



DECEMBER 6TH, 2013

TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Upcoming Events	December 7th Artisan Fair at VCS	December 8th Barnes & Noble Book Fair	December 13th VCS Goes to the Movies <i>The Desolation of Smaug</i>	December 20th World Language Celebration
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Sibling Shadow Day at VCS!





From the Admissions Office

We hosted a very successful Sibling Shadow Day on Thursday, December 5th. Brothers and sisters of currently enrolled students spent the day at our school experiencing a “day in the life of VCS”. The brothers and sisters attended classes, participated in a Green Gray competition and also ate lunch with their siblings. This is an annual event and one that we enjoy hosting every year!

Hobbit Viewing Next Friday, Dec. 13th

The Junior Class is sponsoring a “VCS Goes to the Movies” date on Friday, December 13th, and we’ll all head over to Palace 9, after school, for the premiere of *The Hobbit*. Watch your email for details on Monday or Tuesday, but in advance, the school will cover the cost of the movie ticket. Students should plan to provide pocket money for snacks and beverages. At the end of the school day, all students and faculty will walk over to the theater and then pick up next Friday will be at the Palace 9 at the movie’s conclusion. More details will be forthcoming -- stay tuned to email for time of pick up!



Sustainability Committee Visits the Sustainability Academy

This week, the VCS Sustainability Committee (a.k.a. Bradley’s Research & Service class) was able to visit the Sustainability Academy in the Old North End of Burlington. This is a Pre-K through grade 5 elementary school that decided five years ago to transform itself into a magnet school focused on the concept of sustainability. The mission of the school is: to educate and empower students to improve the quality of life for all—economically, socially and environmentally—now and for future generations. An impressive mission!

We received a wonderfully informative tour from the school’s Sustainability Coach, Anne Tewksbury-Frye, during which we immediately saw how the school takes the concept of sustainability far beyond the environment to include the realms of social and economic justice. The school itself is very diverse, with students from many different social, ethnic and economic backgrounds. We got the sense that there is always a great deal going on at this school with disciplined lines of students continually parading from one place to another led by their teachers. The school is plastered inside and out with student artwork and is also filled with examples of sustainable technology from a major energy retrofit that was done at the school.

One of the most interesting technologies is a geothermal system that draws 55°F water up from 300 feet below the ground beneath the school through several wells and then uses this water to assist with air conditioning in the hot months and heating in the cold month. Through this and other technologies, the school has reduced its energy costs by 75%! Even though the Sustainability Academy is an elementary school, we came away with many ideas that could potentially be copied or adapted for use at VCS. Overall, however, our main impression was that elementary school kids are really, really tiny...and cute!

Common Hour - December 11th

We would like to invite VCS parents and other community friends to please join us next Wednesday morning in the Commons Room at 9:50 a.m. when we welcome our featured guest speaker, Janie Cohen. Janie is the director of UVM's Robert Hull Fleming Museum. Janie has facilitated two major exhibitions at the Fleming: REMBRANDT AND THE ART OF ETCHING: PRINTS FROM THE REMBRANDT HOUSE MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM (9/03-12/03) and ANDY WORHOL WORK AND PLAY. She previously served as the Fleming's curator and assistant director for more than a decade. Join us for an interesting discussion on art!



VCS Sustainability Survey - There's Still Time!

If you have not yet completed the VCS Sustainability Survey, there is still time to do so! We have had a GREAT response so far, but we would love to get as much feedback and as many voices heard as possible! You can find the survey at the following link: <http://www.quicksurveys.com/s/o9QYx7>

Thank You, Tiffany!



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