that I think will be beneficial to me in the long run." "You get better when you play with other players, especially the ones who are more skilled than you," Delphine added. "I'm looking forward to learning more on the tour."



Members of the QMS Girls' Rugby UK Tour team pose after a practice at Starlight Stadium in Langford. /Courtesy of Rob Jones

QMS Equestrian Team Triumphs at IEA Regionals



Team QMS Riders jump for joy at their first IEA Show in Blaine, WA, USA. /Photo by Hayley Picard

BY ZHUOLA S. ('26)

The QMS Equestrian Team recently made history as the first Canadian team to compete in the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) Regional Finals in Tenino, WA. Four outstanding riders – Halle P. ('27), Poppy G-C. ('27), Emily E. ('29), and Juliana W-S. ('28) earned coveted spots in the upcoming Zone 9 IEA Finals and will join the QMS Varsity Team (which had already qualified) in Sherwood, OR, on March 9–10, 2024.

"IEA gives riders of all levels a chance to gain experience in the show ring without having to own their own horse," shares Halle P. ('27). "This unique approach has opened doors for students who may not have participated in traditional shows."

Leading up to the competition, the team competed in IEA Shows in Washington and Oregon State. "Our original plan was to attend a single 2-day show this season so our riders could measure their skills against this unfamiliar format," explains Coach, Indiana Wynne-Smith. "Our first show in Blaine, WA was so successful and popular with our students that our team doubled in size within a week and more competitions were added to the calendar. The excitement was contagious! The kids loved the team camaraderie aspect of the shows and working with horses they have never ridden before." Due to the unpredictability of the IEA format, challenges were not in short supply during the competition. "In these competitions, your horse is drawn for you, so you have no idea who you are riding until the last minute. Every ride is a bit of a gamble, not knowing if you and your horse will get along," outlines Hannah B-S. ('27). "We arrived early so we could watch the horses warm up

and learn as much as we can about them, such as whether they are forward, capable of doing flying changes, or require spurs or crops." Despite the unknowns, the team performed especially well. "In our first year of competing in the IEA, every rider has placed and gained ribbons multiple times, and our Varsity Team (Grades 9-12) finished 1st, 2nd or 3rd overall in each competition," shares Hannah. Coach Indiana expressed immense pride in the team. "I'm really proud of them. It is not easy to go and ride a horse that you've never ridden before, and just that alone is a challenge," she says. Riders are eager to return next year. "Now that we have a good understanding of how the IEA runs, we really want to capitalize on this year by hitting more competitions next year," said Hannah B-S. ('28). "I anticipate us having an even better season next year," adds Coach Indiana. "I would also like to get some of our male riders to participate, as it is open to everyone."

OPINION

Should You Become Vegan? One Student Says Yes

BY EMILY K. ('25)

Should you become vegan? Every day someone chooses to eat vegan, they save 1,100 gallons (about half the volume of a storage unit) of water, 45 pounds of grain, 20 KG of CO₂, and 30 FT of forest. Animal agriculture accounts for 14.5% of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. Land used to raise farm animals accounts for 40% of all deforestation. Farm subsidies are directly responsible for 5.4m acres of forest per year.

Being vegan is good for your health. You will have a lowered risk of heart disease, and diabetes and being vegan can reduce the risk of certain cancers by up to 18%. There's calcium, protein and iron in easily accessible foods such as leafy greens, whole grains, tofu, beans, nuts, lentils, chickpeas and seeds. When someone chooses to be vegan, they also stop contributing to factory farming. To mass produce the meat and dairy found

in grocery stores and restaurants, farms have resorted to cruel methods of mass slaughter. Animals are kept in filthy environments, often in painful cages too small for them to move their bodies. Their lifespans are cut short, their children are taken at birth, and many die of disease and cold. I highly suggest you do your own research on how these animals are treated, but here are some facts.

Over 50 BILLION animals are kept in these conditions every year. In 2011, livestock consumed 80% of all antibiotics sold in the United States. Cows can live up to 20 years in the wild but rarely live past 18 months when raised for meat. Chick culling is a common method of slaughtering chicks who are hatched male and consists of throwing millions into a gigantic blender. The most common method of killing animals in factory farms is by slitting the animals' throats or forcing them into gas



Emily K. ('25) devours her favourite vegan snack: an organic pear. /The Trailblazer photo

chambers. It is evident that being vegan has overwhelming positive impacts on individuals' environmental footprint, and health, and helps reduce the amount of money going to these cruel farms.

Be vegan.

So, to answer the question, "Should you become vegan?" The only right answer is yes.

It's a Fad: The Negative Consequences of Veganism



Kipling S. ('25) indulges in a meaty fajita. /Courtesy of Kipling S. ('25)

BY KIPLING S. ('25)

Veganism, the diet of abstaining from consuming all animal products, has gained popularity in recent years as individuals have become increasingly conscious of their impact on the environment and animal welfare. While proponents argue that veganism promotes a healthier lifestyle and solves moral issues, there are potential drawbacks.

While consuming a well-planned vegan diet might supply essential nutrients, studies have shown it may lead to nutritional deficiencies. Animal products contain several essential nutrients such as vitamin B12, iron, protein and omega-3 acids. The consequences of these deficiencies can cause nervous, skeletal and immune system impairments and

adverse mental health problems.

The shift towards veganism has caused significant concerns about the socioeconomic consequences of the vegan diet. Agriculture is the world's largest industry, with more than 1 billion people employed, and generates \$1.3 trillion worth of food annually. As more people adapt to veganism, the demand for animal-related products decreases, causing a decline in traditional farming practices, and affecting the livelihood of farmers and communities dependent on agriculture. Furthermore, the cost of plant-based alternatives and specialized vegan items tends to be higher, creating economic disparities in access to nutritious foods.

Supporters of the vegan diet's main contention point is that it is better for the environment. This is not true, as the environmental benefits of veganism are not as straightforward as they seem. Large-scale cultivation of crops that are abundantly required for vegan items, such as soy, corn, and

wheat, would lead to larger-scale deforestation than was initially caused by livestock, as well as monoculture and habitat destruction. These crops also require a perpetual amount of water, especially avocados.

If you look at a pack of vegan meat, the packaging, processing and the pile of ingredients in it require more water, land, and plastic, which completely overtakes the carbon emissions of an omnivorous diet. The only reason why veganism has such positive statistics is because less than 1% of the global population is vegan, and it's true, on an incredibly small scale, that the vegan diet is beneficial as it takes less compared to others. But on a global scale, veganism is far more destructive environmentally due to the lack of balance.

We must switch to renewable, locally sourced and ethically sourced produce and livestock. We have the power as individuals to choose how we impact the planet, and eating ethically, locally and sustainable meat is the best option.

COMMUNITY

Introducing Dr. Nixon



Dr. Nixon in his teaching habitat. /The Trailblazer photo

BY ALEX D. ('25)

For years, Mrs. Nishizawa was a student favourite. When she announced this year that she would be going on maternity leave for the rest of the 23-24 school year, students were all anxiously awaiting news as to who would take on her role. . Introducing Dr. Nixon, a recent graduate of the UVIC Biochemistry Ph.D. program with an undergraduate degree in microbiology, and recently spent months in the Arctic on a research boat. His background in

teaching comes from his previous position as a biology lecturer at the University of Victoria. Not only that, but he worked on a paper while in school alongside our very own Mr. Pienaar at UVIC.

Now making QMS his home, he teaches both years of AP Biology and Science 10, and recently took on the role of managing the final portion of the Grade 10 Science Fair.

Dr. Nixon approaches teaching with an enthusiastic, and advanced strategy, employing techniques developed in university lecture halls. He brings a helpful perspective to students, being willing and able to share tips and tricks for university such as how to study, note taking tips, and test preparation.

His interests outside the classroom include kayaking, hiking, and caring for his South American Cichlid fish, dog, and chickens.

Having only been here a handful of months, Dr. Nixon has already crafted a reputation not only for his advanced, post-secondary teaching style, but also for his impressive staff karaoke performances, hilarious Spotify playlists, and noteworthy literary costumes.

Q&A with Mrs. Monroe



Some people call her Mrs. Monroe, some Miss Jemima, and a select few just 'Mum'. /The Trailblazer photo

BY THE LIBRARY CAPTAIN

Introducing Jemima Monroe, who is filling in for Mrs. Chapman in the Senior Library.

What is your history with education?

I went to boarding school when I was 7 and lived on a school campus longer than I lived off it.

Before your teaching career, what did you do?

I set up my own catering company when I was 23.

When did you get married?

I married my handsome husband, Ander, at 25.

What are your hobbies?

Some of my hobbies include but aren't limited to making cake and eating it, mountain biking with my dog Teasel, and reading books in the early morning with a cup of tea.

Literary Magazine, "The Quill" Takes QMS by Storm



Members of The Quill dedicate their Tuesday lunchtime to collaborate on their new endeavour. /The Trailblazer photo

BY SAOIRSE M. ('28)

In an exciting new development, Queen Margaret's School's student body has united to create "The Quill," a vibrant, student-run literary magazine that aims to showcase the creative talents of the school community. Taking off remarkably well, "The Quill" has quickly gained popularity among students and has become a platform for artistic expression in various forms.

One of the unique features of "The Quill" is its thematic approach, with each issue focusing on a different concept or idea. The current edition's theme is "Red," inviting students to unleash their creativity and explore diverse interpretations of the color. By encouraging students to contribute their poetry, short stories, photography, and more, "The Quill" aims to foster a sense of creativity and community spirit within the school.

The team behind "The Quill" is driven by a vision to provide a voice for students to showcase their work and talents, regardless of their prior

experiences. By celebrating the diverse talents and perspectives within the QMS community, the magazine hopes to inspire and acknowledge emerging voices.

As "The Quill" continues to grow and evolve, the organizers emphasize that the success of the magazine relies on the active participation of the school community. Whether you are a budding writer, visual artist, or simply appreciate the power of creative expression, "The Quill" welcomes your contribution. The magazine aims to be a collaborative effort involving all members of the school community, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to be part of this exciting creative venture.

With its innovative approach and commitment to nurturing creativity, "The Quill" is set to become a lasting creative outlet that celebrates the talent and diversity of the QMS community. Stay tuned for more updates and exciting contributions from our student writers and artists!

COMMUNITY

To Be the Finest School of Its Kind



Dr. Stephen M. Johnson

Editor's Note:

This article was originally published in the Winter Edition of the 1997 QMS newspaper, formerly referred to as "The Delphian." Former Head of School, Dr. Stephen M. Johnson, relived the past and shared his vision for the future of QMS. Looking back in 2024, it's evident that the trajectory of QMS has undergone remarkable transformation over the past two decades. However, amidst a period of superlative growth of our programs and facilities, this article remains more relevant than ever.

BY DR. STEPHEN M. JOHNSON

It is said that "a school, like a nation, which forgets its past deserves no future." Last year, witnessing as I did many of the gala events honouring the 75th Anniversary of Queen Margaret's School, two things greatly impressed me: first, the deep pride and loyalty felt by so many alumnae in their school. Second, the sheer delight they had in reminiscing about their schoolgirl escapades, their teachers and, most of all, the friendships they formed at QMS.

I sensed then that QMS was no ordinary school. It is a remarkable institution and not one churlishly to forget its past. You will not take it in any way as derogatory if I suggest that one of the things which adds a sparkle to any 75th Anniversary is that the older participants have had a good many years to polish their stories.

For the 75th birthday of their school, generous alumnae, parents and friends presented QMS students with two memorable gifts - a major upgrading of the Computer Science Laboratory and a splendid all-weather outdoor riding ring in the newly-named 'Shirley Burr Equestrian Centre'.

All of us who shared in and enjoyed the school's birthday party will join me in thanking those who made it possible. Much credit goes to Catherine Spencer and the Alumnae for their organizing ability and uncounted hours of hard work. Special thanks must also go to Margaret Rees Davies, the Acting Head, who harnessed the energy and enthusiasm of teachers, students, parents, Board members and all other members of the QMS community.

The school itself richly merits congratulations on having reached such a respectable age. When Queen Margaret's was founded in

1921, there were numerous girls' independent schools in British Columbia, all but a few closed in the Great Depression, during World War II or soon after. Four girls' schools survived only by amalgamating, at a cost to their identities. QMS today fills a special - increasingly sought-after - role as a school for today's elementary boys and girls and young women.

Let me invite you now to picture yourself as a 1921 student at "Holmesdale." Then imagine that you fall asleep, like Rip Van Winkle, to awaken after seventy-five years as a student at QMS in the Fall Term of 1996.

Can you begin to imagine how astonished you would be at all the changes? You would marvel at tellers in banks and grocery stores using calculators and computers; at learning that few people now travel by train but that a plane built by the Boeing Company of Seattle now takes off or lands with passengers somewhere around the world every three and a half seconds. You might be even more surprised to hear that, while you have been sleeping, women have served - with notable success - as prime ministers of countries new and old and that other women have set records orbiting in space.

If our founders were alive today, what vision would they have for QMS on the eve of the 21st Century? We cannot read their thoughts, but we do know their character.

They were strong women, independent of mind, forward-looking and idealistic.

Having read Beyond All Dreams and Miss Denny's Talks and Addresses, I am confident that she would welcome the rapidly widening opportunities for young women in the world of today.

She and Miss Geoghegan were enlightened conservatives. They grew up in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain. They would certainly have



The QMS Choir during the 1997 trip to London. /The Delphian photo



QMS students playing a game of field hockey. /The Delphian photo

been taught, like other well brought up young women of their time, the dictum, "Be not the first by whom the new is tried, nor yet the last to cast the old aside."

They would, I believe, be delighted by much of what they would see at QMS today...

Queen Margaret's School has boundless potential. To reach that potential, it must set out to be the finest school of its kind for a thousand miles around. It must recognize that it cannot be all things to all people. But what it does set out to do, it must do superlatively well. That word will spread and enrolment will grow. It must have a clear vision of where it is going, and how it proposes to get there...

Fewer and fewer students, once admitted, will leave before they graduate. Each year the school will have many more applicants than vacancies.

Queen Margaret's School has a long, proud past, but I am convinced it has an even greater future.

COMMUNITY

The Trailblazer

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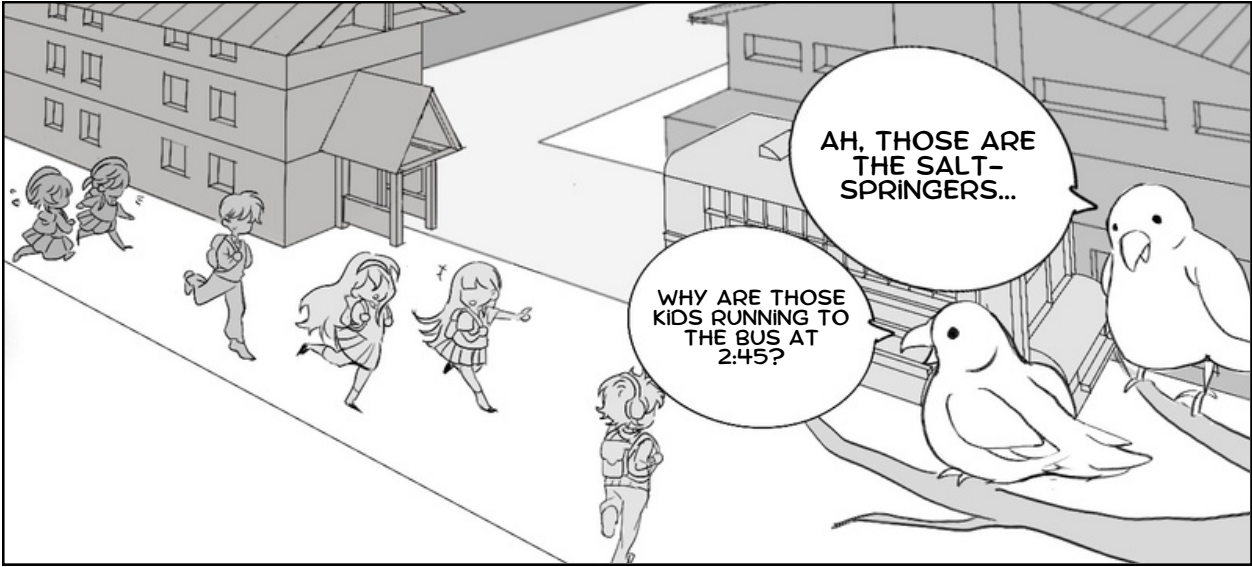
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We acknowledge that we live, learn, and play on the traditional unceded territory of the Quw'utsun People.



BY JIAYI C. ('24)

"OUR COMMUNITY" CROSS WORD

The theme of this edition's cross word is "Our Community". Use your knowledge about the QMS community to fill in the blanks!

BY ISABELLE W. ('26) & RON H. ('26)

Down

- [1] The senior school with a science lab
- [2] The spirit house with a snake on the symbol
- [3] The name of the girls' boarding house
- [4] The cafe that is closest to the school

Across

- [5] The sport our school has a large facility for
- [6] The greenest house (hint: house spirit)
- [7] The house with the motto "The perfect thread"
- [8] The last name of the Deputy Head of School
- [9] The last name of one of the QMS founders

SCAN
ME

Check
your
answers!

