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Press Release

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Vermont Commons Launches New Summer Camp Turtle Trek Adventure Camp

Is living in the woods for a week your idea of fun? Is learning about the interconnectedness of nature something you find fascinating? This summer Vermont Commons School is piloting a new summer camp called Turtle Trek Adventure Camp. The camp is open to 10-12 year old boys and girls who are interested in learning the skills and experiencing the thrills associated with backpacking and wilderness camping. Two 5-day sessions are being offered: July – 18 and July 21 – 25. Experienced environmental educators from Vermont Commons will help campers explore the Moosalamoo Region of the Green Mountains, just south of Middlebury. Campers will practice outdoor living skills and learn about the ecology of the area. The focus will be on science, stewardship, cooperation, challenge and fun!

Turtle Trek Adventure Camp is modeled after the Encounter Week program, one of the defining features of Vermont Commons in that it illustrates the School's focus on experiential education, community service and ecological citizenship. During Encounter Week (offered three times a year) students participate in week-long adventures focused on travel and/or intensive field study. Programs are designed based on faculty strengths and students' interests. Some of the Encounter Week adventures offered this past winter included Snowshoeing, Cross Country Skiing, Winter Ecology, Cooking, Understanding Darfur, a trip to the Sundance Film Festival and a 10-day trip to Belize.

Similar to the Encounter Week program, Turtle Trek Adventure Camp will immerse campers in a wilderness experience where they'll learn to appreciate the interconnected nature of ecosystems -- and *social* systems. Team building and group challenges will be part of the 5-day program.



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Turtle Trek Adventure Camp is the brainchild of two Vermont Commons employees, Wendy McArdle and Hans Manske, both of whom worked as wilderness leaders for Yosemite National Institute (YNI) before moving to Vermont in the mid-1990's. YNI is one of the premiere outdoor environmental education organizations in the U.S. "We're planning on using many of the same strategies and techniques from our days at YNI to help inspire campers to learn about nature and care about their environment," explains McArdle who was hired in November as Director of Marketing and Development. Manske, who has been at Vermont Commons since 1997, will serve as the leader for both sessions of Turtle Trek Adventure Camp. He currently teaches science and math and serves as the Dean of Students and Chair of the Math Department.

Like Vermont Commons, the camp is committed to keeping the "class size" small. Enrollment in Turtle Trek Adventure Camp is limited to 12 campers (and two leaders) per session. To register or obtain additional information, please contact Wendy McArdle at 802.865.8084 x19 or visit www.vermontcommons.org/turtletrek. The deadline to register is June 6, 2008.





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About Vermont Commons School:

Vermont Commons School is an independent day school for college-bound students in grades 7 – 12. The school offers a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum that includes a focus on community service and experiential education. The mission of the Vermont Commons School is to provide a vision of education that crosses traditional boundaries and develops ecological citizenship, with the goal of empowering students with the knowledge, character, skills, and moral vision necessary to become responsible, pro-active members of the world community. For more information, please visit www.vermontcommons.org.

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