



VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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GOOD NEWS OF THE WEEK – April 24th and May 1st, 2015

ROCKVILLE HIGH SCHOOL – GERMAN AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (GAPP) - A group of RHS students and two teachers traveled to Germany as part of the German American Partnership Program (GAPP), where they stayed with host families and attended school at the Martin Luther Gymnasium in Frankenburg. It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to experience the German culture.

POETRY - Congratulations to Mallory Chabre, who competed for and won a position on the 2015 CT Brave New Voices Slam Poetry Team. The finals were held at the Bushnell. The team will tour New England for the next few months leading up to its performance in July at the International Youth Poetry Slam Festival. Marilyn Lowell is an alternate for the team and will train with them throughout the summer. This year, the six-day event will be held in Georgia. Mallory, along with other top young poets from across the United States, will be on an HBO special that features this slam festival.



Thirty RHS student poems are featured in the Walt Whitman Exhibit at the South Windsor Library. The exhibit will run until June. This was an incredible opportunity for these students.

<http://www.courant.com/community/south-windsor/hc-south-windsor-whitman-at-the-wood-20150416-story.html>

RHS NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM - Children in the Blue Nursery School had some special treats this week. Officer Steve Langlais visited the class and talked to the children about safety on the playground and around strangers and what to do if they need help. The children then were invited to check out the police cruiser. The children visited the Ag Ed center where agriculture students had planned mini presentations about the animals in the Center. The children were able to touch and feed some of the animals and learn about the products that they produce. Of course, the alpacas were the favorite! The children also received coloring books of the animals they saw. Thank you to Mr. Cal Brodersen for making this experience an enjoyable one for all of us!

INDEPENDENT LIVING CLASS - Students in the Independent Living class, along with their mentors in the Education Practicum class, learned about Earth Day and did their part to help the school environment by cleaning up around the student parking lot, the track, and the bleachers. They were amazed at how many trash bags they could fill in just a short time. Students were then given a homework assignment to determine which items can be recycled, reused or reduced. The class will also be making some tug toys and animal treats to be donated to the animal shelter in town.

AG ED DEPARTMENT - Over April break, the department hosted UCONN Cooperative Extension as they offered various financial workshops to local agriculturalists. This week the Ag Ed seniors completed standardized testing for “CTE” (Career and Technical Education). On April 23rd, many Chapter members stayed afterschool for a “Talent Share and Game Afternoon”. From April 27th through May 1st

the Chapter will be holding its annual “Fill the Tractor” food drive. Non-perishable items may be dropped off in front of the high school from 7 to 8 am or placed in the “mini-tractor” boxes located around RHS. Food will be delivered to HVCC after school on May 1st.

CUPCAKE EXTRAVAGANZA - The Cupcake Extravaganza, held on April 23rd was a huge success and raised \$6,200 for charity! Students in Mrs. Gilmore's class paired with a staff member and competed in "Cupcake Wars". The competition was fierce and many cupcakes sold out in 15 minutes! Students who did not compete were responsible for making an additional 800 cupcakes from scratch in one day.

ART DEPARTMENT - The Institute of Living/Hartford Hospital sponsored an academic and art competition designed to decrease the stigma of mental illness, called the Brain Dance Awards. All of the students in Mrs. Bengtson's Art classes submitted work that was on display recently at the Institute of Living. Sophomore Lauralee Costello tied for second place in the Art Category with her canvas work titled, "Struggling with Anxiety" and was awarded a check for \$200 at the ceremony on April 23rd. It was a wonderful event attended by family, friends, and IOL staff members. Lauralee will be giving her work to the IOL to keep.



POETRY - Avery Christensen and Kaleigh Perkins have been selected as two of Hill-Stead Museum's Fresh Voices winners for 2015! All of the finalists who read their work at the Hill-Stead Museum on Friday displayed enormous talent, but only five students were chosen as winners. Avery and Kaleigh will be reading in the Hill-Stead Garden as part of the museum's Sunken Garden Poetry and Music Festival on Wednesday, August 19th. They will also be published in a special edition chapbook. Please congratulate them on this amazing achievement!



FIELD TRIP TO ITALY - Mr. Anthony Bianca and Mr. Brian Forte, together with 12 RHS students, went on an international field trip to Italy, providing students with international cultural awareness and a world learning experience. Visits were made to the Coliseum, the Vatican, the Town of Assisi, Venice, Florence, the Statue of David, Piazza, Michelangelo, and more.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION - Many FFA members enjoyed a “Talent Share and Game Afternoon” after school on April 23rd. The Fill the Tractor Food Drive is underway. Nursery school students stopped by to see the tractor and to donate non-perishable food. Several plant science classes are researching and installing a “school community garden” at the Ag Center. The Poultry Science students are finalizing their decision on types of poultry to order for their class project. The annual FFA Awards Banquet will be held on May 28th at A Villa Louisa in Bolton.

ENGLISH - Congratulations to Vivian Ufongene, a winner in the Write Here, Write Now! High school playwriting competition and student play festival held by the Trinity Repertory Company in Providence,

R.I. This annual competition gathers scripts from high schools across New England. Vivian's piece, *Homelessness*, was one of four pieces selected from this year's pool. She then worked with a Trinity Repertory Company staff member in one-on-one play development sessions prior to having her piece performed by professionally trained actors. She also received a \$100 cash prize and a scholarship toward any Trinity Rep Young Actors Studio after-school class or toward Trinity Rep's Young Actors Summer Institute. Additionally, Rockville High School will receive twenty free tickets to a Project Discovery student matinee performance at Trinity during the 2015–2016 season.



VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL – Twenty eighth-grade boys attended a STEM conference at UCONN on April 20. The students learned about careers in engineering, as well as participating in various STEM workshops, such as making "chocolate asphalt" and mechanical hands, evaluating the absorbent material of diapers, and experimenting with magnetism and electricity. The students finished the trip with a visit to the Dairy Bar for some good Husky ice cream!

Five middle school students, who are also Vernon Girl Scouts from Troop 10711, spent the three weeks before April vacation implementing a food composting and waste awareness project at VCMS. The girls began by weighing the trash generated in the cafeteria for a week during all the lunch waves and recording the data. During the second week, the girls presented their findings in a PowerPoint presentation and skit at three grade-level assemblies in order to educate students about the upcoming "composting week". During the third week, students sorted the cafeteria trash into compostable food/paper, recycling and trash. The compostable food and paper were brought daily to Harvest Power in Ellington for composting. During this week, the school reduced its cafeteria trash by 80%. The five girls presented their findings at the Board of Education meeting on April 27 in hopes of raising awareness about ways we can make our schools more "earth friendly".



On Wednesday, April 29th our 6th grade scientists of Team Believe visited the EESmart Energy Center in North Haven, CT. They did two activities that showed them how energy changes from potential to kinetic. The activities were called The Energy Roller Coaster and the Stationary Bike Challenge. The students also learned about energy efficiency and home energy usage.



VCMS students participated this spring in the national Pringles Challenge competition. The objective of the challenge is to engineer the smallest, lightest package to mail a single Pringles chip across the country without breaking. This year VCMS was partnered with Happy Camp Elementary School in California. We sent 9 packages from 6th and 7th graders, and most made the journey well. Upon arrival, the mass (in kilograms) and the volume (in cubic centimeters) of each package is multiplied and recorded. Then chips are scored based on how broken they are. The chip score is then divided by the measurement. And the results are in! The first place team from VCMS was Adam Brucker, Stephen Gottier, and Nick Morales (grade 7) with a score of 17.12. Even though their chip broke in half, they had the highest score Mrs. Wolfgang has ever seen! The second place team was Joanna Steed, Jenni Korkutovic, and Nevaeh White (grade 7) with a score of 7.22, and the third place team was Andy Deschene and Ian Bajorek (grade 6) with a score of 5.87. Everyone who participated did a great job!

CENTER ROAD SCHOOL – Last week Center Road School launched their school-wide book club called, *Reading with Speedy* (our school’s mascot). Every family in the school received a copy of *The World According to Humphrey*, and will be given trivia questions on the reading throughout the next few weeks. Raffle prizes will be given to lucky students throughout this exciting school event that promotes the importance of reading as a family at home.

The 1st grade students in Mrs. Timbrell’s and Mrs. Carini’s class put on a character parade based on characters they have been reading about this month. Students had to learn all the personality traits of their characters by reading several books involving the character. Students created masks of their characters, and presented what they learned to staff and students. Some popular characters were, Poppleton, Arthur, Brother Bear, and Jack from the Magic Tree House series.

The 3rd grade students have been working hard on their biography reports of famous people. Students had to research about their person using a variety of references, and create an entire presentation of their person using trifold presentation boards. Students also worked hard at home creating dolls of their selected person. Some famous people that were covered by our 3rd grade students were Jackie Robinson, Abraham Lincoln, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Rosa Parks.

The CRS Student Council is planning a 4th and 5th grade Talent Show to raise money for two charities of choice. This week all students in grades 4 and 5 will be given a chance to sign-up for this show, which will be held on June 11th.

All our students in grade K-2 have been working hard this week to complete the second round of NWEA/MAP testing. All students tried their best during these tests, and we many students have shown significant improvement compared to their first scores in November. The teachers and staff are all proud of the effort our students gave during these computer based tests.

LAKE STREET SCHOOL – ARGH!! Rehearsals began last week for fourth and fifth grade students performing in our Spring show, “How to be a Pirate!” Students are working hard on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, learning lines and choreography with Mrs. Karen Davis, Miss Gallo and Miss Bortolan. Stay tuned! It’s going to be a fabulous show!

Speaking of pirates....Mrs. Cipolla’s first grade students went on a Treasure Hunt this week, looking all over the school for AR words! Students were led to the treasure box with the last word in their treasure hunt – in the Principal’s office!



Grade 2 students visited Nature's Art last week as part of their geology studies. Students dug for rocks and minerals. Each student brought home their personal collection!

JAMBO! That means hello in Swahili! LSS kicked off Cultural Day with a schoolwide Morning Meeting. Our Pride Club led us in greetings from different countries. Each class presented facts students learned about students in other cultures. Did you know that students in Costa Rica have no school during coffee bean season so they can help with the harvest? Or that students in Japan help with the cleaning duties of their school building, even the bathrooms?

Parents presented to individual classes on some aspect of their culture. Students in Mrs. Merrow's third grade class is learning what a Mitzvah is in the photograph below:



MAPLE STREET SCHOOL – Last week students at Maple Street School celebrated Earth Day by doing a community building activity with their partner classroom. The day began with Ms. Trantolo conducting a school-wide read aloud to *The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry. Students and teachers followed along by projecting the book on their SMART Boards. After the read aloud students discussed the importance of taking caring of the environment and the importance of reusing, reducing and recycling. Students then worked together using recycled milk containers as pots to plant a seed. All students at Maple Street School are now able to watch their seed grow into a plant. These plants can then be replanted at the children's home. The students are working together to make the community beautiful!



Maple Street School held its annual Learning Fair on Thursday. Student in grades three, four, and five selected topics to research and present. They designed creative backboards to share their learning. Many topics were related to science and social studies. Judges from around the district visited the school to listen to students and see their hard work. Thanks to the PTO for helping with the setup!



NORTHEAST SCHOOL – Thanks to the Study Lab, a walk along the upper wing hallway brings us to an eye-catching display titled “*Rethink what you drink! Dude, choose your food!*” Each drink or food container has attached to it a plastic bag containing the amount of sugar used in the product. Seeing IS believing! Soda, cereal, yogurt, milk are just a few of the products on display. Just goes to show you that “you ARE what you eat”.

Signs of Earth Day are covering the lower wing hallway walls. Students in grade 1 wrote a “review” of their visit to the Trash Museum and then collected recycle-able items which they used to create butterflies, insects and animals. They came away with a greater understanding and appreciation for the need to help save and protect our earth. Their combined efforts/displays remind us that even though Wednesday, April 22 is recognized as Earth Day, in reality, every day is Earth Day.

With their loving hands placed on painted earths, Kindergarten students in Mrs. Champagne’s class let us know how they can care for the earth. Some examples are “I can care for the Earth (1) by picking up the garbage, (2) not wasting water, (3) not cutting down trees, (4) planting trees and bushes that make food, and by (5) recycling.”



The second graders celebrated Earth Day by keeping the lights off and seeing how much water is wasted by leaving the faucet running while brushing your teeth. The suggested amount of time to brush your teeth is two minutes. The running water was collected in buckets and used to water the flowers outside.

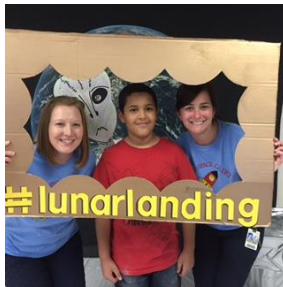
NES will be hosting an Invention Showcase this Friday night! To prepare for this fantastic event, the fourth grade students wrote research papers about inventors and the fifth grade students identified a problem, developed a solution and created an invention.

SKINNER ROAD SCHOOL – The SRS READING CHALLENGE is over. Skinner Road Students had a blast watching Mrs. Simon, dressed as Fiona from Shrek, Kiss Fiona the Donkey. The students read over 370,000 pages over the past eight weeks. As promised Mrs. Simon puckered up and kissed the donkey. Also pictured is Mrs. Massuli dressed as Fiona.



It has been another exciting week at Skinner Road School. On Tuesday evening Story Teller Jim Harriman was at SRS telling Stories from around the world. Over 100 parents and students from Maple Street and Skinner Road School were in attendance. The evening started with a pizza dinner.

On Thursday evening over 300 parents and students attended our first annual Lunar Night. Mr. Devery, one of our fifth grade teacher attended NASA Space Camp in College. He was able to borrow actual moon rocks and meteorites from NASA. Every student received a Lunar Passport and had it stamped at each activity they attended.



LOVELAND HILL SCHOOL – Last week Loveland Hill School students spent time designing cards, letters and posters to deliver to Vernon's first responders for the Superintendent's Challenge. Many of our students were able to share personal stories of times when the fire department, police department, or ambulance crew has provided helpful or life-saving services to someone in they know personally. Students discussed how appreciative they are to the men and women who serve our town and keep us safe every day. The students were enthusiastic about designing creative and inspiring works of art to be presented to Vernon's first responders! We thank you for all you do!

Loveland Hill School was also fortunate to have Jo Ann Freiberg meet with staff. Jo Ann works for the Connecticut Department of Education. Her expertise is in the area of School Climate, Bullying and Character Education. She shared a wealth of information which is sure to be helpful to the students and staff of LHS.

Loveland Hill School has created an Enrichment Block with many wonderful options for the students to participate in every week. One of the enrichment activities is healthy cooking. Students have made fresh soup from scratch, as well as a whole wheat pasta and vegetable dish. Students then admire their creations by setting a table formally and sharing a meal together. Skills worked on are planning, measuring, sharing, cooperative learning as well as manners. A great time is had by all participants!



The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.