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APRIL 12TH, 2017

# TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

**UPCOMING  
EVENTS**

**April 13th - 14th**  
Senior Exam Period

**April 14th**  
Senior Send-Off  
Morning Meeting

**April 14th**  
Last Day for Seniors

**April 21st**  
Progress Reports  
Sent Home

## Vermont Commons at 2017 Dartmouth Model U.N.



# Four VCS Students Teach Environmental Lessons to Local First Graders

by Max Perrotto '19

Last November, a few students went to the Youth Environmental Summit in Barre to showcase films they had made about wind energy in September. Mark Cline Lucey, who was bringing the students, opened the event to anyone interested and I jumped on the opportunity along with two more students. We learned a lot and had a good day together.

At the Youth Environmental Summit we learned about an opportunity to apply for a mini grant for an environmental educational project, as well as a teaching program. The six of us formulated an idea for an encounter week revolving around the damage to the loon population in VT. We all worked tirelessly for the grant, trying to meet a tight deadline, but unfortunately it was denied.

Of course, we didn't give up. I looked into the other possibility, teaching children about the environment. I asked my group-mates about it, and Taegen Yardley, Sevi Burget-Foster, Lilah Neider and I formed a team of four for teaching. We applied for a position on the team teaching about the waste system and, when we were accepted, we became the first official Teens Reaching Youth (TRY) team of Vermont Commons School. Together with Mark Cline Lucey we attended a full day training session in Hyde Park where we learned what we were going to teach, and got plenty of supplies for it.

For the next two weeks we will be teaching first grade students at the Orchard about the importance of recycling and compost! The five of us chose this program because we know the importance of environmental education, as it will have a big impact in the future when it matters most. We all love working with younger students, and we all know it will be a great teaching experience.



# Janine Farms!

by Ben Patrick

Background photo by  
Graham Byers '18

*This project has been created by "Technology Exposed", a Research and Service Class at Vermont Commons School.*

Do you want to eat an African eggplant or an African hot pepper this Summer? Yes, you do!

Our class is starting an online business for farmers at New Farmers for New Americans in Burlington, Vermont. This organization works to help provide immigrants and refugees with agricultural resources. On our end, we hope to support individual farmers by developing websites and graphics that will promote their business of selling healthy produce. 100% of the money will go directly to farmers.

We have recently secured the website domain, and have just began work on Janine's website. Soon our class will work on promoting social media to spread the fruits of this labor across the globe. It is still in its embryonic stage, but please visit our website here:

[JANINEFARMS.COM](http://JANINEFARMS.COM)

Before we launch the e-commerce component of this business, we are "kick-starting" this business with sales of seed packets at the front desk. The seeds are in beautifully printed packages, and are \$5.00.

This is a simple way to try exotic foods, be more healthy, and support a farmer in need!



## Kent '20 Mentors Future Racer

article & photos by Tony Vaccaro

Kent Vaccaro took time out from his racing duties at Homestead Miami Raceway to discuss the different aspects of his racecar with a very enthusiastic 8 year old who was visiting the track with his Dad. They spoke about the different parts of the car and how they work. But the real pleasure for the young boy was being able to sit in the car and learn about all the controls that are available to a driver during a race. As you can see it was a big thumbs up for the lad.



# Yearbook Ads

by *Adriana Comtois*

As we are creating the yearbook 2016-2017, we have reserved some space for you to send a special message to a graduating senior, a hard-worker student or just your favorite VCS person. We also welcome ads for your growing businesses. Prices are as follows:

- Business Card Size (3 1/2 x 2") \$15
- Quarter of a page (3 3/4 x 5 ") \$25
- Half a page (7 1/2 x 5") \$50
- Full page (8x11) \$75

If you are interested, please send me an e-mail. We will be accepting ads until Wednesday, April 12th. If you have any questions, please let us know at [a.comtois@vermontcommons.org](mailto:a.comtois@vermontcommons.org).

## Seeking Parent Volunteers for Green Up Day

by *Dexter Mahaffey*

We are looking for some parent volunteers to coordinate the building of Adirondack chairs and/or picnic tables for our outdoor spaces on campus on Greenup Day (the afternoon of Friday, May 5 at Vermont Commons). You'll have lots of student and faculty helpers, but we need parent leaders willing to organize donations of materials, determine plans/designs, and oversee construction on the day-of. If interested, please contact Dexter.



## LOOKING AHEAD

### *Cosmic Bowling*

**Where:** Champlain Lanes

**When:** Friday, April 14th, 7-9pm

**Who:** Open to all grades

**How Much:** \$15 (includes shoes)

### *Friend Day*

**Where:** VCS

**When:** Tuesday, May 9th

**Who:** VCS students & their friends

Tell your pals & mark your calendars!

# FROM DEXTER

There's lots going on this week, as Seniors take their final exams later in the week and we give them a rousing send-off at Friday's Morning Meeting. They head off to a wonderful array of innovative and compelling Senior Projects, which you are invited to come learn about on Friday June 2nd, 12:30-3:30, when they each present on their experiences to the public.

Next week we'll observe Earth Day with programming throughout, all focusing on the social and environmental challenges of electronics, from their sources to their disposal. We'll watch a documentary on the coltan mining in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo that supplies the needed mineral for cell phone usage, explore the environmental impact of e-waste, and hear from local experts from Tetra Tech, the Environmental Depot, and Amnesty International on what we can do to make a positive difference when it comes to our use of technology.

We've finally confirmed the general 2017-18 school year calendar, with the following highlights:

**August 31, 2017:** First Day of School  
**September 4:** Labor Day; NO SCHOOL  
**October 2-6:** Fall Encounter Week  
**October 19th:** Conference Day (Parents/Guardians and Advisors); NO CLASSES  
**October 20th:** Fall Break  
**November 3rd:** End of 1st Quarter  
**November 20-24:** Thanksgiving Vacation; NO SCHOOL  
**December 25-January 5, 2018:** Winter Vacation; NO SCHOOL  
**January 15:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday; NO SCHOOL  
**January 16:** High School End of Second Quarter/Exam Review Day  
**January 17-19:** High School Mid-Year Exams  
**January 19:** Middle School End of Second Quarter/End of First Semester (Grades 6-12)  
**February 5-9:** Winter Encounter Week  
**February 26-March 2:** February Break; NO SCHOOL  
**March 30:** End of 3rd Quarter  
**April 18-20:** Senior Final Exams  
**April 23-27:** Spring Break  
**May 21-25:** Spring Encounter Week  
**May 28:** Memorial Day; NO SCHOOL  
**June 6:** End of 4th Quarter  
**June 7-8:** Final Exam Review, Grades 8-11  
**June 11-13:** Final Exams, Grades 8-11  
**June 14:** Field Day  
**June 15:** Graduation, Last Day of School

We've worked hard to align our schedule with those of local public schools, while maintaining the integrity of our program; we hope this schedule works well for everyone!

This schedule will be uploaded to the Calendars page of our website before the end of the week.

Background photo by Graham Byers '18

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