



Turtle Tracks

May 1, 2009

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MAY 18- 22

Spring Encounter Week

MAY 25

Memorial Day
NO SCHOOL

MAY 27

Night of Glory, VCS
6pm-8pm

MAY 29

VCS Field Day

JUNE 1 – 3

Final Exams

JUNE 5

Graduation, 10:30am

2009 SPRING ENCOUNTER WEEK: MAY 18-22

Submitted by **Chance Cardamone-Knewstub**

The end of the year is nearly upon us, which means it's time for our last round of Encounter Weeks. Please take a minute to review the offerings this May and discuss with your child what trips may be the best fit. Please keep in mind that we expect all students to participate in at least one overnight, wilderness-based trip per year. Students will make their selections on Wednesday, May 6th and groups will be formed by Monday, May 11th. By May 12th you should receive a letter from your trip leader with all pertinent information and required gear.

**Adirondack Canoeing • Rock & Road • Cycling Day Trips
• Calming and Creative Crafts • Acadia National Park •
Improv Theater • Rome • New England Summits**

New England Summits

Leader: **Jason Cushner**



Hiking Mt. Mansfield is nice. Climbing Mt. Washington in New Hampshire is great. Summiting Mt. Katahdin in Maine is spectacular. But to do all three? Most people don't accomplish this in a single lifetime. And yet, we are not stopping there. This encounter week shoots for the stars, aims for the impossible, hopes to do what can't be done. We plan to summit the high point / peak of each New England state in 4 days. Yes, that is 6 states in one encounter week! We may or

may not make it, but we will certainly have fun and do some great hikes along the way. We have a packed itinerary of car camping and peak bagging, sometimes doing multiple summits in multiple states in a day. Are you up for the challenge? This is an overnight trip.

Cycling Day Trips

Leader: **Chance Cardamone-Knewstub**



In this Encounter Week we will sample the best of the local scenic bike rides, from the Burlington Bike Path, to scenic rides in Charlotte, to riding the ferry to explore the NY side. Rides will range from 20 – 50 miles, so they will be physically challenging, but extensive riding experience is not a prerequisite for this trip. What is important is that each participant has a bike that they feel comfortable with and that is in excellent condition. Participants may

use either mountain bikes or road bikes, but 99% of the riding we'll do will be on paved roads so slick tires will be the most appropriate. This trip does not include overnights.

**Acting Head of
School:
Hans Manske**

FACULTY & STAFF

Sarah Bertucci

Chance Cardamone-
Knewstub

Mark Cline Lucey

Jennifer Cohen

Adriana Comtois

Jason Cushner

Leonora Dodge

Conor Driscoll

Glenn Etter

Peter Goff

Xue Li

Shyla Nelson

Susan Palmer

Ben Patrick

Jessica Redmond

Jordan Romm

Jasmine Walker

Acting Dean of Students:
Mark Cline Lucey

Dean of Faculty:
Cara Simone Bader

Director of Academic
Enrichment Center:
JoAnna Easton

Director of Admissions &
College Counseling:
Sarah Soule

Director of Development:
Jordan Romm

Business Office:
Emily Tupper

Administrative Assistant,
Registrar, & Editor of
Turtle Tracks:
Allison Fayle

Marketing:
Wendy McArdle

Adirondack Canoeing Adventure

Leader: Carly Lagasse

Co-Leader: Mark Cline Lucey



Carly Lagasse (with Mark) will be leading a Canoeing/Camping trip as part of her Senior Project. Carly has been working with an outdoor education organization and has been learning about wilderness leadership and creating positive group dynamics. She will be putting those new skills to use on this Encounter Week as the group floats down the Raquette River in the Adirondacks, camping along the way. This trip will have a focus on personal reflection, journaling, and group processing, as Carly applies some of the group dynamic models she has been working with during her senior project.

Carly will also be teaching the group some wilderness survival skills that she has learned: how to build traps, how to start a fire without matches, and how to use a compass, among other skills. This is a trip for anyone who loves being outdoors, loves being near the water, loves hearing the early morning call of the loons, and wants to see what the woods (and Carly) have to teach. This is an overnight trip.

Rock & Road Trip

Leader: Conor Driscoll

Co-Leader: TBD



Come climbing in the beautiful Northeast! Conor and another leader will be taking a group climbing at the crags of Vermont, Franconia Notch, and Rumney, NH. No specialized equipment or experience is necessary, but rock shoes are highly recommended for the trip. We will learn rappelling and climbing techniques as well as basic rope work skills. We will work as a group to develop a sense of trust in each other and in the equipment we are using. Both leaders will be certified to guide climbing trips by the American Mountain Guide's Association. We will climb for a half-day on Monday in Bolton, Vermont. We will then spend two days learning to

sport climb at Rumney, NH, and finally will spend a day and a half traditional climbing in the historic crags of Franconia, NH. This is an overnight trip.

Calming & Creative Crafts

Leader: Jessica Redmond

Co-Leader: Adriana Comtois



Picture this: It is the last encounter week of the year, exams are coming and you just want to stop, take a deep breath, reenergize and get focused for your upcoming finals. You want to achieve a Zen-like connection with your outdoor surroundings without waking up at 3 a.m. to see a sunrise. You want to explore some other creative outlets using different media and feel that sense of accomplishment of creating something with your own hands. If you are thinking what we are thinking, then this is the E-week for you.

Students in this encounter week will experience the serenity and satisfaction of designing and completing their own cross-stitched creation. Cross-stitch is an embroidery technique in world and American folk art. Cross-stitch, and its other embroidery cousins, has been used for decorative and functional purposes such as the making of medieval tapestries, textiles, and teaching the young women of Colonial America how to read and write. However, nowadays, it is seen mainly as a hobby for people who appreciate the quiet introspection and sense of accomplishment achieved by completion of a stitched project.

We will begin the week with a day at Shelburne Museum, where there are numerous examples of colonial era embroidery samplers, not to mention other textile arts. Students will then spend the remainder of the week learning to stitch by creating



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their own pieces. Students will initially select a pattern to complete from which they will learn the basics of cross-stitching and back-stitching (satin stitch is a possibility!). They will then create their own pattern, taking into account the fabric, colors, and a combination of functionality and aesthetics desired in their design.

Some of the options could be to create a decorative border for table or bed linens, a monogrammed towel, their own small family sampler or anything else that they feel inspired to create. Cross-stitch is versatile.

We will also be visiting the Tapis collection at

Dartmouth and have a guided tour with one of their

textile experts. Students will also have the option to

add beads to their creations, since we will have a vast array of beads ready to be strung, stitched or

converted to beautiful pieces of jewelry. We will dedicate part of each day to work on the basics of beading to create bracelets, necklaces, earrings and pendants. We

will be working with wire, string, metallic thread, stretchy cords and beads of all

sizes and materials available (including felted ones!). We will provide all the

materials but you are welcomed to bring your own. We will be based from VCS but

we will travel by foot or bus to scenic local areas for creative inspiration and

personal reflection. Students who are looking to achieve pre-final exam calmness

and express their creativity should sign up for this E-week.



All materials will be provided. Students should bring lunch every day. This trip does not include overnights.

Acadia National Park

Leader: Peter Goff

Co-Leader: Jennifer Cohen



Peter and Jen will be (*seals*) leading a stalwart band of adventure-seekers to DownEast Maine. We will be leaving Vermont and traveling north (*baby seals*) through New Hampshire and Maine on a lovely 8-hour tour through northern New England. Upon arriving (*baby seals*) in Bah Habah Maine we will set up camp and spend the early evening on classic Maine rocky cliffs overlooking the Atlantic.

You've never seen the stars until you've seen them over the ocean! Over the next few days we will be exploring tidal pools, tidal caves, climbing mountains (well, REALLY steep large hills, anyway), and working with the National Park Service (*newborn baby seals*). One of the most memorable parts of the trip will be a trip on a converted lobster boat in & around the islands around Mt. Desert Isle. While learning the history & current methods of the lobster fishery, we will see bald eagles, porpoises, and...wait for it.....baby seals. A colony of harbor seals has its pupping ground on a rock outcrop right outside of Bah Habah. Last spring, we were there no more than 48 hours after the simultaneous births of about 6 pups. The last day, we break camp at around 3:30am and are the first Americans to see the sunrise...before the lovely 8-hour trip back to VCS. This is an overnight trip.



Improv Theater Encounter Week

Leader: Glenn Etter



Technically, this encounter week is too fun to be legal, but we are offering it, anyway – it's the improv theater Encounter Week! Play improv games! Learn top-secret acting techniques! Pretend to be other people and other things! Gain the skills to help you entertain friends and manipulate your enemies!

Over the course of the week we will learn, oh yes we will learn the fundamental skills of both improv and acting. Improv is not just "making stuff up" – there are principles behind creating compelling stories and engaging humorous skits. We will

learn to listen, to act in different genres, to build upon others' ideas, to commit to our characters, to tell focused stories, and to treat ridiculous ideas seriously. At the same time, a major principle of improv is to have fun – to be silly and a little "crazy." We will practice this as well! So, come join us for a week-long, intensive introduction to the silly, crazy, yet endlessly fascinating world of improv theater.

Leader Glenn Etter was a professional improviser for nearly 10 years in San Francisco and has taught a variety of improv workshops to both kids and adults. This trip does not include overnights.

Rome

Leader: Cara Simone-Bader

Co-Leader: Ben Patrick



The Rome Encounter Week centers on the study of a survey of the history of art and architecture in Rome. From ancient ubiquitous pottery and the founding of Rome by Romulus to the angels that Bernini sculpted on the bridges over the Tyber River, students will learn a wide range of artistic, cultural, and historical phenomena of this ancient city. Our focus will be on the Baroque, and, as such, one of the highlights our trip we will be visiting the Galleri

Borghese to view an exhibition of a comparative study of Caravaggio and Francis Bacon. Students will document their experiences in Rome with a sketchbook and we will be drawing ancient ruins, the giant feet of Zeus at the Musei Capitolini, many lions and other fantastic works of art. We are looking forward to great food, inspirational paintings and sculptures and our long walks on the circuitous roads of the eternal city. This is an overnight trip and is closed to new participants.

We want your TRASH!

Submitted by Adriana Comtois



The Greening R & S class is working with Terracycle to fundraise money to implement green initiatives. However, this time we don't want your money, we want your trash!

Terracycle is a company that makes tote bags, backpacks and pencil cases out of wrappers and empty containers.

We will be collecting juice drink POUCHES (no boxes) and Nabisco

cookie wrappers and sending them to Terracycle. For each item we submit they will donate 2 cents to VCS. It doesn't seem like a lot but everything counts, plus the important point here is to extend the life of these non-recyclable items

that otherwise would go to our landfills. This is an ongoing project so it doesn't matter when you send your pouches and cookie wrappers- just bring them in!

There will be a collecting box outside Adriana's office and one in the Commons Room or wrappers can be drop off in Adriana's mailbox. We need hundreds of them so if people can collect these bags from other households it would be greatly appreciated. The U.S. produces an average of 4.5 lb of waste per day. Help us reduce that amount!



Picture Day Retakes Scheduled for Tuesday May 5th

Submitted by Sarah McGarghan

Retakes will be offered on Tuesday 5/5 at no charge **only** if there are technical issues (ie. blink, blur, distortion...), otherwise a \$5.00 retake fee will apply. If you intend to have a retake taken, please send your student in with the \$5.00 retake fee, if applicable, and the original package with all of its contents **EXCEPT** the class picture. If you would prefer a refund, requests **must** be submitted within 10 days of receiving your original images from school. Please be advised that re-takes cannot be taken unless the original package is returned.

If you would like to order more pictures, there is an add-on order form included inside your picture day package. Those will be due in to Allison by Friday 5/8. And lastly, if you did not order an original package, there is still time for that. All forms must be into Allison by Friday 5/8. Unfortunately, there can be no exceptions to that. Friday is the deadline!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah McGarghan at sarah@srmphotography.com or 802.238.0663.



Flowers for Graduation

Submitted by Emily Tupper



Even though it's early, think of VCS graduation when your flowers begin to bloom. VCS graduation is Friday, June 5th, and we are in need of some donated bouquets to brighten our ceremony! If you can commit to providing flowers in June, please contact Allison in the main office at x10.

Drew University College Visit

Submitted by Sarah Soule



Drew University in Madison, New Jersey will be visiting VCS on Thursday, May 7th at 12:00 noon in Sarah's office. Drew offers majors in the Arts, Environmental Studies and has programs where students can do internships in nearby Manhattan. They also have a major in Mandarin Chinese! www.drew.edu

Attention, Junior Class!

Submitted by Sarah Soule

The June 13th ACT test registration deadline is fast approaching! If you plan on taking the ACT on Saturday, June 13th, the registration deadline is May 8th. To register: www.actstudent.org and our school code is 460 417.



Drivers Ed Summer 2009

Submitted by John Viau



Learn how to drive this summer!! The summer session of Driver's Ed, offered through ASM Driving School, will begin on Monday June 29th, 2009 and run until the end of July.

Students will be in class from 8:00am until 10:00am Monday through Friday until the required thirty hours are completed, on approximately Friday July 17th, 2009. They will also be required to complete six hours of driving and six hours of observation. Driving and observation time will be one day per week after class from 10:00am until about 12:00pm and will run from the first week of the summer session until the last week of the summer session.

Driver's ed registration forms are available in the main office. Questions? Contact John F. Viau, (802) 878-4839, johnviau@msn.com.

FREE Red Sox / Yankees Raffle Tickets

Submitted by Wendy McArdle

Buy or sell 5 raffle tickets, and we'll give you one FREE! VCS is selling \$10 raffle tickets for a chance to see the Boston Red Sox take on the New York Yankees at Fenway Park on Sunday, August 23rd. Our goal is to sell 500 raffle tickets before the drawing on June 12th. If every student/family/faculty member sells just 5 tickets, we'll reach our goal.

This year, we're offering some new incentives to encourage more people to buy -- and sell -- tickets.



Buy a sheet of 5 raffle tickets and the purchaser gets one ticket FREE!
Sell 5 individual raffle tickets and the seller gets one ticket FREE!
Sell the most raffle tickets and win a Vermont Commons Flashbag!!!

Nearly everyone in Vermont is either a Yankees or Red Sox fan, so please ask your friends, relatives, neighbors, and work colleagues to buy a raffle ticket. Don't miss getting in on this chance to see the ULTIMATE sports rivalry. Thank you! All proceeds benefit VCS.

PRINT or PURCHASE raffle tickets at www.vermontcommons.org/raffle.