

May 1, 2012

# TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### May 7-19

Annual Fund  
Auction

### May 8

Teacher/Staff  
Appreciation  
Luncheon 11:30-  
12:30 PM

### May 10

State of the School  
6-8 PM

### May 18

Fourth Quarter  
Ends

## State of the School—Thursday 5/10 from 6-8 PM



Please join us next Thursday evening for an open conversation with Peter Gilmore in regards to the State of Vermont Commons. More details about the discussion topics will be shared in next week's Turtle Tracks.

## Have you Donated to the Annual Fund?



The end of our fiscal year is nearing and we need everyone's help to meet our Annual Fund goal! The Annual Fund supports important VCS programs such as Financial Aid, E Weeks, and the World Languages Program. Please help us with our goal of 100% participation from our parents and check out Alum Johnathan Mann's fantastic Annual Fund video by clicking on the picture to the left! Thanks for your support! -The Annual Fund Committee

## Class of 2012 College Decisions! –by Sarah Soule

I feel very fortunate to serve in a dual role at Vermont Commons as I am able to work with families as they first consider our school and as our juniors and seniors evaluate their higher education opportunities. That being said today is May 1st and the day that the Class of 2012 has to submit their deposits at the college or university where they will enroll in the fall. I am very pleased with each of the choices made by our seniors and am pleased to share the list of their final decisions with our community. As they cross the stage on graduation day, I know they are heading off to the college or university that is the perfect fit for them as based on their specific interests and academic profile. Please join me in congratulating our seniors as they look ahead to their first year in college!

Sandra Ackert Smith - Mt. Holyoke College, MA  
Joey Carrara - University of Colorado at Boulder, CO  
Adam Coll - University of Denver, CO  
Christian Frey - Acadia University, NS  
Leslie Gadway - St. Michael's College, VT  
Elsa Hollyer - University of Redlands, CA  
Lex Jackson - Colby College, ME  
Nate Jaffe - Union College, NY

Mae Kemsley - College of Wooster, OH  
Justine Magowan - Tulane University, LA  
Josh Minot - Hampshire College, MA  
Sarah Mueller - Beloit College, WI  
Tim Sears - St. Lawrence University, NY  
Milo Self - Hampshire College, MA  
Phineas Schlossberg - Beloit College, WI  
Willie Strausser - University of British Columbia, BC

## Annual Fund Auction Items –by Shona Mossey



A few of the fabulous gifts coming up in auction next week donated by Deirdre Senior, owner of, A Little Something in Shelburne, VT are A Gretchen Scott Design long turtle shirt, beautiful gunmetal, and turquoise wrist band for all ages, and a set of unique bottle openers and coasters. Please visit their Facebook Page by clicking [here](#), and don't forget to "Like" them!

## Summer Research Project –by Peter Goff



This summer, Aidan Villani-Holland ('14) and Nora Hill ('15) will be working with me as part of the Vermont EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) project. In particular, we will be doing research into adaptation to climate change (the RACC program: <http://www.uvm.edu/~epscor/new02/?q=node/142>). Nora and Aidan submitted applications to the science faculty in February, and once they were selected as the two finalists, the three of us applied to the UVM summer program. We will be spending a week living in St. Michael's college dorms and working with UVM faculty (at UVM labs, in the field, and on their research vessel). After that week, the three of us will be carrying out a year-long research project, coordinating with a state-wide, decade-long data collection/analysis program to better understand our changing waterways. Throughout the summer and fall, we will be collecting data, during the winter we will be analyzing the results of our experiment, and we will present our findings at UVM in April 2013 at the annual undergraduate research day. In addition to that work, we will also be working with UVM Biology and Engineering faculty to develop a System Dynamics model of the Chagas Disease system (<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmpr/?Page=news&&storyID=13395>), which will hopefully lead to future grants, research opportunities, and travel for these and future VCS students. Congratulations, Aidan and Nora!

## Vermont Commons Brings Home First Ever Scholar's Bowl Trophy! –by Ruth Heindel



This Saturday, four eighth graders – Sophia Webb, Nathan Gamble, Sam Edwards-Kuhn, and Adam Hamilton – took second place in the Vermont Middle School Scholar's Bowl competition at Fair Haven Union High School. The team has been practicing for just three weeks, and managed to win 6 out of the 8 rounds, getting narrowly defeated by Mater Christi during the final round. Questions were on a wide range of topics – everything from Rick Perry quotes to the geography of the Indian Ocean.

In addition to awarding trophies for the top two teams, the tournament officials also recognized the top individual scorers. Nathan placed fourth for number of points scored, and Sam placed first, earning an impressive 400 points throughout the tournament! Most importantly, the entire team had a blast and worked well together, collaborating on hundreds of bonus questions.

I hope that more Scholar's Bowl trophies will join the shelves of the trophy case soon! Next year I hope to see Vermont Commons' teams competing in both Middle School and High School meets.

## Summer College Credit Available –by Peter Goff



During the upcoming summer, I will be teaching a course through UVM's Engineering department entitled; **Modeling Dynamic Systems** (CE395). This will be a largely independent-study program, centered around modeling the Chagas Disease system using System Dynamics and the STELLA™ modeling software. This class can be taken for a minimal free, or you can pay for UVM college credit. There will be UVM undergraduate students taking the class, and UVM faculty involved in the research. This class will be available to current ninth-twelfth grade students. No previous modeling experience is necessary, there will be a few face-to-face classes at VCS & UVM. Please contact me at PGoff@Vermontcommons.org with questions.

## Environmental Engineering R&S to Present Survey Results to City of South Burlington



Students in the Environmental Engineering Research & Service class will present the results of their Bartlett Brook watershed survey to the City of South Burlington and Jim Pease, Environmental Scientist, at the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation on Wednesday, May 2 at 7:30pm. The R&S class, in cooperation with the Champlain Water District, conducted a stream survey of three tributaries of Shelburne Bay (Pine Haven Shores Brook, North Brook, and Farrell Brook) within the City of South Burlington in February and March. The survey assesses and inventories potential sources of contamination to the watershed, which is a natural and recreational resource for the City of South Burlington, and the drinking water source for the 70,000 customers of the water district.

## The Porters Play at Higher Ground! –by Ruth Heindel



This Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 7:30-8:00pm, The Porters will be playing at Higher Ground, opening for the bands Brown Bird and Horse Feathers. The Porters is made up of Jordan Romm (former VCS faculty) on guitar, Rachel Smith (VCS alum) on violin, Ryan Hayes on drums, and Ruth Heindel on cello. We play all original compositions by Jordan, arranged by the band. We're really excited to play this gig, and it would mean a lot to us to see you there. The show is open to all ages!

Buy tickets in advance! The show is likely to sell out the day of the show, so be sure to get your tickets now! <http://higherground.frontgatetickets.com>

## This Week In Photos on Page 4...



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