

# Vanier Catholic Secondary

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www.vcss.ca

Ryan Sikkes, Principal Jeanette Gallant, Vice-Principal

November 2014

## Principal's Message

This newsletter is accompanying our Term I report cards—it was enjoyable reading each and every report to get a sense of how our students are performing academically to date. I encourage all parents/guardians to look past the letter grade or percentage as teachers have spent a great deal of effort to write informative comments with specific suggestions for further growth and development.

All students are reminded about our Skills Room—an invaluable resource for extra help and academic advice. It is open every day in the morning before school, during the morning and lunch breaks and after school, too! Any student is able to drop in for extra help as needed or can make arrangements for ongoing tutoring there.

It is conveniently located across from the staff room so there's usually always a helpful staff member nearby who can help find the answers to those tough questions!

Speaking of hard-working staff, it is my pleasure to highlight those staff members who are receiving long service awards this month. Congratulations to Brenda Fediuk (25 years),

Denise Chisholm (20 years), Sylvie Hamel and Sean McCarron (15 years) and Marcia LaLonde (10 years) for your many years

of continued dedication to education in Yukon—we are lucky to benefit from your experience!

Once again, Vanier Catholic Secondary students took a lead role in the incredibly successful Food Drive on October 8. A record amount of food was collected and the shelves are still pretty full a month later! The Food Bank is experiencing constant increases in use which suggests that food security is a pressing issue in Whitehorse. We hope that our students, through their experiences with this organization, will be the ones who will help our community find a just and sustainable solution to this issue in the years to come.

The cold weather is a sure sign that Share the Spirit, our school's two-week fundraiser for needy families in Whitehorse is just around the corner. Be sure to visit the school at the beginning of December to experience all the fun fundraising activities!

I wish you all the best as we head into winter!

Sincerely,

Ryan Sikkes  
principal



## Dates to note for Term II (November.-January)



- Monday, November 10th—Newsletters and Report Cards Mailed
- Tuesday, November 11th—Remembrance Day—(NO SCHOOL)
- Thursday, November 13th—Grad Retreat
- Tuesday, November 18th—School Council Meeting
- Tuesday, November 25th—School Science Fair
- Wednesday, November 26th—Northern Lights College
- Thursday, November 27th—Career, Volunteer Expo
- Friday, November 28th—Yukon Women Exploring Trades
- Monday, December 1st—12th—Share the Spirit
- Monday, December 1st—Advent Celebration
- Tuesday, December 9th—Pancake Breakfast
- Tuesday, December 9th—School Council Meeting
- Friday, December 19th—Christmas Celebration & Talent Show
- Monday, December 22nd—Friday, January 2nd—Christmas Holidays
- Monday, January 5th—First Day of School
- Tuesday, January 6th—Epiphany Celebration
- Monday, January 12th—Friday, January 16th—Review Week
- Monday, January 19th—Friday, January 23rd—Exams
- Monday, January 26th—First Day of Semester II / Term III

## School Council Corner

The next regular council meeting will be Tuesday, November 18 at 7:30 pm in the VCSS Library.

The members of our current council are:

- Edith Elder; Chair
- Michael Lauer, Vice-Chair
- Dianne Tait
- Maureen Long
- Shanon Cooper

For more information on Vanier's School Council, including current contact information, visit [www.vcss.ca](http://www.vcss.ca) and click on the "School Council" tab.

### School Growth Plan Update

Vanier staff and students continue to work on this year's school-wide goal: "To improve students' writing abilities." This goal was determined through consultations with parents, students, staff and Yukon Education. The School Growth Plan document is available for review on the school's website. The website also has information about the results of our fall school-wide-write assessments and what we've learned about the writing abilities of our students.



To support this goal, we have been using the Friday PLC times to delve deeper into instructional strategies that will lead to higher student learning in this area. In the last month, we had a guest presenter share strategies for use with English language and vulnerable learners, as well as focused conversations in subject-area groups around how we can ensure consistency and purposeful instruction across the grades. These conversations will continue in the coming months.

All of our professional conversations are focused on actual student writing samples from Vanier students. This focus supports conversations about the learning of students and how best to support it. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us!

# Share the Spirit!

**Share the Spirit** began in 1995 as a community program. At that time it was known as Adopt-A-Family. The mandate of **Share the Spirit** is to provide support to families in the community who struggle to make ends meet, particularly during the holiday season. The Yukon has the second highest per capita income in Canada, yet we have many families who do not have the resources to provide a traditional Christmas to their loved ones.

At Vanier, sponsor classes are provided with information from the Christmas Wish List that has been completed by the family. These classes then go shopping and purchase

the items on the "Christmas Wish Lists" of their assigned family.

Starting December 1, our school becomes alive with numerous fundraising efforts. In the coming weeks check the school website for a calendar of events supporting Share the Spirit.

If you wish to contribute to our Share the Spirit Campaign, cash donations as well as Canadian Tire money can be sent to the office.

Thank you for your continued support!



Canadian Tire generously provides discounts to the Share the Spirit program. Please help our funds go even further by donating any Canadian Tire money to use to use for purchasing items. Donations can be made to the office.

## DO NOT MAKE BREAKFAST!

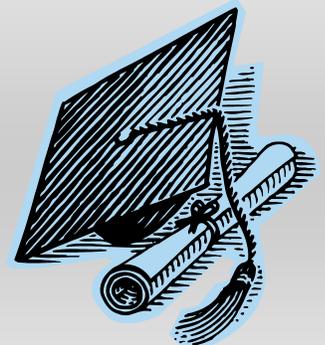
(on Tuesday, December 9.) Why not?! It's the day of our annual VCSS Administration Pancake Breakfast to raise funds for Share the Spirit! The doors open at 7:30 a.m. to get hot pancakes, sausages, coffee and juice! See you there!



Our school science fair will be on Tuesday, November 25 from 8:30 to 12 noon for participating Grade 8 and 9 students. We are looking for parents and community members to help judge projects and select those who will represent our school at the regional science fair. If you are interested in helping judge on the morning of the 25th, please contact Janet Clarke at 667-5901



The next VCSS Graduation meeting will be on Tuesday, November 25 at 7:00 p.m. in the library.



# From the Office

## Parking

Drivers are reminded that there is a pick-up loop near the student parking lot. We have a special bus that comes daily to pick up students in the staff parking lot which is often blocked by other vehicles. Thanks for your cooperation!

## Field Trip Forms

Parents will notice many more field trip permission forms being sent home this year. Teachers are being encouraged to combine as many activities throughout the year on one form, but parents should expect to see a form any time their child does an activity off school property. The form is a way to ensure parents are aware of any risks that are associated with activities occurring off school property. If you have any questions about the forms, please contact the teacher issuing the form.

## Phone Us...Please!!

The office will be telephoning the parents of each student who is not excused and absent for the first block each morning. Parents are reminded that to keep proper attendance records for students, absences must be phoned in or they may be



recorded as unexcused. Please call the school in the morning at 667-5901 if your child will be absent or late for school. For students who are sick, we would appreciate a phone call each day they are sick.

Our automated call system will call each evening for students with 'unexcused' absences.

If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please call the office.

## Mobile Devices

The school rule on mobile devices has changed this year to the following:

*"Mobile devices (e.g. cell phones, music players, etc.) may not be used in classrooms during class time."*

Students are permitted to use mobile devices during breaks and at lunch.

Students who are caught using their mobile devices during class time may have them confiscated and sent to the office. On the first offence, the device will be returned at the end of the day. On second and subsequent offences, the device will be kept for a parent to come and pick up.

If parents have urgent messages for their child, please call the school office and we will deliver it to them in class.

# From the Religious Ed. Department

## Retreats

Thank you to those grade 10 and 11 students who participated in their grade-level retreat in October. The grade 11 students had a unique introduction to First Nations Spirituality in visiting Harold and Phil Gatensby out in Carcross, and the grade 10 students had a chance to visit various service organizations and advocacy groups around Whitehorse. The grade 12 grad retreat will be on November 13 at Yukon College and the Yukon Arts Centre. The retreats for grade 8 and 9 students will happen in the spring.

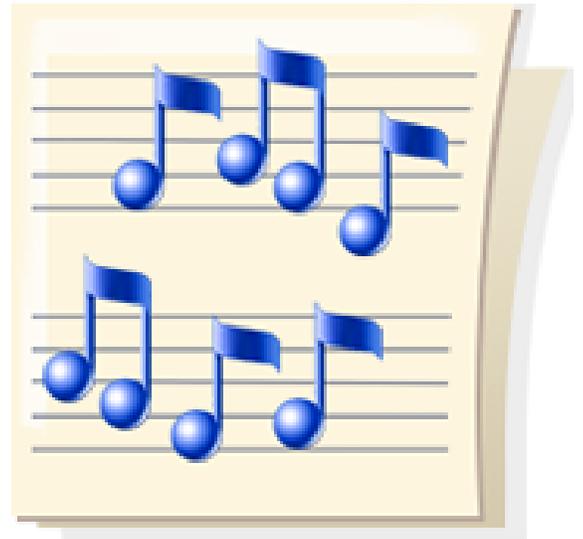
## News

Congrats to Team Ross and Finn who, under the leadership of Steve and Michelle Beaulieu, participated in the Victoria Marathon on Thanksgiving weekend and raised more than \$40,000 for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy research! Go team!



## Music Notes

- Vanier Christmas Concert will be held 7pm on Dec. 2nd at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Admission is by donation to help fund music education opportunities for our students.
- Vanier Music Program will be performing at the YTG building from 12-1 on Dec. 2nd. Come out and enjoy your lunch listening to the melodious sounds of our music program.
- Vanier Jazz combo will have the opportunity to work with Canadian Jazz group Myriad 3 on Nov.21st.



### Southern Lakes Tour

Southern Lakes Tour was a resounding success! Vanier Jazz Combo, Choir and members of the Wind Quintet performed for

the Carcross and Atlin communities on October 22 and 23. Vanier music students also hosted an open mic night in Atlin which drew a good crowd and encouraged Atlin students to perform for their community. Vanier students also toured the Atlin community, visited the museum, went to the Taku River Tlingit First Nation culture camp and learned about the Taku River Tlingit First Nation "Little House Project".

**Vanier Music Parent  
Annual General Meeting  
November 18th at 6:30pm  
in the Vanier Music room.**

**25 Tutor matches  
have been made so  
far this year!**

**All Vanier students  
can receive free  
tutoring**



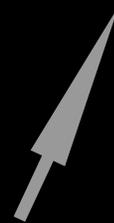
for assistance in course work, assignments,  
organizational skills or test preparation.

Students will be matched one on one.

To receive tutoring the student needs to *fill in an application* and return it to **Ms. Bergsma**.

*For the latest news, school  
information and homework  
assignments, visit our informative  
school website:*

**[www.vcss.ca](http://www.vcss.ca)**



# Social Justice Club News

## Social Justice Club hits Vancouver!!

Written by student columnists and WE day participants: Anna Grewal and Mary Anne Portea.

On October 20<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup>, twelve students and two teachers from the Vanier Social Justice club went to Vancouver and attended an annual event called We Day—a global celebration of young people who've made a commitment to improve their communities and the world. Here's a list of our Vancouver social justice activities:

### Monday, October 20

We met Scott Small, Manager of the Vancouver Catholic Charities. We toured the shelter and then in two smaller groups, we were taken on a tour of the Downtown East Side. We were given the opportunity to meet some of the residents of this area and gained an appreciation of the challenges that they face each day.

### Tuesday, October 21

In this morning, we went to the offices of the Canadian Fair Trade Network / Fair Trade Vancouver to learn more about the process by which schools and communities can become designated as "Fair Trade". We picked up some documentation and posters on this subject and will be displaying them, as well as a selection of fair trade items available in Whitehorse, at the Vanier table at the **November 15<sup>th</sup> Global Craft Fair.**

### Wednesday, October 22—We Day!

Our trip to WE Day inspired each of us and was a very



special event for everyone, although it touched us all in different ways. Here are a few comments and reflections from students on the trip:

"We Day has impacted my whole view of the entire world. It opened our eyes to new things we'd never seen before, and we all agreed it was definitely a trip to remember. We didn't only take away the memories, we took away ideas too."

"One of the main changes I think would be incredible to see would be to become a Fair Trade city."

"Start local, go global".

"We all agreed with the speakers that we heard, including Hannah Alper who said that when we are empowered, we have to share that feeling with others. "

"We believe that if we can make a difference in our

community, we can make a change in the world. The ideas we can come up with to help our community are endless."

"It all starts with ourselves. We want to take what we learned and not only share it with our school but the whole community."

"I strongly believe the little things we do locally and globally are making an enormous impact to others and to ourselves"

"We need to get everyone included in making change. We see people on the street who look poor and we may ignore them but hearing their stories and seeing what they have to deal with make us want to make a change."



Our trip changed our perspectives on everything and gave us a feeling of empowerment that we hope we can share with others. We also really liked how some East Hastings restaurant and grocery store managers hire vulnerable people to work. It gives these individuals a sense of belonging and a source of income.

Finally, one of our schoolmates noted, "By finding ways to create the feeling of empowerment in those around us, we have the ability to construct an army of people with the power to make change".

### Upcoming Important Dates:

#### November 3 to November 14 – Clothing Drive for the Outreach Van

Let's keep Whitehorse Warm! Bring in your hoodies, mitts, hat, and warm jackets and we will pass them on to the Outreach Van to give to people who need some added warmth this winter. Please ensure that they are clean and in good shape.

#### Friday, November 14 - Wear a hat...Warm a Heart

Pay \$2.00 to have hat immunity and wear your hats around school all day – a fashion item normally not allowed in school. Put on your ball cap, cowboy hat, fuzzy hat...you choose and help out people in need. All proceeds will go to the Outreach Van.

#### Saturday, November 15 – Global Craft Fair

Drop by at the Old Firehall on November 15th between 10 and 2 and check out all of the great booths. The Vanier SJ Club will be selling our ever-popular art cards, bead necklaces and Rafiki bracelets. We look forward to seeing many familiar faces visiting the Craft Fair to buy the wonderful wares that support Fair Trade practices worldwide! It's the gift that gives twice!

Rafiki just like these will be at our Vanier Social Justice table at the Global Craft Fair on November 15 at the Old Firehall from 10 to 2 pm.

#### Friday November 21st, 2014 – Sea of Pink

Vanier staff and students will join other schools to wear PINK and show our determination to push bullying from our schools. Every style and shade of PINK is encouraged!



**Brrr!! It's cold outside!!**

Let's work to keep everyone in Whitehorse warm!

Bring in your clean hoodies, jackets, hats, mitts and gloves and the Social Justice Club will pass them on to the Outreach Van.

Drop your stuff off at the library or in the boxes in the front foyer.



## Education, Career & Volunteer Expo

Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre  
Thursday, November 27

10:30 am to 4:00 pm

Educational institutions, governments, businesses, and non-profits will be available to inform students and the public about pathways to getting into their desired careers. This is an opportunity to:

- **Meet the different educators** and find out about post-secondary educational programs, entrance requirements, university transfer programs, and more
- **Speak with employers** and human resource staff about what they look for in applicants and how to break onto that short-list for the ideal job
- **Gain the work experience** that employers look for on resumes by talking with social justice and community organizations that are looking for volunteers

### Sponsors:

Dana Naye Ventures      City of Whitehorse

Royal Roads University      Alkan Air LTD

Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon

Organized in partnership by  
Yukon College, Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon, and YuWIN.

## Educators

Yukon College  
Yukon School of Visual Arts  
Alberta College of Art and Design  
BC Council on Admissions & Transfers  
Brock University  
Consortium national de formation en santé – Volet Université  
GPRC – Grand Prairie Regional College  
Northern Lights College  
Royal Roads University  
University of Alberta  
University of BC (UBC)  
Vancouver Island University  
Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon

## Employers

Northwestel Inc.  
EDI Environmental Dynamics Inc.  
Capstone Mining Corp—Minto Mine  
Casino Mining Corp.  
Human Resource Management Association  
Northern Vision Development (NVD)  
Meadia Solutions  
Alkan Air LTD  
Advanced Education  
RCMP M—Division  
Yukon Government Tourism and Culture—  
Museums Unit  
Government of Canada Public Service Commission  
Student employment programs  
Yukon Continuing Care: Thomson Centre, Macaulay Lodge & Copper Ridge Place  
Yukon Energy, Mines & Resources  
Carcross, Tagish First Nation  
Social Justice and Community Organizations  
Association Franco-yukonnaise (L'AFY)  
Yuwin  
Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon  
Dana Naye Ventures  
Yukon Learn  
Skills Canada Yukon  
Yukon Women in Trades & Technology  
Youth Employment Centre—Skookum Jim Friendship Centre  
Teslin Tlingit Council— Workforce Development  
Court Watch Yukon  
Yukon Status of Women Council  
Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon (TIA Yukon)  
Association of Professional Engineers of Yukon (APEY)  
Civil Air Search & Rescue Association (CASARA)  
Many Rivers