

April 17, 2013

# TURTLE TRACKS

A WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER FOR THE VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**April 18**

PACS Coffee  
Hour 7:45-  
8:45 AM

**April 19-26**

Spring Vacation

**May 9**

State of the  
School 6-8 PM

**May 17**

4th Quarter  
Ends

**May 20-25**

Spring Encounter  
Week

## Annual Fund Update

**\$150,000**



**Operation Participation!!!**

**Where We Are and What/Who We Need**

Current Parent Participation: **69%!!!**

Our GOAL??? **100%**

Needed: **23 more parent donations!**

Current Cash/Pledge Status: **\$132,099.81!!!**

Needed: **\$17,900.19**

## VCS on WCAX

A special thanks to WCAX for covering the partnership between SUDEF and the Vermont Commons School and the media campaign created by our students. Enjoy the interview in the attached link featuring Nora Hill '15 and Peter Keny of SUDEF which aired on April 16th.

If you happened to miss the live coverage, [click here](#) to watch!

## PACS Coffee Hour



Thursday, April 18th is the next PACS sponsored Coffee Hour. Please join us for great coffee and conversation with parents, faculty, and staff in the lunch room from 7:45-8:45 a.m.

We are still looking for the future PACS leader(s)! Could it be you? Do you like to know about events at the school? Are you looking for a way to meet other parents? Do you think you could spare a few hours a month to organize and plan fun stuff? Then this is the job for you- payment in laughter and camaraderie! Please step up - your school needs you!

- Dinah Larsen and Lisa Lillibridge, soon to be (we hope), former PACS co-chairs  
[Dlars99@gmail.com](mailto:Dlars99@gmail.com) and [Lillibridge@gmail.com](mailto:Lillibridge@gmail.com)

## Dartmouth Model UN



For the 5th year in a row, a full VCS contingent of delegates participated in the Dartmouth Model United Nations conference. Serving on UN committees ranging from the World Health Organization to the Security Council, and representing countries including Syria, Canada, and Somalia, seventeen students spent the weekend debating, negotiating, collaborating, public speaking, and writing resolutions to solve the problems of the world. Congratulations to Eli Hulse for being awarded Outstanding Delegate for his performance as the Minister of Health and Welfare on the South Korean Cabinet! [Click here](#) to watch!

# SPIRAL Summer Exchange Program



SPIRAL INTERNATIONAL, based in Vermont, is hosting its second annual Summer English and Cultural Camp with 30 students from Southern China. The students will be here from July 11th- July 23rd.

We are currently seeking host families and student ambassadors who would be interested in participating in this program.

The benefits of being a host family for Chinese students visiting the U.S. are numerous. Vermont is a very unique and special place. Through hosting Chinese students you are given the opportunity to share the culture of Vermont while also learning Chinese culture from them.

If you have children in your family, hosting a student provides them with the opportunity to develop a life-long experience and friendship with international children. The benefits of cross-cultural communication at a young age are endless. As our world becomes more connected these experiences will assist your child throughout their lives in college or at work.

To share expenses you will receive an appreciation check of \$200 per Chinese student. If you host two students, you will receive \$400. Two Chinese students per family are recommended. Both students can share the same room.

In addition, your entire family will be invited to the “get acquainted” welcome event and the closing entertainment.

If your 7th-12th grade child participates in the AMBASSADOR program, they will be included free of charge in every aspect of the program: helping out in the classroom in the mornings as well as going on field trip excursions in the afternoons. Based on an “each one teach one” philosophy, Ambassadors will help the Chinese students learn their language and culture while simultaneously learning Chinese and culture from them. Some of the excursions will include: a day hike to the top of Mt. Philo, a visit to the State House, a stop at Vermont’s #1 tourist attraction, Ben & Jerry’s, a tour of local farming communities, a blog workshop to stay in touch, and the opportunity to cook a Chinese meal.

In the past, our host families were not limited to the families who have school children. Host families with no children or young children are most welcome. The most important qualification to be a host family is having a kind heart and interest in others.

We believe host families have much to offer Chinese students and that Chinese students, in turn, have much to offer you. If you are willing to open your home and your heart, we are sure you will find this experience worthwhile. Open hearts and open homes help to create open minds and lifelong friendships.

For more information on hosting Chinese students OR on becoming a student Ambassador (7th-12th graders), please contact:

Eric Kauppila

(802) 989-3564

Kauppila.e@gmail.com

Mary K. Dennison

(802) 233-1476

marykdennison@gmail.com

[Click here](#) for the application.

# Senior Project Synopses

## Katiya Boudette

The goal of my project is to better understand methods that help children with special needs learn and engage with others, both in and outside of the classroom. The reason why I want to pursue this goal is because of my work with special needs kids in the past, and my desire to be a teacher in the future. I want to achieve a better understanding of the ways that children with a variety of different needs can be part of classrooms, extra-curricular activities and any activity they want to so that I can use these techniques as a teacher in the future. With this project I will be able to see firsthand what goes into making these experiences possible for them and what is the best way to help them achieve their personal goals.



## Justin Decatur

My goal for this project is to learn as much as I possibly can about automotive repair in my five weeks. I hope to be able to do basic maintenance of my Volvo 740 by the end of my time at McCaffrey's. Academically, I hope to achieve a base understanding of the automotive repair business: how a business like that has to be run, what you have to know how to do in order to do it. Artistically, I want to learn how to finish a repair job and leave it looking like new. Personally, I want to learn how to do basic mechanical repair, since that's all a car is at the bottom of it, a big machine. A car is perfect for this because it will keep my attention while I still learn the ins and outs of mechanical processes.



## Henry Frantz

My own personal objective for this project is to learn about the typical restaurant, specifically what goes into making the food there, and also about the costs that are necessary to keep a restaurant functioning continuously. I hope that by the end, I will have gained a more in-depth understanding of how a restaurant works, such as what decisions go into menu options, how the budget of a typical restaurant is conducted, the hierarchy of the kitchen staff, and how the schedule is decided. This project will help my personal goal by throwing me right into the thick of the typical restaurant kitchen experience.



## Ross Hiatt

In doing this senior project, I hope to learn several things about the geographical change in Vermont. By looking through a database of over 30,000 pictures of Vermont from the past 150 years, I will venture across Burlington and retake those same pictures in the exact same spot as they were taken in the 1900's. In doing this project I hope to find a greater understanding and importance of local history and development. Not only do I want this project to benefit myself, but the entire project as a whole. My senior project is going to be a part of The Landscape Change Program, and I hope that the contributions I make to their collection of data will help them present to communities in Vermont about the recent geographical changes.



## Mia Jager

Through my senior project I hope to explore and grow as an art educator for my future. I hope to achieve a more well-rounded artistic view of my community, the world of art education, and of my own art. Many of my peers want to explore something completely new and out of their comfort zone before they leave for college, but I wanted to take a different approach. I want to get a jump start on what I see myself doing in the next chapter of my life. Being able to work with an art teacher and an art business association will help me see the wide ranges of art within a community. I hope everything I work on from a daily to monthly basis will help me reach my goal of better understanding art and art education.

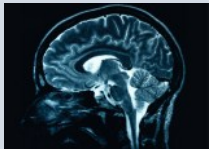


## Jonah Kraynak

I've always liked cars, ever since I was little. By interning at VT Sportscar, I have a valuable opportunity to learn more about cars. I'm hoping to learn everything that I possibly can about the business, the cars, and the people. Everything from the way an engine works, to part design and body fabrication, is done in the workshop. Not only will I be able to learn about the mechanics of cars, but I'll also have a chance to see how running the business works in the sport of rallying. This is something that I could be interested in as a career, which is why I'd like to get more information about how to get in the business, how to become a driver, and just how to become involved in general.



### Gabe Mantegna



I hope to learn more about what it would be like to work in the field of Neuroscience. By the end of my project, I will be proficient at using the functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) analysis program FSL (fMRI Software Library), and I will have learned about the functionality of all the different parts of the human brain. This project will give me a firm start in the field of Neuroscience, which I hope to pursue in the future.

### Charlotte Rutz



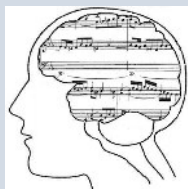
For my senior project, I would like to study and work at the Vermont Zen Center in Shelburne. My community mentor will be Ti'an Callery (priest and chief gardener). Through this experience, I hope to have a better understanding of the practice of zazen, the form of meditation that is unique to Zen Buddhism. I wish to become a more mindful person, and I know that this experience will provide me with the opportunity to do so. In addition, I will understand myself better and become a more attentive and thoughtful person. In terms of the work that I will be doing around the center, I will focus on working in the gardens under the direction of Ti'an Callery.

### Henry Sadler



I hope to hone my amateur passion and talent for woodworking into a professional skill. Woodworking takes patience, and requires intense focus. Creativity is required to figure out what one is building, but it also takes a logical and methodical mind to overcome the various hurdles that arise. During the course of this project I want to achieve several goals. The basic aim is to create something that I love, and something that others can appreciate. However, I also want to learn more about patience, and develop techniques to overcome frustration. Finally, I want to absorb as much knowledge about the various technical aspects of woodcraft that my mentors can possibly give me.

### Ivan Voinov



I will be studying how sound is created through various forms of synthesis, and learning how to record sound in a studio set-up. Apart from preparing me for my future endeavors as a computer-based musician, this project will give me extensive knowledge of the basics of sound and how sound can be changed and created - which is vitally important when it comes down to doing anything with sound, be it brain music, sound design, production, etc.

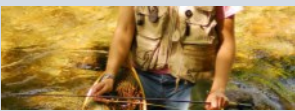
## Spring Encounter Week Offerings



**Day hikes:** (1 overnight) Join special guest Lex Jackson and summit some of Vermont's highest peaks. Students will have input in which peaks interest them and this trip will go outside of the usual VCS day hiking experience. There will be an overnight. Vermont is a breathtaking place to hike in the spring—you will see tiny spring ephemerals poking up and alpine zones reawakening.



**Film:** (day trips) Join local legend Allan Nichols, as you learn to design, shoot, and edit commercials. Learn how to tell a story in 30 seconds, what makes a video go "viral," and qualities of an engaging film. Students will work in small groups to create a story board, a shoot schedule, and a final, edited film. Films will be screened on Friday afternoon. This is an incredible opportunity to work with a professional and to better or begin your skill set of directing and designing film.



**Flyfishing:** (4 overnights) Ever watched *A River Runs Through It*? Ever dreamed of that sense of inner peace as you lazily cast your fly into a babbling river? Or the rush as a Brook Trout grabs hold? That could be you. The Adirondack Flyfishing Adventure will take us out to some of the most untouched wilderness in the Adirondacks where we will hike to rustic cabins next to rivers, ponds and lakes.

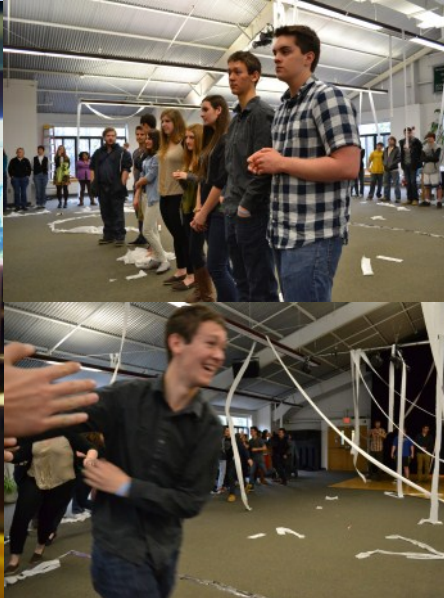


**Biking:** (1 overnight) Biking to Reward. This Encounter Week will challenge students to bike a little bit farther each day, to a little bit more intriguing reward. Whether the end goal is a campfire and overnight or a perfect creme on a hot day, this trip will both push and reward you.



**Acadia:** (4 overnights) We will leave for DownEast Maine on Monday, ending the day by setting up camp and sitting on a cliff above the Atlantic, watching the Milky Way above the lighthouses. The week includes many exciting activities including climbing the legendary beehive, exploring tidal pools where feeding barnacles, porpoises and puffins live, and eating lobster.

## This Week in Photos



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