

DECEMBER 20TH, 2013

TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Upcoming Events

Dec. 21st-Jan. 5th

VCS Closed for
Winter Break

January 10th

End of 2nd Quarter &
First Day of Ski Club

January 13th-14th

Review for 1st
Semester Exams

January 15th-17th

Final Exams for
1st Semester

VCS Community Film Series, Part II: *The Opiate Effect* by Mary Hamilton

Skip Gates, father of Will Gates, a UVM student and consummate ski racer who died of a heroin overdose, visited Vermont Commons yesterday for our Health and Wellness Common Hour. Skip and Tristram Coffin, the US Attorney who prosecuted the man who sold Will the heroin, showed their film about the scourge of opiate addiction in the northeast and across the country. Skip shared his heart breaking story about losing his son and best friend with our students and faculty.



Photo Courtesy of Mark Cline-Lucey

Our students were moved by his story and engaged both Skip and Tris in a great discussion about opiate use, how to help friends or family, and about Skip's own experience. Once again our student body illustrated the maturity and depth of feeling and thought of which we are so proud.

Skip, Tris and a panel of experts in the community returned Wednesday evening for a community screening and discussion sponsored by VCS and the United Way of Chittenden County.

One of the many take-away messages? GET RID OF YOUR MEDICATIONS. Annie Ramniceanu, of Spectrum Youth and Family Services commented that they are seeing addicted 12 and 13 year olds who gain access through experimenting with prescription meds from their family medicine cabinets. And as Tris said, having opiates in your home is like having 50 loaded guns sitting around.

We are so pleased to have been able to bring this important issue to our community and thank Martha Maksym of the United Way of Chittenden County for her help in making it happen and in putting together such an incredible panel of speakers.

Special Thanks from the Senior Class

The senior class would like to extend a thank you to Phil Oldham, who came and spoke in our Ecological Economics class. Covering issues ranging from sustainable international aid to corruption in East and West Africa, Phil helped us gain a more complete understanding of global affairs in order to work with our Challenge 20/20 partners in Mzuzu, Malawi. Additionally, a huge thanks to Mark who was able to bring this great learning opportunity to the class through the VCS Parent Resources Inventory.



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The Annual Fund Blooper/Outtake Reel has Been Released!

Watch friends and family act in very silly ways in this blooper reel from our popular "Should I?" video! And then consider an END OF YEAR GIFT!!

Go to www.vermontcommons.org/giving

Math 9 Students Participate in Coding Challenge

Last week, students in Jasmine's Math 9 class participated in the international Hour of Code challenge.

They wrote programs in Python, a popular programming language, and started learning about loops and other computer science terms.



PACS News *by LaTrisha Gibbs & Steph Muzzy*

We would like to thank every parent who helped make this year's teacher appreciation luncheon a huge success! The faculty and staff had a wonderful time enjoying all of the delectable foods and desserts. They were also very appreciative of the gift cards and chocolates.

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday break!





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