

November 27, 2012

TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 28	November 29	December 5	December 8	December 9
Noon Dismissal	Sibling Shadow Day	Stress Reduction Workshop and Mindful Parenting	Artisan Craft Fair 10-4 PM at VCS	Barnes & Noble Fundraiser

Be Fun, Be Festive, Find that Fantastic Something—At the Craft Fair!



Join us for our first ever Artisan Fair, December 8, from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Bring your family, bring guests, share our school and support the local artisan scene!

Thus far we have wool, paper, beading, handcrafted handbags, jewelry, terrariums, hand-painted scarves and prints, wooden rolling pins, pies and more! \$5.00 will be charged at the door for Attendees.

Sibling Shadow Day!

Vermont Commons School is excited to host our fourth annual Sibling Shadow Day on Thursday, November 29th! Brothers and sisters, who are in fifth grade or higher, of alumni and currently enrolled students, are invited to spend the day attending classes.

Please RSVP to Sarah Soule, ssoule@vermontcommons.org, or 865-8084, ext. 27.

Coat Drive For Vermonters In Need



Do you have any coats, sweaters, hats, or gloves that you no longer wear? Please consider bringing in any gently-used winter clothing to help JUMP, an interfaith civic advocacy group. Keep Vermonters in-need warm.

Drop off dates are Wednesday, November 27th to Friday, December 7th. Please put items in bags and leave in Cara's office. Thanks for your help!

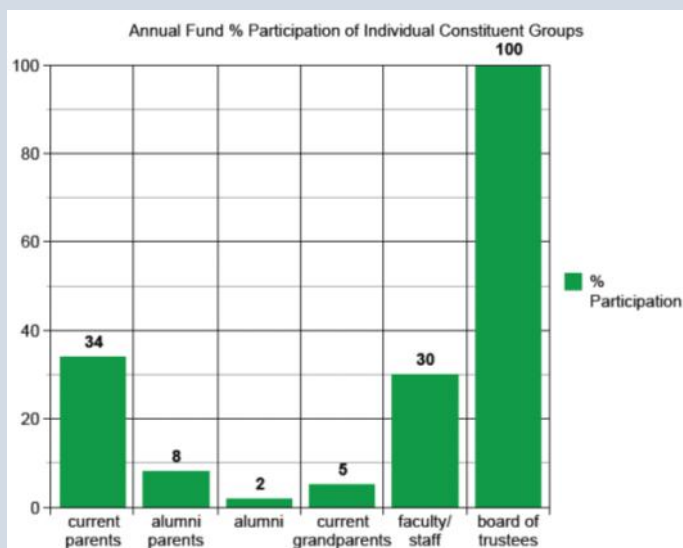
Save The Date—Free Wellness Workshops 12/5



The Wellness Committee would like to invite you to attend a workshop on Wednesday, December 5th. Vermont Commons Wellness Initiative is sponsoring Catherine Schiller to lead students and parents in two mindfulness based stress reduction workshops on December 5th.

Workshop 1 for students "Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction," 3:45 - 5:00 PM
Workshop 2 for parents "Mindful Parenting," 5:45 - 7:00 PM

Giving Tuesday: Breaking News!



Bill Gates supports our Annual Fund! Posted on his Twitter account @BillGates:

“Everyone knows about **#BlackFriday** and **#CyberMonday**. Now help me spread the word about **#GivingTuesday**: b-gat.es/Uoybz2 26 Nov 12.” He further explains on his blog, “Over 1,000 charities, community organizations and businesses in the US have banded together to promote this Tuesday as a day to give back, and to encourage people to give more, give smarter and celebrate the spirit of giving.”

Upshot: Bill Gates is asking you to support your favorite not-for-profits. We are hoping Vermont Commons School is one of them.

Thanks Bill!

Jeff Govoni, Annual Fund Chair and Mary Hamilton-Homer, Interim Director of Development

PACS News



Teacher Appreciation Luncheon—Traditionally, PACS has offered a teacher appreciation luncheon at VCS in the month of December. We have considered many time and calendar factors and are moving our luncheon to January. We will be appreciative to our fabulous faculty and staff on Tuesday, Jan. 15. Save the date! Parents supply the food and treats and staff the meal, so you will be contacted in early January for contributions.

Spirit Wear—New shirts (including girls’ styles) and hoodies will be coming in soon from our local printers. Stay tuned for sale dates and pricing! Yes, we are looking into PJ pants too!

Class Dinners—Our last class dinner was for 10th and 11th grade parents held at the Govoni/Lillibridge home. It was a very fun evening with delicious food and sparkling company. We look forward to planning more dinners again in the spring. We can’t thank you all enough for your food contributions, hosting skills, and honest discussions.

Please let us know if we can help you or answer any questions you have.

Lisa Lillibridge and Dinah Larsen, PACS Co-Chairs

Barnes & Noble Bookfair— Flying Turtles to the Rescue!



100% of all Book, Nook, and Cheesecake proceeds will benefit the Hurricane relief effort. **Simply use the school code 10872497 when making a B&N purchase in the store on December 9th or online from Dec. 9th-14th.** Check out more details at the Vermont Commons School Facebook Event Page. Please share the code with your friends and family! Thank you in advance for your support. Cheesecake orders and money are due on Dec. 8th at VCS. Stay tuned for a VCS Event Schedule at B&N on the 9th!

9th Grade Visits the Race Exhibit at Echo



On Thursday, November 8th, students in 9th grade Language Arts visited the Echo Center in Burlington to explore the visiting exhibit “Race: Are We So Different?” The social construction of race is an idea prevalent in the two novels we have read so far this year, Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. The exhibit aims to take a scientific, historical, and cultural look at our conceptions of race, and uses video footage of interviews, visual displays, written timelines, and hands-on activities to present the many different facets of this often hard-to-discuss topic. Also included in the exhibit were stations where visitors could document their own experiences with race; these first-hand accounts provided some of the most compelling components of the exhibit. The narratives were written

by people of many ages and from many different backgrounds, and were honest, moving, often troubling, but frequently hopeful. The students spent about an hour exploring the many displays, and reflected on the visit in a homework assignment. The following are excerpts from some of their written reactions to the exhibit:

“Our class arrived at Echo and started to chatter, but the second we walked into the Race Exhibit, the chattering slowly began to fade into different exhibits. The exhibits and visual representations were shocking. Some of the subject matters were topics we had discussions about in class, but some were not, and that’s what I liked about the exhibit. There were exhibits that talked about Native American mascots, and some about how the skin reacts to the environment. I liked how the exhibit was catered to people of all ages. For me, the visual representations of inequality were the best examples and best ways to prove a point. Yet, for others, it was the timeline about dates in history revolving around inequality and equality.” – Camille Bartsch



“While visiting the Race exhibit at Echo, my partner and I came across a station that was a small screen with three buttons on the bottom. On the screen were six faces, each a different race. Pressing the button on one side played a voice recording of a (unidentified) person speaking, and the viewer would try to guess which of the faces that voice belonged to. The button on the other side would light up the face of which that voice belonged to. The tricky part of this was, the voices did not quite match the faces as much as one would expect. For example, the voice with a clear “American” accent would match up with a photograph of an Asian woman’s face, and not a Caucasian woman’s face. This exhibit made me think before I judged. This station was showcasing that race does not determine much of anything besides what it is. The voice does reflect the appearance; it reflects the place where one spends the majority of one’s life, and the ways it grows up to know. A person with ancestors who lived in America could have grown up in Africa, thus having a thick African accent. This station surprised me a great deal, and now when I look at people I will think before I judge.” – Leah Dinkin



“One piece of information that I found intriguing was the small display on how race classification changed over the years. Ever since the beginning, there was an idea of separation of different people based on appearance, including in 1792 when a “racial angle” was conceived that classified people on how their brow and nose were angled. In 1839, physician Samuel George Morton made a study on how human skull size made a difference in intelligence by measuring different race’s skulls. It was later shown that his study was completely false, because he excluded skulls that didn’t support his theory, and it is now known that skull size has nothing to do with your intelligence.” - Lincoln Pierce