

ONE GAME, ONE DREAM: THE RISE OF THE TORONTO RAPTORS

Michelle Arapol
Community Reporter

In our community, youth have found numerous ways to occupy their time, including scrolling through social media sites such as Twitter or Tumblr. However, there are a majority of youth who enjoy the outdoors and playing sports. Basketball is likely to be identified as the sport that the youth of Malvern play, and probably favour the most. The youth take the game seriously and dream it to be more than just a street game, and even perhaps view it as a possible career.

For those who follow the Toronto Raptors, most fans are familiar with the fact that they have not been very good for some time. The Raptors have missed the playoffs for five straight years, but all that is about to change, as they sit 1st in the Atlantic as of March. The news about the Raptors' latest success is inspiring for upcoming basketball players because it gives them hope, inspires and motivates them. In the past, most fans would probably be skeptical about the Raptors success because of their past failures, and ever-changing roster. However the exciting play of young talent like Kyle Lowry, DeMar DeRozan and Jonas Valanciunas has made the Raptors one of the most exciting teams in the NBA.

Now that our home team is starting to win games, this will hopefully create a chain reaction and continue to motivate young basketball players in the community. As young athletes continue to be a part of the Raptors latest success, this may inspire Malvern youth to use their talent to dream bigger for the future. Although some athletes may feel they have few chances to make it into the NBA; many Canadians have broken through in the last few years. Many professional basketball players say it was hard to be chosen and drafted into their



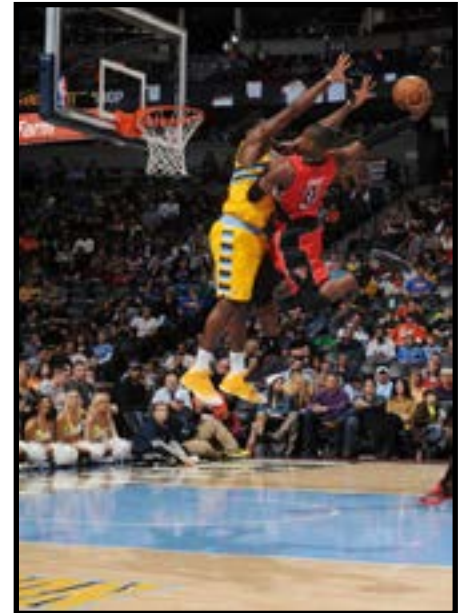
teams, but they didn't accomplish what they did by hoping and wishing. Instead they took a proactive approach and worked very hard to accomplish their dreams.

After another Raptors victory on January 24, 2014 against the 76ers, news spread fast about their victory around Malvern. I remember going to our local mall and seeing crowds of youth discussing the latest Raptors win. They talked about Terrence Ross and Kyle Lowry being the best players on that team because they were capable of making the challenging three point shots – particularly when the Raptors were far behind in the game and needed to catch up.

Furthermore, Toronto native, Drake has recently become the global ambassador of the Raptors. This has brought a new spotlight on Toronto and created a greater sense of pride because of the success of both the team and the artist, Drake.

Overall, has the Raptors late success affected our community? I like to think so because there are hundreds of basketball players and athletes across Scarborough searching for the same dream. They

all want to play basketball, not only as a job but because they are all passionate about it. For those of you who are inspired to do something and want to make your dreams into reality, I leave you with a quote from Michael Jordan: "I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed."



»»» TORONTO RAPTORS' TERENCE ROSS DUNK OVER DENVER NUGGETS' KENNETH FARIED

**Send us your nomination for
Outstanding Student
of the Season to
malvern.youth.roots@gmail.com**

»»» MALVERN FIGHTS ICE STORM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Q: Why not?

A: You know, the whole experience itself was very humbling. We kind of went back to basics and realized how blessed we were to have neighbours, just to have each other really. So when we heard they were giving away gift cards we thought it would be nice to save them for the people who really needed them. We had a huge Christmas dinner and we were able to keep most of the food at our friends' homes or our family's homes. We had people to turn to. A lot of other people didn't. We had our close friends calling us and inviting us over for

dinner, for showers, to spend the night. It kind of opens your eyes to a lot of things.
–Rebekah Mattis

While Rebekah and Jesse Mattis were able to somehow extract a very positive outcome from the ice storm, a lot of other families were left with more questions than answers. Toronto residents were infuriated at how long it took Toronto Hydro to respond to the calls. The clean-up process dragged on for weeks and weeks. Most of the confusion, however, lies around the fact that a metropolitan city like

Toronto has not established the type of hydro that would be resistant to outages, no matter how harsh a storm. If this winter was any indication of what our future winters will be like, we ought to give some consideration to getting some reliable underground infrastructure.

OUTSTANDING STUDENT OF THE SEASON

Athena Narsingh
Community Reporter

"Get involved!" – Raj Patel

As a first year student at the University of Waterloo, Raj Patel has been a volunteer for as long as he can remember. He was first exposed to volunteering when he began attending after school and summer programs at the Malvern Family Resource Centre. Volunteers facilitated programs and assisted at community events. "It seemed like fun," Patel expressed. He initially got involved with the Malvern Youth Cabinet (MYC), which he says contributed to his adoration for volunteering.

Raj stated that apart from volunteering, the involvement got him use to contributing to the community, the environment and it introduced him to leadership roles. By the time Raj was in Grade 12, he was President of the Malvern Youth Cabinet. He learned even more about coordinating events, being a strong leader, and most importantly, helping others see their leadership potential.

The most important part of volunteering, Raj feels, "is the fact that you get to help people. Rewarding. You know you did something to help someone else." Volunteering helps the community, so it is important to get as many people involved as possible. As he started to get more involved, he got his friends involved. Raj asserts, "If everyone could help out, we would have a better community."

Volunteering not only gave Raj the opportunity to help others, it also helped him. When asked to describe, in one word, how volunteering has changed your life, Raj stated, "confidence." Getting involved let him build the confidence to interact with different groups of individuals, command a crowded room and voice his opinion with conviction. Volunteering has shown Patel that there is more he can do with his time. Community involvement kept him busy and provided him with a number of opportunities.

Raj Patel has been a part of many community projects, such as the Malvern Youth Cabinet's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Smoking campaigns, WE Day, Student Council, Focus on Youth Toronto Council, Feed the Children, DECA and was even Valedictorian for his graduating class at Lester B. Pearson Collegiate Institute.

"Truthfully, I got involved with the MYC and MFRC because the program coordinator (Kelvin Ramchand), said it would be fun and promised us snacks. Since then, I have been involved with both organizations since grade 7, so at the time, I did not realize exactly how big a role these organizations would play in my growth as a person. Although I originally got involved for the sake of simply being there. I've realized over time that both causes were worthwhile, and decided to stick to volunteering and being an active member. My continued involvement was due to the fact that I saw the amount of opportunities that the staff brought to us. They all really cared about us and we saw it every day when we went to the Centre or to a meeting," states Raj.

Raj admits that having this kind of support from mentors in the community helped encourage him to see the endless opportunities and the impact that he could make in the community. He not only learned about event planning, but also about filling out grant applications and paperwork that were integral to the success of the MYC's yearly BBQ.

Raj also says that his experiences taught him the value of event planning: "when I was in grade 11, I also was fortunate to attend a leadership retreat which was definitely a very memorable weekend. We learned a lot about what it takes to be a strong team, while engaging in fun activities. Another event that we planned last year was an International Night. We were able to get a variety of performers and a huge attendance for the event. The event was totally free, and everyone had an amazing time. I was one of the MCs and the atmosphere was unforgettable. Through these experiences I learned a lot of applicable skills that I can use in school and life such as teamwork, communication skills, leadership traits, responsibility, time management and a lot more."

Yet, out of everything that he learned, Raj says that the greatest thing he learned about being part of the MYC was to be proud of where he was from; culturally and geographically. "People

often label Scarborough as being "at-risk" or "gang-ridden", which becomes a lot more evident when you leave the area. But I think this is what has made me strive to keep going and show people that there is a lot more to all of us than what meets the eye. Being from Malvern has helped me realize how important every opportunity is and how crucial it is to seize every chance to make a change."

Graduating high school did not end Raj's community service; it just marked the beginning. Raj is still involved in the community through university clubs, such as Kickboxing and Waterloo SOS tutoring.

The advice Raj has for fellow youth is; "Learn how to manage time and there are a lot of opportunities open to us. We don't get involved or are too shy to get involved. Get involved! Do things you like!"



»»» RAJ PATEL

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MALVERN ALUMNI: RON ROCK

Karissa Young
Community Reporter

Ron Rock is the executive director of the East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club (ESBGC) who has worked as a community coordinator, social worker, family counsellor, and youth offender court placement worker throughout the years. He has been a resident of the Malvern community for over 23 years and his inclination for helping youth in the community is well known.

Rock was previously a community coordinator for race relations for the City of Scarborough as well as an access and equity consultant at Toronto city hall. He is a long-time supporter and contributor to the United Way and the Malvern Family Resource Centre.

Q: What was your experience like living in Malvern?

I've been living in Malvern for 23 years. We actually chose to live in Malvern when we were looking to buy a home to settle down with kids. With a new family, I was constantly driving from Bowmanville to Bolton and I kept exiting for a rest at Morningside and Neilson. We ended up really liking the community and the people every time we stopped there. It was not by chance we ended up here, it was very intentional – we wanted to live in a community where we could raise a family in a diverse environment. That was the attraction 23 years ago; and we have no intention on leaving. We don't plan on moving anytime soon, this is our home. There are amazing services, parks, rec centres, walking paths, biking and walking areas, and still many green spaces close to Rouge Valley. It's the ideal place to live. I see no reason to move to another community... sorry; I'm sold on Malvern.

Q: What inspired you to get into community service?

A couple of things really – after high school I took a number of jobs, I was one of those kids that needed time off after high school to figure out what would be best for me. I did odd jobs for a couple of years. During that time I learnt things about myself. I had to discover what type of man I wanted to be, and I learnt a great deal - that I was a great motivator of people, and that I also extremely strong planning skills, which helped me to figure out what I wanted to do.

I also grew up in community centres from a really early age. By being around these great leaders I found that it was natural later on in life, that I wanted to also give back. I think I'm good at playing to my strengths. I encourage all young people to really self-evaluate what they are really good at doing, and then encourage them to play to their strengths, because failure often makes people feel that they are not



»»» RON ROCK

capable of contributing to their own success.

Going to college CRLT (Community Recreation Leadership Training) involved me with planning, programming and leading activities. I felt so empowered that immediately after I finished in the Spring and applied to go to McGill School of Social Work. I spent 4 years there, while working part time, of course.

Q: Did you face any adversity?

Naturally I faced adversity. The first thing I always remind myself of is how I got here. Living with my single mom and being one of four children, I didn't have a lot except the support of family, friends, and the community. Mom had to work 12 hour shifts, so I spent my time in the safety and security of the local community centre. Community centres make sure kids get equal opportunity to excel in what they are good at. This support encouraged me into going to college, to university. I found bursaries and scholarships in order to make opportunities out of nothing, and people also invested in me. In that regard it shapes who you are and how you grow.

Q: What impression do you think others have about Malvern?

There are a number of issues that we are still experiencing, despite the fact that

Malvern has a very high per capita income (contrary to popular belief- there are a lot of middle class income earners here). We still have some social issues. There are a significant number of early high school leavers, and as a result this causes issues for young people in finding employment opportunities in the surrounding areas. There are many groups of displaced young people, and with the current pace of society they tend to feel lost and left behind. This is where we run into some difficulties. Malvern has had its share of social issues, often exaggerated by media and others who perpetuate a negative image. Yet there is such a large percentage of people who live in the community and when asked, "Have you had a negative experience?", the answer is always no.

The way that the media portrays it - there are some real social issues - in the larger scheme of things however, these issues are not so severe that a negative stigma needs to be placed on the postal code. It's somewhat of a slanted view.



»»» RON ROCK

Q: How did you get involved with the ESBGC?

I worked in the City of Scarborough for many years, which then amalgamated into the City of Toronto. Here I became involved in doing grants and I used to do funding applications for other organizations

TORONTO MAYOR: ROB FORD

Ramya Sugumar
Community Reporter

On May 17 2013 both the U.S. gossip website Gawker, and the Toronto Star reported the existence of a video containing Rob Ford allegedly smoking crack cocaine. On October 31, 2013 Toronto Chief Bill Blair stated that the aforementioned video allegedly exists. Shockingly on November 5, 2013 Ford admitted that he smoked crack cocaine, perhaps in one of his "drunken stupors". Ford has attracted attention from international news organizations, and has become international news and fodder for late night comedy shows such as The Tonight Show with Jay Leno and Jimmy Kimmel Live. But how do Malvernites feel about their mayor?

A significant group of individuals strongly believe that he has embarrassed the city and his resignation is best for the city. Blessed Mother Teresa student, Justin Alfonso, mentioned "Even though he is doing all this during his own time, he has an image to uphold, not just for himself but for the city of Toronto. In the best interest of the city and the future generation it would be best if he resigned."

Other members of the community such as Blessed Mother Teresa Student Michael Arapol think that he does not act appropriately considering the stature of his job. "It seems he has just been fooling around and not taking his job seriously. As a public servant Rob Ford is supposed to follow the laws created by the state, as a Mayor Rob Ford has failed to do so."

Many people such as Blessed Mother Teresa Student Michelle Arapol believe that the attention obtained from this scandal has gotten Toronto the wrong type of attention. "Rob Ford, although he's the mayor of Toronto, he does not act like one. Ever since the drug scandal he has placed our city on the map, although in a negative way. The scandal has made Toronto significant, but as a big joke, for our crack smoking mayor."

However, there are a group of people that feel he still has potential to continue on as Mayor. Woburn Collegiate student Madhulika Verma mentioned "I think he has a lot of potential, but with everything he's being doing or has done, it's not letting his potential show. He is portraying himself as an irresponsible individual but think about it he was voted in for mayor for a reason."

Some individuals within the community such as Lester B. Pearson student Selina Ally believe what occurs in his personal life does not necessarily interfere with his performance as a Mayor. "Rob Ford has been getting a lot of hate lately but people seem to not remember the good he has brought to our city. Rob Ford can do what he wants in his spare time, that's his life but what he does for our city. That's what truly matters."

Rob Ford's scandal has brought up many questions. Should what a politician does in his personal and private life matter to all of us? Does Rob Ford need to step down? Should an individual who holds power be allowed to use illegal

drugs? So far Malvern Youth are evenly split about the answers to these probing questions. Rob Ford has made it clear that he is not stepping down as Mayor, and he has promised to change his ways. Despite what he does for the rest of his term we will only know what the rest of Toronto thinks in the election coming this October. Malvern youth who are eligible voters, can make their voices and opinions heard by participating by filling out a ballot.



»»» TORONTO CITY HALL

»»» MALVERN ALUMNI: RON ROCK - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

I was looking for a change and played to my strengths: working with children, youth and communities. The opportunity came up to be Executive Director of the ESBGC, and I decided that this is what I want, and that's how I came into my present role.

I followed my heart and passion, I'm extremely happy that I did - I wouldn't do it any other way. We do amazing programs for youth and we find satisfaction in the many young youth that come in and are inspired. It is very gratifying to see kids who we've supported and mentored over the years, going off to university and taking it to the next level.

With the completed capital restructure project, families love the new space and

the care and compassion they show with the centre, makes it really gratifying to know that we all had something to do with its development

Q: What can we expect to see in the future for Ron Rock?

For me, I'm not one who likes to beat his own drum, I focus on the things I do best working with young people. I mentor and support youth, share my years of experiences with those who are interested in learning, and have some knowledge and understanding of the how sector works. I create opportunities for people who would not normally have them. I have no big plans - I will continue to refine and do great work for the ESBGC.

Q: To conclude, if you had to describe Malvern in one word, what would it be?

It would be too difficult to encapsulate the community in one word, but it's a great place to live. It's a terrific place to live and grow.

The East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club is located at 100 Galloway Road, and provides services for people from infancy to the age of age 24, offering access to affordable recreational and educational services. The goal of this club is to help guide these youth into becoming responsible, compassionate, and capable individuals in the community, giving them a place to nurture their potential.

MALVERN NO LONGER A "PRIORITY AREA"

Devin Persaud
Community Reporter

Under a new ranking system revealed by Toronto City Hall, Malvern failed to qualify as a "Neighbourhood Improvement Area," which replaces the old "Priority Neighbourhood Area." The ranking was created using a new ranking scale that included 15 criteria including: health, economics, political participation, and education. Mayor Rob Ford dismissed a recommendation from city officials to increase the number of neighbourhoods with the priority neighbourhood designation to 31.

"We have enough," Ford said. Neighbourhood Improvement Areas are targeted for investments in community infrastructure to increase the quality of life for residents. Malvern has benefited from this priority status since 2005, when former Mayor David Miller first introduced the program.

When determining which communities should receive the designation, city officials take into account based on five key factors: Economic opportunities, social development, healthy lives, participation in decision-making, and physical surroundings.



Members of the community are divided on the issue. "I'm not sure if this is a good thing or a bad thing. I don't think that based on all of the factors we have improved across the board, maybe we haven't improved and other communities just got worse," stated York University student, Darin Singh. "Priority neighbourhoods have increased access to programs that build community capacity, losing this designation will be a loss for the community, because we will lose this increased access," said a local Community worker.

The City's team of experts set 42.89 as a benchmark score. Communities that fall below the line are designated as Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. Black Creek scored the lowest, with 21.38. Lawrence Park north was the highest, with 92.05.

Malvern, which stretches east from Markham Rd to Morningside Ave, and north from the 401 to Finch Ave.

scored just one point above the cut-off at 43.89, meaning just one point separates it from a classification that attracts city resources as well as millions of dollars in third-party funds.

Some councillors may not like the label of having priority neighbourhoods in their own wards, and others could be upset they aren't getting funding. Malvern councillor Raymond Cho is yet to comment about the issue, which is still pending a vote by City Council. The initial program was introduced after the summer of 2005, which was often referred to as "the summer of the gun".

During that year, 79 people were murdered, including 15 year-old Jane Creba, who was an innocent bystander shot dead just steps north of the Toronto Eaton Centre on Boxing Day. In the wake of this violence, City Hall passed a new strategy to deal with crime by targeting specific low-income communities with infrastructure development programs.

Malvern By the Numbers

11.3% People in neighbourhood on social assistance. City benchmark for high-need area: 15.1%

57.8% Persons age 26-65 with post-secondary degree. Benchmark: 62%

39.7% Eligible voters who voted in last election. Benchmark 41.4%

16.7 Average number of meeting places within 10-minute walk of each residential block. Benchmark: 23

196.8 Number of deaths under age 75, per 100,000 people 75 and under. Benchmark: 271.4

SOURCE: The Toronto Star



MY ROOTS

MALVERN YOUTH RECOGNIZING OUR OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED

MALVERN VERSUS ICE STORM



WHAT'S INSIDE?

OUTSTANDING STUDENT:

RAJ PATEL

MALVERN ALUMNI:

RON ROCK

MALVERN'S TAKE ON

ROB FORD

MALVERN NO LONGER

A "PRIORITY AREA"



TORONTO RAPTORS

JUNIOR WRITERS

CORNERS

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

March comes in like a lion, and out like a lamb... at least that's what its supposed to do. So far there's been no evidence of Winter letting up! A winter that included an Ice Storm, that rocked the city to its core, which our cover story describes from the point of view of Malvern residents. However, this season has also brought with it many new and uplifting stories for our community. The Toronto Raptors are in playoff contention again, uplifting the community, which Michelle Arapol captures in her piece. For the first time ever we have a Junior Writers Corner with great community submissions from two Holy Spirit Catholic School students. As always our Outstanding Student of the

Season and our Malvern Alumni sections are shining examples of individuals who are ambassadors for what Malvern has to offer.

We are also very excited to bring you this edition for the first time ever in colour. It has been a long and arduous process getting to this stage, but the commitment and unparalleled support we've seen from the community has made it all worth it. We hope you enjoy this edition, and please be sure to visit us as always at my-roots.ca for the latest about our organization.

Sincerely,
Devin Persaud

MALVERN FIGHTS ICE STORM

Stephanie Hinds
Community Reporter

On December 21, 2013, Toronto was hit with an ice rampage that was unlike any kind of storm we have ever seen before. While the sight of newly ice-glazed trees was a beautiful one, remnants of trees and broken power lines are still scattered around the city. The estimated cost of damages from the ice storm was \$250 million, and over 300,000 people in the GTA lost power in their homes and workplaces. Some grocery stores, unable to keep food at the appropriate temperatures, lost much of their inventory. This happened in many households too. To make up for this, Premier Kathleen Wynne, who went door-to-door with care packages, offering Torontonians \$100 gift cards for groceries they had to get rid of due to the power outage. Over \$500,000 of gift cards were given out in total. The Mattis family was just one of the families who lost power in the Malvern area.

would need at our disposal, like our cell phones. We tried to contact people who lived in our area but we didn't want to use too much of our phone batteries because we didn't know when we would be able to charge them again. We all went over to my neighbor's house because she has a fireplace in her basement our house got cold very quickly. -Rebekah Mattis

Q: When you got to your neighbour's house, what did you do?

A: There were about eight of us in total. We thought it would be a good idea to play board games because it would keep our minds off of the fact that we had no power. So we got all the games we could, had some snacks, and just kept each other entertained. -Jesse Mattis

Q: What was it like when your power came back on?

A: Well, it was tricky because our power came on, briefly one night. We were so excited and it shut right off again. My heart broke. This was the third day we were without power and I started to get really frustrated at that point. I tried to keep calm and be patient but, I mean, it was just unbelievable. When the power came on for good, two days later, we all took turns showering. We sat in front of the television and turned the heat up as high as it could go. -Rebekah Mattis

Q: Did your family line up for the gift cards?

No.

MY ROOTS EXECUTIVE



LAXMI PARTHASARATHY
Editor-in-chief/ Founder
malvern.youth.roots@gmail.com



HILORI KALOTI
Managing Editor/ Co-Founder
malvern.youth.roots@gmail.com



DEVIN PERSAUD
Sponsorship Director/ Co-Founder
malvern.youth.roots@gmail.com



NATASHA RAJARATNAM
Public Relations/ Co-Founder
malvern.youth.roots@gmail.com

Layout design support by:
Rachel Banaag

Visit us @
www.my-roots.ca

Q: When you first lost power, what was your reaction?

A: I really wasn't expecting it to last as long as it did. We've had power outages before but it was only for a minute or two. So when the power didn't come on after the first hour, then the second hour, we started to worry. -Jesse Mattis

Q: What did you do when you realized that the outage would last longer than you thought?

A: We panicked. My siblings and I started gathering all the stuff we knew we

JUNIOR WRITERS CORNER

TYPHOON HAIYAN

Ilyssa Sanchez
Junior Reporter

Before it reached the Philippines, Typhoon Haiyan first passed through Micronesia and Palau. Then on November 8, 2013, it reached the Philippines. It passed the limits of Category 5, which is the highest category on the tropical cyclone scale. Eleven million people were affected by the storm, in which 6201 people were killed. Many countries have offered help and aid, including Canada.

Less than a month before the typhoon, an earthquake also devastated the region. The magnitude of the earthquake was recorded at 7.2 and it was recorded to have 4026 aftershocks, 114 of which were felt.

The damage the storm left was ruinous. Many buildings were destroyed, trees were knocked over or broken and cars were piled up. Widespread power interruptions, landslides and flash floods were also reported. Major roads were blocked by trees and cars were unable

to pass. 453 domestic and international airline flights were cancelled with ferries also being affected.

Celebrities such as David and Victoria Beckham, Stephen Colbert, Kim Kardashian and David Guetta have also contributed to the fundraising. Celebrity efforts have gone as far as creating an iTunes compilation album entitled Songs for the Philippines featuring artists such as Katy Perry, Madonna, Bob Dylan and the Beatles with all proceeds going to the Philippines Red Cross.

To help support and repair the damages, our school, Holy Spirit Catholic School, has created a small group in my grade 5/6 class to help raise money for the Philippines. We called this group, "Holy Spirit Helping Hands." Many other students in other grades have also offered their help.

Thus far, we have made bracelets with beads of the colours of the Philippines flag: blue, red, white and yellow

A couple of friends and I have offered our time to help sell these bracelets. We also helped sell them during parent-teacher interviews.

For the whole month, we raised approximately \$600. The amount of money we raised will also be doubled by the government of Canada. Altogether, Canada as a nation has donated \$40 million in relief efforts.

The Philippines is slowly recovering from this terrible event. With all the worldwide support, I think they will have all the courage they need to stay strong and rebuild their hope. With that, I will leave you with a quote from the Dalai Lama, "I find hope in the darkest days, and focus on the brightest. I do not judge the universe."

WINTERLUDE IN OTTAWA

Alyssa Joy Ercilla Umali
Junior Reporter

During the week of February 5-7, 2014, my classmates and I went on an overnight trip to Ottawa. Although this wasn't our first trip to the city, we all experienced new things. We got to see things that the average person wouldn't get to see, like the Prime Minister's office. As grade 6 students, we also learnt about planes and how they work by visiting the aviation museum. Our classmates in the grade 5 class learnt about the government system. As a class we really enjoyed the museum where we got to see the different models of planes.

The two days in Ottawa were full of activities and we went to many places in a short period of time. On our first day we went to the flight museum. We learnt about each of the four forces that makes a plane fly: drag, lift, thrust and weight/gravity. We also attended the Winterlude festival.

At Winterlude, we had the chance to go tobogganing down tubes and ice

skating down the Rideau Canal. The next day we had breakfast at Don Cherry's. Following that, we went to another museum and visited Parliament including visiting the Prime Minister's office and the Peace Tower. We also visited ByWard Market and the Governor General's house where we learnt about Canadian history and the city of Ottawa.

Overall, I found this trip to be both exciting and rewarding and I learned a lot about our Canadian heritage.



»»» WINTERLUDE FIREWORKS IN OTTAWA



»»» WINTERLUDE ICE SCULPTURES