

## Western Law 2012 Orientation Week: The London 2012 Games

**By: *Somm Tabrizi &  
Alexandra Mamo***

There's law school, and then there's Western Law. Far more than a catchy tag-line or an example of narcissistic bravado, this is a sentiment that truly resonates with members of the 2012 Orientation Committee. Undoubtedly, any Ontario law school will provide its students with a sound legal education and the academic tools required for a successful legal career. That being said, there's something different about Western Law – some intangible quality that lets you know you've arrived, and that within these walls, you will find a home. Not only will you learn a great deal and experience tremendous development as a student and burgeoning professional, but you will also have a whole lot of fun along the way. As our Orientation Committee has worked throughout the summer to plan a great week of events for the incoming class, it is this reality that we have sought to emphasize, all while shedding light on what makes our law school so unique.

The two of us greatly enjoyed our own Orientation Week (O-Week), and while we have sought to add some distinctive features to this year's program, we certainly wanted to emulate what we loved about our experience from a year ago. Only twelve months removed from the anxiety-ridden walk through the front doors of the law school on our first day, we wanted to plan an O-Week program that would assuage that anxiety in the incoming students as quickly as possible. We are grateful for the welcome we received as first-year students, and we both felt compelled to serve as Chairs of this year's Committee in order to spearhead efforts at providing an exciting welcome for the Class of 2015.

The theme for this year's O-Week festivities is "The London 2012 Games", conveniently inspired by this summer's Olympics in England. On opening day (Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012), after a morning filled with welcome speeches, administrative procedures, and book-buying, students will congregate outside for the Welcome Day Barbeque. After a somewhat hectic morning, students can take advantage of their first lunch as official members of Western Law to relax, meet new people, and strike up friendships. That evening, everyone will gather at The Barking Frog for O-Week's annual Welcome Night Party, where good times and shenanigans are sure to



*Photo courtesy of Western Law.*

ensue.

On Wednesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, the Olympic theme comes to life! In the afternoon, everyone will gather at Gibbons Park, where small groups will compete in various games, and group prizes and bragging rights will be on the line. In the evening, we will shift venues and head to Palasad, where there will be something for everyone. Small groups will compete in bowling and billiards events, and there will be food, drinks, and great company available for all! O-Week Committee members will be keeping a tally of cumulative points earned during the outdoor games and the events at Palasad, and prizes will be awarded to small groups and individuals accordingly.

The following evening, members of the incoming class will be dressed to impress at Western Law's annual O-Week semi-formal dinner gala, taking place at the beautiful Old Court House. Nicely juxtaposed with the insanity that is the following night's Graffiti Party, this event provides an experience befitting of a professional school and allows students to enjoy the company of their classmates and faculty in a classier setting. This year, we have added an outdoor cocktail and hors-d'oeuvres reception (weather permitting) prior to transitioning inside for dinner, and this is sure to add a different, more social dimension to the evening. The gala will be followed by an exciting after-party held at the Thorny Devil/Robinson Hall, where students are free to let loose and party the night away.

The final, and most anticipated, event of O-Week is the Graffiti Party, scheduled for Friday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at London Tap House. This event is sure to be a major highlight, as students vandalize one another's shirts, enjoy the music, the drinks, and each other's company, and continue forming the bonds that will carry them through the next three years. At the end of the night, students are left with a shirt replete with messages, pictures, and incoherent ramblings, but they are also left with a unique keepsake that

will trigger fond memories for years to come.

It is our sincere hope that everyone attends all of the O-Week events and has a fantastic time. The Orientation Committee has spent countless hours planning and coordinating this year's O-Week program, and we could not be more excited to see it come to fruition. On a personal note, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our Committee, whose often-thankless efforts have played an integral role in ensuring that O-Week 2012 is a success. Lastly, to the class of 2015, welcome to Western Law, and welcome to a new and exciting world. We're sure you'll all learn to love it as much as we do. ♦

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# Welcome to Law School

By Tamara Zdravkovic

Dear Incoming 1L Class

I've been assigned the arduous task of writing a column for this paper. Originally, I was planning on writing whatever came to mind, no matter how distasteful or ridiculous. However, some of you – those of you who are yet to have your wireless installed – may find yourselves with nothing to do but read the newspaper. So I'll keep it PG. For those poor souls, I present to you – Things You Can Look Forward To In Law School.

Instant Boost Up the Social Ladder

Something magical happens the second you enter the doors of the Josephine Spencer Niblett building. By this point, you've already had the time to internalize an acceptance. But you don't really feel it until you're here, surrounded by future judges, professors, and advocates. Some of these people will become friends that you will cherish all your life. Others will become people that you can hardly give a shit about. Others will become people that you groan at in class. No matter what kind of a relationship you have, you are suited to have one with each person in your law class. Enjoy observing these. They can be hilarious.

Virtually every casual beer turns into a conversation about your case brief or whatever other project you have on the go. This is understandable, because people choose glaring commonalities as default topics when getting to know new people. The constant discussion of all things law can be a little taxing on those of you who like to be normal sometimes. However, as you boost up the social ladder, so will your ego. You'll come to anxiously anticipate the chance to tell some one about a good grade. Make it nonchalant. Make it look like it's really not a big deal. Mental note: Master the humble-brag and master it early on.

Appreciation for Home/Appreciation from Friends

After a few weeks, you start to miss your family and your friends and you begin to stomp around your house while screaming "I want to go home!" And I don't just mean going home *out there*. I mean going home *in here*. You start to get back to your roots and you think to yourself – "Yeah, I may be the next hotshot lawyer in the future but this weekend is about who I am at my core". It's about you and dad playing ping pong, or your mom's home-made quiche, or whatever makes you feel like you're at

'home'. So you go home and visit your best friend and go to your favourite bar. You'll find that all of a sudden, your friend will be yelling over the music, introducing you as follows – "OH Hey Kathy! Yeah, you know Tim? Guess what? He's going to be a lawyer!" Huge emphasis on *lawyer*. Just to make sure Kathy got it. Got that, Kathy? A *lawyer*. This is where all your humble-bragging skills will kick in. You got lucky – your best friend did it for you. All you have to do now is roll your eyes, wave your friend off, and give a sheepish smile, like 'oh no, Jimmy, not again'. Nine times out of ten, you'll be waking up at Kathy's place the next morning.

There is an obvious downside to this. One or two delinquent classmates from high school will catch on that you're going to be a lawyer. You've been in law school for about a month now and are somehow expected to know the outcome of their misdemeanor. 'What do I do?' Your advice should invariably be - 'Get a lawyer. And don't do dumb things'.

3) FREE PIZZA ALL THE DAMN TIME

I should caveat this by saying that the pizza can be yours SO LONG AS you're fine with sitting through a presentation that may or may not be ludicrously dull. You really do take a chance with these free pizza lunches. Sometimes, you come out victorious, having learned something of value. Other times, you come out downtrodden, submersed in an existential crisis - 'Why did I just sit through that? Was there any point to it? Is there any point to life at all? Pepperoni gives me heartburn.'

4) Events Galore

You got lucky, kid. You chose Western Law. If it's not a denning, it's Homecoming, or St. Patty's, or Law Games, or Memo Parties. There is virtually no end to community events. Caveat: Watch yourselves! Be safe and don't do anything stupid. The Law Society does not look too kindly on urinating in public spaces.

5) Being Humbled

While your ego is capable of inflating, you will also find yourself being remarkably humbled by your peers. Oh, you volunteered at an endangered species conservatory in Suriname? Oh, you were a doctor before you decided to become a lawyer? Oh, you have a PhD in something I can't pronounce? At least a few of your classmates will have spearheaded something that looks very

impressive on a resume. This is a good thing. If you didn't have your classmates to put you in your place, who would? You'd become a prick if you weren't humbled by them. You'd do prickish things, like be rude to waiters, 'forget' to replace the toilet paper roll, and quote lines from Two And A Half Men.

5) Learning that Your Classmates Are Just People

Personally, I continue to be humbled by the people in 3L. I appreciate them for all of the fine work they have done and will do. However, another thing that I have learned about my classmates is that they're all people. They make mistakes, they laugh, they cry, they get angry, they ask obvious questions, they get too drunk and then require our help. No matter how all-knowing they appear to be, they are by no means fool proof. So try your best during your time here. Have fun with your future colleagues and establish the kinds of relationships that you can rely on in the future. Respect their knowledge but don't feel threatened. You're all in this together and your best resources are one another.

Well that's all that my little mind can conceive of at the moment. Might I remind you that I am writing this in the dead of summer and beaches are calling my name. As are articling recruits. Might I also remind you that this is entirely accurate for the most part, although most circumstances, outcomes, and observations are highly exaggerated and may be less awesome than they appear. Further to that, just as a way of catering to the obvious bias in this article, I'm leaving you with a consolidated list of things that you should not look forward to in law school. Toodles.

- Your first (actual) LRWA assignment
- Your first moot
- First year exams (April exams are the worst, Decembers are just practice runs)
- Not having adequate time for socializing (this isn't undergrad, folks)
- Applying for jobs
- Job anxiety
- The realization that articling is not 100% guaranteed
- Changing your Facebook name ♦

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# A Guide to London: The Best Not-So-Hidden Gems

By Ciara Pittam

As a London Ontario native I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all non-Londoners to the city and to Western University! No doubt orientation week activities and the ever looked forward to bi-weekly Denning's will provide you with plenty of opportunities to take in the night life that is "Richmond Row" in London. But what else does this city have to offer? Let me share with you a few not-so-hidden gems and personal favourite spots to help make you feel at home amidst the whirlwind that is going to be your first year of law school.

## Favourite Restaurants

**The Early Bird** (King & Talbot) – Featuring house made perogies, anytime breakfast and delicious grilled cheese this place offers traditional diner favourites with a modern twist! Looking for something on the healthy side? Try the Organic Spinach Salad.

**Nooners** (Clarence St.) – A little hole in the wall deli featuring healthy & delicious salads, sandwiches and homemade goodness. They also offer frozen items perfect for when you don't feel like cooking dinner!

**The Tasting Room** (Richmond Row) – If you are looking to have a nice dinner with some new friends this is the place! The Tasting Room offers wine flights and a wide selection of delicious appetizers perfect for sharing. Also a great location for a date!

## Favourite Place for a Pint

**Winks** (Richmond & Albert) – Featuring a selection of beers on tap and Sunday night karaoke Wink's is always a good time. Also a great place to nurse a hangover; try the breakfast poutine!

## Favourite After-Bar Grub

**Prince Albert's Diner** (Richmond & Albert) – try the famous "Wally" burger – bacon & peanut butter on a quarter lb patty, what more could you want?

Favourite place to watch the game (Go Leafs! This is the year!)

**The Oar House** (Oxford and Wonderland) – snack on peanuts or popcorn while watching the game on one of the many televisions. Featuring "Wacky Wednesday" with cheap pint specials.

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Hot Yoga anyone?

**The Yoga Shack** – my personal favourite; with two locations and a variety of classes hot yoga will help you de-stress during exam time!

## Favourite Coffee Shops

**The Black Walnut** (Wortley Rd.) – Enjoy a tasty sandwich on hand-crafted bread and take a stroll around Wortley Village while you are there.

**Café One** (Richmond Row) – a great place to grab a bite to eat and a cappuccino while you read over those summaries!

## Best Sushi

While the jury vote for "best sushi" is still out, my personal favourite is **Ozen** (Richmond Row). If you're going with a big group however, you might want to choose a different location as the seating is limited.

Yo, where can I get the best Fro-Yo?

Downtown – **Yo Yo's** (Richmond Row)

West End – **Kiwi Kraze** (Wonderland Rd. & Fanshawe)

Yo Yo's may have better toppings, but the yogurt and flavours at Kiwi Kraze are far superior.

## Hidden-Cinema

**The Hyland Cinema** (Wharncliffe Rd.) – The Hyland opened in the 1930s and plays art and international films from around the world in a traditional setting. It has that "old school" vibe with red velvet seats and drapes around the big screen. The perfect place to take a night off from school work and just relax.

## Best Fresh Markets & Free-Trade Coffee

**The Covent Garden Market** (Downtown – King & Talbot) - try the pad thai from **Thai Delight**, it is the best in the city!

**The Western Fair Farmers Market** (open Saturdays, King St. East) – featuring local delicacies, homemade bread & fresh produce. Upstairs is the **Fire Roasted Coffee Company** – the best hand roasted coffee in the city – Fair Trade & Organic.

Hopefully you get the opportunity to try out at least a few of the hot spots mentioned in this article and to find a few personal favourites of your own! Cheers! ♦



# Travel Bug

By *Natasha Nesretep*

I guess I shouldn't have been surprised. As I was sitting on my computer looking out onto a beautiful view of the High Atlas mountains in Morocco, I asked a young farmer what a synonym for "experience" was. He gave me a puzzled look, no answer, and went on with his business. Completing my 2L summer job applications in my spare time in rural Africa was a bit difficult at times. "Real life" commitments have a way of slowly creeping up on you during the glorious time between May and August.

Regardless, summer is still the most magical time of the year. I spent my summer across Russia, Europe and Africa. The morning after the last 1L exam I flew straight to Russia for a month to teach an entrepreneurship course at a university in Togliatti. Russia was full of pleasant surprises. I didn't really have any expectations but my stay in Togliatti turned out to be one of the best trips of my life. The place I stayed was nestled in the middle of nowhere in a beautiful, lush forest. A quick walk down the steep edge of the forest led to a private beach on the Volga. The other

teachers and I spent our mornings prepping for our classes playing frisbee and relaxing in the Russian sun. Some mornings we helped out at other schools. Our students took us to their daichas (Russian cottages), introduced us to their families, taught us about their culture, and helped us get to know the city. May also happens to be the month of a ridiculous amount of holidays so we were able to join in on several celebrations, festivals and parties; every day was filled with good times and great friends. We did a three-mountain trek, learnt Russian tongue twisters, and embarrassed ourselves thoroughly at Russian karaoke. It was so sad to leave but really fun to go to Moscow and St. Petersburg to meet up with other Canadian teachers who spent the month in Russia. Both cities were just breathtaking and full of fun times.

After St. Petersburg, I spent time in Berlin, one of my favourite cities, eating good food, listening to good music, and meeting up with friends. I was there for the festival of cultures which I highly recommend to anyone in Germany in the summer. After a quick stop in Madrid, I was in Morocco, my home until August.

In Morocco, I was working for a company that leads youth summer programs around the world. I was there to set up their expansion to Morocco and then lead their first programs held in North Africa. The programs I set up and led were based around community service, adventure, hiking, and cultural learning. The first month of my job was a great learning experience and completely wild. I had to adapt to the cultural differences from clothing to business approaches, and had to learn Arabic and fine-tune my French in order to avoid being scammed. I also became quite good at speaking a southern dialect of Tamazight while hitchhiking across all the villages of the Ait Bougamez valley setting up community service projects. Leading the trips was tiring but so rewarding in a million ways. I met some of the best and brightest kids around the world and got to show them the country I grew to love. It was amazing sharing so many unique experiences with the teenagers from giving underprivileged children the first book they have ever seen to sleeping under the stars in the Sahara after a camel ride, or haggling for a good price in Fes' legendary souks and climbing to the top of a mountain and feeling the fresh breeze of the High



*Photo courtesy of Natasha Nesterep.*

# Travel Bug continued

Atlas region. I love Morocco from its plentiful beautiful waterfalls, the gorgeous coast and great surfing, to the locals' hospitality and humour, and the bustle of the medinas.

I am in my last week in Morocco as I write this and am heading to Kenya in a few days. I am driving from Kenya across to Tanzania to climb Mount Kilimanjaro and then do a camping safari for a couple days. I am then heading back to Berlin to see another one of my best friends who will be there. After that, I am heading to Paris, Chicago and then back home to Vancouver for a few days, just in time to volunteer for the Ironman in Penticton and make it back to Toronto for the start of orientation week.

While school interruptions are never the best when you are living the dream in summer, they have made me excited to finally be back in Canada and see all my amazing friends at Western Law. I am looking forward to another great year and hopefully more epic adventures.



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# Summering in Newfoundland



*Photo Courtesy of Emily Stockley..*

## By Emily Stockley

I spent my summer working at McInnes Cooper (lovingly hereinafter referred to as “MC”), a full service firm in St. John’s. MC is a regional firm with seven offices spread out over Atlantic Canada. Our office is in the middle of downtown St. John’s with a view of the harbour and is just a quick skip away from Signal Hill, the jellybean row houses and a plenty of restaurants, pubs and shops.

Summering anywhere comes attached with tons of bonuses: putting practical skills and knowledge to work, meeting new colleagues and friends, and making a little cash (let’s be honest!). For me, summering at MC in St. John’s has been a beyond ideal experience. Because MC is a regional firm, I completed my orientation in Halifax, allowing me to meet lawyers from the Halifax office, as well as law students who work around the region. MC has an open-door policy and is complete with amazing lawyers willing to give you a hand at every turn. I received work from both the litigation and corporate groups, allowing me to gain exposure to many areas of the law. From writing memos (upon memo... upon memo) to drafting contracts to attending discoveries, MC enabled me to greatly expand my legal knowledge this summer while meeting and working with new law students and lawyers from the Newfoundland Bar.

My summer at MC was also littered with community events and socials – from representing the firm at the Autism Society Gala and Junior Achiever’s Business Hall of Fame to volunteering at the Board of Trade Golf Tournament and Youth Justice Camp, the students and clerks at MC were given a chance to both meet other business people and to give back to the City of St. John’s. Playing against other St. John’s law firms in the annual Cox & Palmer Charity Softball Tournament was the best possible way to spend a beautiful Saturday in Town.

Finally, I would be remiss to neglect pointing out the summer holiday schedule in St. John’s. We finish June off with a trio of holidays: Discovery Day (nearest Monday to June 24), Canada Day, and Orangemen’s Day (nearest Monday to July 12). Following the trio, the first fine Wednesday in August is the Royal St. John’s Regatta, the oldest organized sporting event in North America. Regatta Day is a civic holiday in St. John’s and allows everyone to take the day off work to enjoy the rowing competition taking place at Quidi Vidi Lake. Because the holiday is weather dependent (the Regatta only goes ahead if the weather is calm enough for rowing), the evening before is typically referred to as “Regatta Roulette” where people spin the dice and head to the last night of the George Street Festival in hopes that the following day will be a holiday.

Overall, summering in Newfoundland is all a girl could ask for: a ton of new legal experiences, amazing opportunities to go out and participate in the community at large, and a myriad of holidays to keep us sane. If you have any questions about or interest in summering or articling on the east coast, please don’t hesitate to come and chat with me! ♦

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# Beyond Baystreet

By *Stephanie Marentette*

**B**eyond Bay Street: Looking for an alternative legal career? Give politics a shot!

This summer, I was fortunate enough to receive one of the coveted “call-backs” for summer law jobs, but not in the conventional way. Summer employment took me to the nation’s capital to complete legal research for the Honourable Peter Van Loan, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons.

House Leaders of all parties are responsible for the legislative functions of their respective caucuses. This essentially means that when a bill moves through the legislative process, these individuals steer the bill through the various stages. House Leaders are also responsible for procedural matters (for example, this summer Minister Van Loan played a key role in streamlining the voting process for the various amendments proposed to Bill C-38 – the budget bill), deciding who should answer and/or ask questions during question period, and other tasks related to the legislative process.

Assisting Minister Van Loan allowed

me to witness first-hand how the legislation that we as future lawyers will delve into is created and modified to suit the present needs of Canadians. One of the ways I was asked to participate in this process was by conducting a bill review of the *Faster Removal of Foreign Criminals Act*. For each bill that passes through the House of Commons, a bill review is conducted to determine what the bill does and how it affects individuals’ legal rights. This is essentially a legal memo that dissects the proposed bill to ensure that the goal of the bill and what it actually accomplishes align.

House Leaders are also viewed as the “go-to guys” when it comes to Parliamentary procedure. For example, this past session, the House was flooded with amendments from all parties concerning bill C-38, which would have forced parliamentarians to sit for over 60 consecutive hours to vote on them. In the House, the Standing Orders govern procedure, and the role of the Speaker is to interpret these rules and apply them in the House. The process of amending a bill as it passes through the House is highly complex and includes a very specific schedule that outlines when amendments to a bill may be made and by whom. When the House was

flooded with all of the amendments to bill C-38, it was Minister Van Loan who was responsible for writing a memorandum to the Speaker on behalf of the conservative caucus outlining concerns regarding the lack of compliance with the Standing Orders. House Leaders often function as defacto administrative law and procedural experts of their parties.

When a situation such as the marathon voting session on Bill C-38 or the back to work legislation passed to bring the rail strikes to a close occurs, House Leader staff assist the Whip’s office with the logistics of voting. This includes attendance duties to ensure enough Members are present and in their seats to during each vote to ensure a majority (this is more difficult than it sounds when individuals have been awake for over 40 hours), ensuring all Members have the information they need (ex: briefs or a quick discussion with a staffer) in order to vote intelligently, and making sure the supply of red bull and caffeine pills doesn’t run out.

Working in politics can be a little insane at times – the hours are crazy, and a crisis can crop up in seconds that requires immediate attention. The stakes are incredibly high, as

one mistake can mean the fall of a government. But it is possibly one of the most rewarding and exciting careers a person could have. In almost every Ministerial office, the staff are legal professionals poached from brilliant careers on Bay Street or elsewhere, and many go on to return to those careers afterwards. But very few careers allow you to have a direct impact and afford you the chance to actually make a difference. In politics, one moment you may be called to brief your Minister on an issue, and 20 minutes later you just might see him on CTV discussing that issue using the information you have provided him with.

For any adrenaline junky passionate about public policy issues (where in finance, immigration or foreign affairs), politics is the place to be. It truly is a unique experience unlike any other career out there. ♦



Photo courtesy of Stephanie Marentette

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