

# Vanier Catholic Secondary

16 Duke Road, Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4M2

Phone: (867) 667-5901 Fax: (867) 393-6370

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

Ryan Sikkes, Principal Jeanette Gallant, Vice-Principal

**November 2015**

## Principal's Message

We have firmly entered winter—the snow is on the ground and it's probably going to stay for the season! This is also the season of the long service awards for employees and we have three to recognize this year:

- Mr. Dan Reimer, educational assistant—10 years
- Ms. Kimberly Hart, teacher—10 years
- Ms. Caroline Holway, teacher, 30 years (!)

Congratulations and thank you to Dan, Kim and Caroline for your continued dedicated service to Yukon youth—we are so fortunate to benefit from your experience and commitment.

Our students are heavily involved in service learning opportunities throughout the community and we, as the school, often hear how appreciative community organizations are for the continued commitment that our students make to helping our community be a better place. If your child is looking for service learning opportunities, I invite you to visit our new Religious Education Coordinator website at <http://www.vcssreligion.com/> - a big thank you to Mr. Gillard for setting up and maintaining this website.

Advent is just around the corner which also means the start of our annual *Share the Spirit* tradition at Vanier. Classes will be engaging in various fundraising activities to help give needy families a better Christmas experience. We appreciate all our students' efforts in helping with this charitable activity.

As the temperature drops and days get shorter, these activities really help to build community and raise the spirits of everyone in the school!

Sincerely,

Ryan Sikkes  
Principal

## A Prayer for Peace

Spirit of God,  
move again over  
the waters  
Of your creation,  
Drawing life from  
the chaos.

Bring reconciliation to the nations,

Removing the bitterness,

Greed and hatred

That divide our hearts.

Inspire the minds of all leaders

With care for the needs of their people.

Let truth be standard

As we seek to bring about

A fair sharing of the goods of the earth.

Help us to know you,

The Father and Jesus,

Calling to mind Jesus' words:

"As often as you did it to one of these,

The least of my brothers and sisters,

You did it to me".

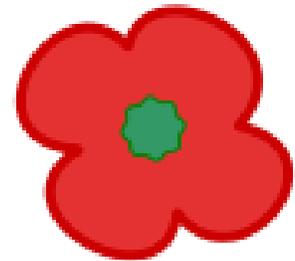
Help us also remember today

And throughout the year

To be at peace with ourselves

And accept others as God made them.

Amen.



**Lest We Forget.**

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

The official 2015-2016 School Calendar can be accessed online at the Yukon Education website.



- Monday, November 2— First Day of Term II
- Tuesday, November 10— Remembrance Day Ceremony at 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, November 11— Remembrance Day (NO SCHOOL)
- Thursday, November 19—School Group Photos
- Thursday, November 19—Grad Meeting 7 pm
- Friday, November 20—Sea of Pink Anti-Bullying Day
- Saturday, November 21—Project Kenya Volleyball Fundraiser
- Tuesday, November 24—Grade 12 retreat
- Tuesday, November 24—School Council Meeting at 7 pm
- Sunday, November 29—Advent Youth Mass
- Monday, November 30—Share the Spirit Campaign begins
- Monday, November 30—Advent Celebration
- Monday, December 7—National Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence Against Women ceremony
- Tuesday, December 8—Pancake Breakfast—7:30 a.m.
- Friday, December 18—Last day of school before Christmas Break
- Friday, December 18—Alumni Day and Talent Show
- Monday, January 4—School Resumes from Christmas Break
- Wednesday, January 6—Epiphany Celebration
- Friday, January 15—Review Week Begins
- Monday, January 18—Christian Unity Celebration
- Thursday, January 21—Last Day of Classes for Sem 1.
- Friday, January 22—Exams Begin
- Wednesday, January 27—Last Day of Semester 1
- Thursday, January 28—First Day of Semester 2

## School Council Corner

The next regular council meeting will be Tuesday, November 24 at 7:00 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

Contact information for council members is posted in the front of the school and online at [www.vcss.ca](http://www.vcss.ca)



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 8.) 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!



# 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 November 30, 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!

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## France Exchange Trip

From September 30 to October 12, 11 Vanier students travelled to France with Ms. Hamel and Ms. Clarke. It was a wonderful and meaningful trip! The students were great ambassadors of our school and our community and it was a pleasure to travel with such a enthusiastic and inquisitive group. Lucky for us, the weather was really fabulous which helped make our trip all the more fun. (Picnics just don't work out the same way in the rain.) We spent three days in beautiful Paris enjoying many things such as a boat ride on the Seine, a walk up la Tour Eiffel, some very yummy pastries (right Carl!), interesting Metro rides (quite interesting for Katlego and Ms. Clarke) and three wonderful French dinners. We travelled by train to the city of Oyonnax where we were extremely well-hosted by Lycée Arbée Carme and our host families. Oyonnax is close to Genève so we had the fantastic opportunity to tour the United Nations.

Our French twins will be visiting Whitehorse in May 2016 and our students are already brainstorming ideas for activities and excursions that we can organize for them when they arrive.

Thank you to M. Herry at Yukon Education and Mr. Sikkes and Anilee Ault for all our support and help to make this trip happen!



## “Service Learning” at Vanier Catholic Secondary

For years, we have used the phrase “Community Service” to describe our program of having students volunteer in community organizations for the betterment of others. Unfortunately, the term Community Service has developed a somewhat pejorative definition! Here’s a sample of a dictionary entry for the term:

com·mu·ni·ty serv·ice *noun* noun: **community service**; modifier noun: **community-service**

voluntary work intended to help people in a particular area unpaid work, intended to be of social use, that an offender is required to do instead of going to prison. E.g. "sentenced to 600 hours of community service"

We certainly want there to be a better understanding of why we ask our students to be involved in our community, lest they think of themselves being ‘sentenced’ to do volunteer hours!

Therefore, we have taken the initiative to transform the phrase "Community Service Hours" or simply "Volunteer Hours" and calling them "Service Learning Hours". We believe the definition of Service Learning is a better fit for our school philosophy, as well as that of the Religious Education Department, that is; “Service Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.” (National Service Learning Clearinghouse).

We truly think that this is a much more positive definition and reflection on what it is we are trying to impress upon our students. We simply don't want to just have our students volunteer (for hours). We want to see them **grow and develop new understandings** from the experiences they have.

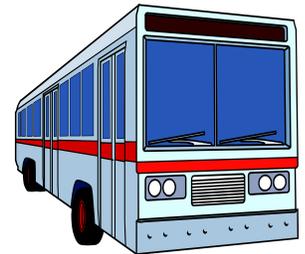
To quote Vanderbilt University’s Janet S. Eyler (winner of the 2003 Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service

Learning) and Dwight E. Giles, Jr., Service Learning is “a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students. . . seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. In the process, students link personal and social development with academic and cognitive development. . . experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action.”

If you have any questions about our Service Learning program, please don’t hesitate to contact Bruce Gillard, Religious Education Coordinator at 667-5901 or [Bruce.Gillard@gov.yk.ca](mailto:Bruce.Gillard@gov.yk.ca)

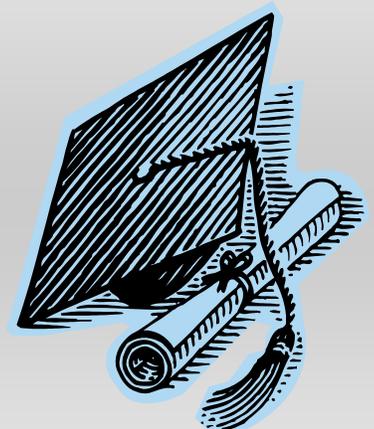
### City of Whitehorse Transit

This year, the City of Whitehorse Transit program is available to all students who are eligible for school busing. Students can inquire in the office, where they will receive a registration form.



They need to fill this out, obtain a parent signature and then return it to the office in exchange for a monthly pass.

The next VCSS Graduation meeting will be on Thursday, November 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the library.



# Social Justice Club News and Events

## Helping out @ the Food Bank

On Thursday, Oct. 29, a group of SJ members went with Ms. Hamel to the Whitehorse Food Bank to help with assembling bags of vegetables. There was lots of work to do and the students had an amazing time. We are hoping to do this rewarding work again soon.



## Pass on Your Warmth – donate winter clothing to the Outreach Van



Whitehorse has had its first blast of winter and there are many people in our city who spend much of their time on the street. The Outreach Van travels the city each night and distributes warm food and clothing. If you

have gently-worn winter clothing (hoodies, coats, mitts, hats, jackets) or new pairs of socks, drop them off at the Vanier Learning Commons and help warm someone up!

## Wear a hat...warm a heart - Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>

Pay \$2.00 on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Global Craft Fair - Saturday, November 21 from 11 am to 3 pm

Drop by at the Old Firehall on November 21th

between 11 and 3 pm and check out all of the great booths. The Vanier SJ Club will be selling our ever-popular art cards. We have many new, beautiful photos, which are perfect for any birthday, graduation, or Christmas greetings that you wish to send. 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!

## Sea of Pink - Friday November 20st

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



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

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

A grey arrow pointing upwards towards the website URL.

# Vanier Learning Commons News

The new Vanier bookmarks are in! The new Vanier bookmarks are in!

Congratulations to Alyssa Cuenza whose winning design graces our Vanier bookmark this year and thank you to everyone who submitted a book mark entry. Drop by the Learning Commons and pick up your bookmark today! They are free and fantastic!

**Grade 8 reflections on dating...book dating, that is.**

Before speed dating, I had never looked at a manga book. Now I have read some really good ones! – Katriona

Through speed dating, I found the Scott Pilgrim series...my new favourite! – Liam

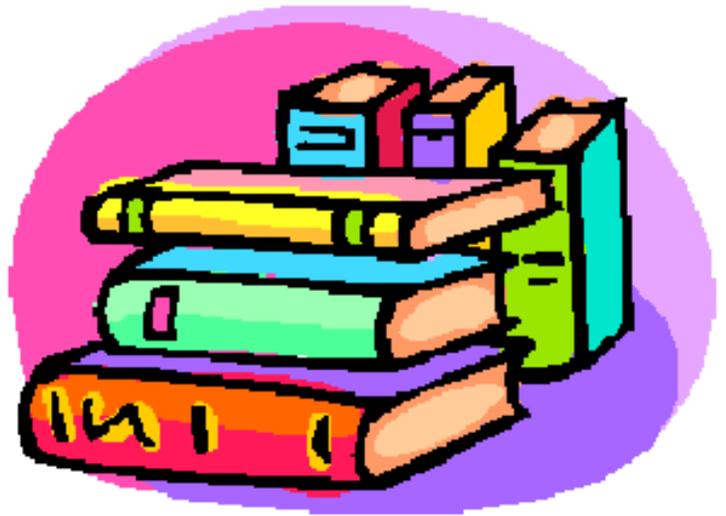
I was never much of a reader but through speed dating, I found a book I loved...then I even read another by the same author. - Tangelia

I found the best book ever (*All the Bright Places*), recommended it to my friend and now she is reading it.- Shayna

*In the time of the Dragon moon* is excellent and I found it during speed dating - Cara

The choices were good....but I would like even more next time we do it! – Kat

What is this speed book dating anyway? It is a great way to introduce enthusiastic readers, reluctant readers and every reader in between to a variety of books and genres. Each reader spends 3 minutes with a book and decides whether they have a “connection”. If they do, they check the book out and spend some time getting to know it. If there is no spark, they break up with the book...letting it down gently, of course. If a student wasn’t successful at the end of the speed dating session, the matchmaker (Ms. Clarke) stepped in and recommended a blind date. Did we mention the great lounge music!?



**YOUTH MASS**  
*Sunday, November 29th*  
**11:30 am**  
*Sacred Heart Cathedral*



**Celebrate Advent**  
*with students from*  
*Christ the King Elementary, Holy Family Elementary*  
*& Vanier Catholic Secondary Schools*

*Please join us after mass in the CYO Hall for refreshments*  
*provided by the Catholic Education Association of Yukon (CEAY)*