



Turtle Tracks

August 29, 2009

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

AUG 31

New Families Orientation
6-8 pm
(Parents AND Students)

SEPT 1

First Day of School

SEPT 4

All-School Picnic
Early Dismissal 1:30

SEPT 7

Labor Day
NO SCHOOL

SEPT 9

Picture Day!

SEPT 10

Parent's Night
6:30-9:00 pm
(Parents Only)

SEPT 21-25

Fall Encounter Week

Opening Day Coffee and Treats

Submitted by Hans Manske

Vermont Commons School invites all VCS families to attend our September 1st Opening Day Coffee Hour starting at 7:45 am in the downstairs kitchen. Please feel free to stop in on the first day of school to say hello to everyone and grab a cup of coffee. We look forward to seeing you there!



VCS Community Gathers to Welcome Peter Gilmore

Submitted by Wendy McArdle



Peter Gilmore and Mary Hamilton Homer, chair of the VCS Board of Trustees

On Tuesday, August 18th, more than 100 parents, faculty, and friends of the Vermont Commons community gathered at ECHO to officially welcome Peter Gilmore, our new Head of School. It was a perfect opportunity for Peter and his wife Cynthia to meet the people who make our community so special. The evening included inspiring words about the school's mission, lively conversation among friends, and even a dramatic thunderstorm! Our heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who attended and helped make the evening a success!

Special thanks to Claudia Barber for her beautiful flower arrangements and overall flair in organizing the event; Rebecca Lindy Coll for making a hand-bound guest book; Shelburne Farms for donating a selection of delicious cheddar cheese; Penny Cluse for preparing delicious local veggies and dips in turtle-shaped bread bowls; and ECHO for allowing us move the event indoors at no extra charge.

New Families Orientation

Submitted by Allison Fayle



Vermont Commons School invites all new 2009-2010 families to an evening of presentations and activities on **Monday, August 31st at 6:00 pm**. The event will be held at school, and we will get you up-to-speed on everything you need to know before starting your first year at VCS. Parents AND students should attend this event! Please feel free to call the main office with any questions.

Head of School:

Peter Gilmore

FACULTY & STAFF

Chance Cardamone-Knewstub

Mark Cline Lucey

Jennifer Cohen

Adriana Comtois

Conor Driscoll

Glenn Etter

Peter Goff

Xue Li

Hans Manske

Ben Patrick

Jessica Redmond

Jordan Romm

Cara Simone Bader

Jasmine Walker

Assistant Head of School: Hans Manske

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

Registrar & Editor of Turtle Tracks: Allison Fayle

Marketing: Wendy McArdle

Flying Turtle Volley Ball!

Submitted by Peter Goff



Attention all Flying Turtles! The 2009 Volleyball season is upon us! VCS Volleyball has both girls and boys teams, and we are looking to fill our rosters with some new blood, as we lost a lot of experience to graduation. Anyone with any interest is encouraged to at least give it a try, no experience necessary, all ages welcome. Our girls are hoping to defend their State Championship title, and our boys are looking to capture their first this year. Most of our matches happen in October (one or two per week), so you will have time to get up to speed and prepare for the season.

We will begin optional pre-season practices on Monday August 24th (6am, Burlington Waterfront Park, and 3:30pm at Colchester Airport Park sand courts). Preseason 2-a-days will run throughout the week. Regular practices will be at Sports & Fitness Edge, South Burlington on: Monday (3:30-5:30), Tuesday (3:00-5:00), Thursday (3:00-5:00), and Friday (3:30 - 5:30). The practice and match schedules for the season can be found on the VCS Athletics calendar.

Again, we welcome and encourage anyone to join us for a practice or two, just to get a feel for the sport and team...

Coaches: Peter, Bill, & Ben

September 21st-25th Encounter Week News

Submitted by Chance Cardamone-Knewstub

9th graders and families take note! All 9th graders to bike around Lake Champlain (bridge to bridge).

Breaking from tradition, all 9th graders will participate in one Encounter Week. We will be bicycling around Lake Champlain! More detailed information will be coming next week but it's never too soon to make sure that you have a bike that you feel comfortable riding and that you know is in excellent shape. It doesn't matter whether it's a mountain bike, a road bike, or something in between, it just needs to work and you need to feel comfortable on it. Please direct any questions to me.



Details on all Encounter Week offerings will be in next week's Turtle Tracks. Please make sure to review that information and talk with your student about what choices are most appropriate. It is very important that I know as soon as possible if there are specific offerings that your child cannot do. It becomes very problematic to make changes to Encounter Week groups after they are created.

How you can help with Encounter Weeks:

We need a variety of things to help pull off this round of Encounter Weeks. Please contact Chance if you can help with any of the following:

1. Parent Drivers. Please call or email me if you could be available to help transport students during this week.
2. Help with our Food Preservation Encounter Week: Kitchens! We need access to kitchens – the bigger the better. We could also use canning jars.



Vermont Commons School

75 Green Mountain Dr.
So. Burlington, VT
05403

Phone: 802-865-8084

Fax: 802-865-2429

Email: info@vermontcommons.org

Website: <http://www.vermontcommons.org>

3. The Writer's Retreat needs help as well. We offered this Encounter Week last year and we've received many requests to offer it again. However, we're in search of a site. Our group size will be 9 or 10 people. The ideal location will be something like a cabin that can be heated, has water, kitchen and bathroom facilities. It does not need to have beds for everyone. We are prepared to pay for the use of such a facility.

Retreating Writers Seek Camp

Submitted by Glenn Etter



8-10 peaceful, considerate, yet enthusiastic students are seeking a scenic camp for the Writer's Retreat Encounter Week of September 21-25. If you know of a place that is nice (and affordable or free!), please send an email to Glenn Etter at getter@vermontcommons.org.

DON'T FORGET! All paperwork and forms included in the summer mailing are due in the main office by Sept. 1st. Please feel free to call Allison at 865-8084 x10 if you have any questions!

Flying Turtles Soccer Update

Submitted by Chance Cardamone-Knewstub

Soccer Practice will begin Thursday, September 4. The soccer practice schedule will be as follows:

Tuesday: 3:00-5:00

Thursday: 3:00-5:00

Friday: 4:00-6:00

All practices will be held at Farrell Park in South Burlington. Students must be picked up at practice, on time!

Anyone interested in being on the Soccer team should let me know as soon as they see me.



11th and 12th Grade Science Elective

Submitted by Peter Goff

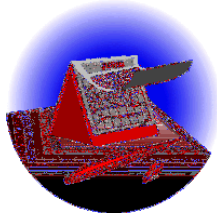
For 11th and 12th graders, a new option for a Spring science elective is going to be Marine Biology. This course will use an ecological focus to examine the geography & geophysics of the ocean floor, the vast array of unique (and largely unknown) biological communities, and recent human impacts on our watery world. The course will culminate with a weekend trip to the Boston Aquarium and a deep-sea fishing expedition.



Instructor: Peter

College Visits to VCS

Submitted by Sarah Soule



A variety of colleges and universities are scheduling visits at Vermont Commons to meet with juniors and seniors (and their parents) this fall. The schedule is posted on our website on the college visit calendar. Please check it regularly as the list changes continually!

This is a reminder to each member of the Class of 2010 that all seniors are to request their TWO letters of recommendation for their college applications from their teachers by Friday, September 11th. Seniors can get the recommendation forms via the Common Application's website: www.commonapp.org and are encouraged to see Sarah Soule with any questions.

35mm Cameras Needed!

Submitted by Mark Cline Lucey

This fall, Mark's Research & Service class will be working with a class at Barnes Elementary School. The students will be documenting and mapping their neighborhood using photography and we need cameras and film.

Do you have an old 35mm camera that's been sitting in a drawer ever since you upgraded to digital? Film that's sitting in your fridge? Would you be willing to donate it to this wonderful place-based education project?

Please bring any donations to Mark at school. Thank you!



Registering for the October SAT

Submitted by Sarah Soule



The deadline for registering for the October 10, 2009 SAT test date is September 9th. To register, go to www.collegeboard.com. Our school code is 460-417.

Fall Picture Day Wednesday September 9th

Submitted by Sarah McGarghan

Sarah McGarghan of srmphotography is thrilled to announce that, once again, she will be participating in VCS's picture day on Wednesday September 9th. Just a few reminders:

- ⊕ All individual pictures will be taken outdoors using natural light. This will lend itself to a more natural portrait.
- ⊕ Some hints as to what to wear for picture day:
 - Choose solid colors or simple patterns. Logos should be avoided.
 - Select small accessories that do not detract, such as simple earrings and necklaces.

- Combs and brushes are great for quick touch-ups!

⊕ Class pictures and the all-school picture are taken as a group photo. Unfortunately if your student is not in attendance for either of these pictures, there will be **no retakes offered.**

⊕ All students will receive a complimentary 5x7 class picture.

⊕ It was a Green Team win last year, so the ID cards will display the winner's colors!

Included as a link in this Turtle Tracks email, you'll find a price sheet of the packages available. Please be advised that if you are interested in purchasing a package, the completed form, along with form of payment, **MUST** be returned on picture day, September 9th. Again, please make sure that your student brings the completed order form, plus correct form of payment, with them when their picture is taken.

Please anticipate delivery of your pictures within 2-3 weeks of picture day. Retakes will be scheduled within 2 weeks of receiving your original package.

If you decide to purchase a package, we are confident that you will be thrilled with your images. However, if for any reason you are dissatisfied, we will be happy to offer a retake, or offer you a full refund. Refund requests **must** be submitted within 10 days of receiving your images from the school.

Everyone who ordered a package will have the opportunity to purchase more photos. There will be an "add-on" order form included with your images. However, to order additional pictures, an initial package must be ordered.

A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Vermont Commons School.

Throughout the year srmphotography will have the opportunity to photograph school events. Those images will be posted on a password protected website that only the VCS community will be able to access; no names will ever be attached to these images. If you prefer that your child's image not be posted, PLEASE make sure to check the appropriate box on the order form.

Thank you! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call at 802.425.4034 or e-mail me at sarah@srmphotography.com!

Driver's Education

Submitted by John Viau

Driver's Education will once again be offered after school at VCS this fall! The teacher is John Viau, a certified Driver's Ed teacher, and all inquiries should be directed to John at:

ASM Driving School -- Arriving Safely Matters
John F. Viau - Owner & Operator
34 South Summit Street
Essex Junction, Vermont 05452
(802) 878-4839 or 355-3159
johnviau@msn.com

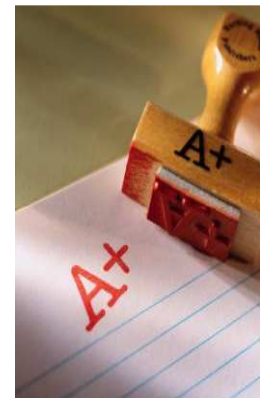


The cost is \$750/student, and the class includes both driving time and classroom instruction.

Fall 2009 Enrichment Offerings

Submitted by Jennifer Cohen

Currently Vermont Commons School is offering one-hour and 1/2-hour increments of Academic Enrichment in Math, Language Arts, Chinese, Spanish, and Academic Skill Building (note taking, test taking, organizational and time management skills). Families may sign up for services on



a quarterly basis. We will schedule 7 meetings per quarter, with any missed sessions to be rescheduled by the tutor and student. The sessions will be scheduled during the student's study halls or during the lunch period

The tutor will contact you by e-mail to confirm scheduling and toward the end of the quarter; the tutor will contact you again with a report about what he or she and the student have been working on. Payment and form are due before services begin.

Please stop by the main office to pick up an enrichment enrollment form or email jcohen@vermontcommons.org for more information.

Environmental Team Leadership Program

Submitted by ECHO



ECHO Lake Aquarium & Science Center has over 70 species of live animals (fish, amphibians and reptiles) and 100 hands-on interactive exhibits and national traveling exhibits that change on a seasonal basis. ECHO educates and delights visitors about the ecology, culture, history and opportunities for stewardship of the Lake Champlain Basin. ECHO is currently looking to recruit high school E-Team members to support ECHO's Education Department by engaging youth, families and community members about science and environmental issues. Responsibilities will include planning and running *Community Science Nights* for Burlington's low-income area residents, providing outreach experiences in environmental education to youth at Burlington community centers, and interact with the general public by leading science experiments and environmentally-themed crafts and games. If you might be interested in joining ECHO's E-Team, stop by the main office for more information!!

Names & Faces to Include VCS Businesses

Submitted by Wendy McArdle

Our handy little Names & Faces directory is adding a new section this year! In addition to listing students, faculty and staff, we thought it would be nice to include a listing of businesses owned and operated by the immediate families of Vermont Commons students and alumni. We hope this new feature will make it easier for our community to support each other by patronizing VCS family businesses. Keeping it local is so important, especially in these tough economic times!

There is no charge to have your business listed in Names & Faces. Simply complete the online form by August 28th. Online form at: www.vermontcommons.org/vcsbusinesses.