

MAY 4, 2015

# TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 6**  
Common Hour  
Spring R&S Presentations

**May 9**  
Spring Gala

**May 12**  
Screening of Jay Cra-  
ven's *Northern Borders*

**May 13**  
China Big Trip  
Departs

### UPCOMING:

## Spring Gala This Saturday, May 9th!

The Vermont Commons 2015 Spring Gala will be held this coming Saturday, May 9. There will be plenty of reveling, entertainment, and an auction (in which you could win a Retro Ski Chalet Weekend in New Hampshire, SAT Prep with Jasmine, and much more) to benefit the An-

nual Fund.

Parents & families, don't forget to RSVP to Mary or by Paperless Post. Scholarship tickets are also still available! Contact Mary at [mhamilton@vermontcommons.org](mailto:mhamilton@vermontcommons.org) for more information.



## Capital Campaign and Annual Fund

The Capital Campaign is at **\$727,832**  
(86% of goal) and the Annual Fund  
is at **\$127,167** (72% of goal).

**UPCOMING:**

## Evolutionary Biology CH Students to Lead Seminars

We're hosting some lunch-time seminars led by the tenth-grade Contract Honors (CH) Evolutionary Biology students. All students and faculty are welcome to attend. See the schedule on the right for times.

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**SCIENCE NEWS:**

## Dissections

Congratulations to the dissection teams lead by Megan Hosmer and Jacob Decatur who successfully met the challenge of pulling out a shark's brain, wholly intact! Every VCS ninth grader has faced this exacting challenge, but very few (less than 10 in the last decade...) have had the steady hands, nausea-proof stomach, patience, luck, and dexterity to pull it off!

Name	Time (Lunch)	Topic
Katya	Monday, May 4	Vaccines 101: understanding the SocioScientific pros & cons
Kamli	Tuesday, May 5	CDC 101: why is the USA stockpiling the most dangerous diseases on earth?
Danny	Wednesday, May 6	Zombies 101: parasites which cause behavioral changes
Sean	Thursday, May 7	Hobbits 101: Homo floresiensis
Alex D.	Friday, May 8	Stem-cells 101: understanding the basics and history



# Vermont Commons Welcomes New Faculty

*Dexter Mahaffey*

Please give a warm welcome to Jenna Bisset, who joins us as learning specialist. Jenna holds a Masters in Education from UVM, has worked and taught in several schools as well as at the Stern Center, and is the founder and director of the Vermont Learning Lab, a learning center in Richmond.

Also, we're pleased to announce that Jory Hearst and Kris Mohlman will join us next year as core sixth-grade teaching faculty. Jory, who will teach the humanities inter-

disciplinary course, comes to us from Green Mountain Union in Chester and holds a Master of Arts in Teaching from Simmons College and a degree in comparative literature from Michigan. Kris, who will teach the math/science interdisciplinary course, comes to us from St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Maryland, has done coursework at Harvard, and holds a geology from Bowdoin.

We are delighted to welcome these wonderful professionals to the Vermont Commons School community!

## Design Challenge Winners

*Dexter Mahaffey*

Over the weeks between February and Spring breaks, students and teachers were challenged to create solutions to some problem in the world through artistic, technological, or social designs. They could work individually or in teams and could work on any problem of interest to them.

Those taking up the challenge had to make their initial three-minute pitches on April 1st, after which they had the remaining weeks before Spring Break to revise and complete their designs and get as far into either a build or implementation of their project as possible.

Through an incredible pool of ingenuity, the following participants in this design challenge earned top honors. First place went to Stefan Brecher for his build-out of flush

wall-mounted retractable seating. Second place went to Zelda Ferris and Jill Lamberson for their creation of an educational website on body image disorder in boys (see <http://boys2kendolls.com/>). Third place went to Camille Bartsch for her design and mock-up of a backpack for children in developing countries in which to carry water that is APA-compliant for load-bearing, rather than the traditional jerry can.

Also, honorable mention goes to Kent Vaccaro for working on a refillable ballpoint ink pen design and the team of Emma Dixon and Fiona Oldham for their design of a non-restrictive hair-tie. Congratulations to these innovative students!

## College Counseling Reminder

*Sarah Soule*

Juniors are reminded that May 8th is the deadline to register for the June SAT and ACT tests! Please go to your Naviance account and use the College Board's link to register for either the SAT or the subject tests and the ACT. Please see Sarah with any questions.

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