

# Vanier Catholic Secondary

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www.vcss.ca

**November—December, 2011**

## Principal's Message

Can you believe that Halloween has come and gone – and there is no snow on the ground? I know that in cities across the South of our country, shopping malls are busily putting up all their Christmas decorations and lights. It seems in the rush of our lives, we look for certain “markers” to hang our plans and our memories on. We say things like, “hey, remember last Halloween ....”, or, “wow, if we get weather as cold as last Christmas...”.

Not too long in the past, in reflecting how time flies in our hectic lives, we would probably have said we need to slow things down – take time to enjoy things. I think we are all coming to accept that life doesn't slow down and a hectic pace is the norm. But how do we change things so we are not just organizing our lives or looking back on them only in the context of these “markers”? Perhaps we need to reflect on the fact that although our lives may be hectic, we still have a great impact on the people we meet every day. How hard would it be to focus our attention on the details of our everyday interactions? Once we start looking, we may notice that it is possible to make our time more meaningful. Just because we are in a rush, do we get angry at people for minor issues? While we are making a meal for our family and also trying to get someone ready for an appointment, do we not still have the time to listen to a story that one of our children is trying to tell us? How annoyed do we get when we are trying to pack up our groceries when it is cold and windy and someone is asking to take our cart back so they can have the dollar from it? You can see how easy it is to build a list like this. We do have an impact on those around us and our actions, though small to us, can make a huge difference to someone in our day. Maybe that little effort to recognize how we interact with people can become the new “marker” for us to look back on and remember. Maybe in small ways, we will become more amenable in these interactions. It is then that we will be more like who Christ was talking about in the Beatitudes. Now that the Advent season is almost upon us, it would be a good time to reflect on how to make that happen. Wow, what a change it would bring to our whole community.

Congratulations to our volleyball teams for their great play so far this season. It was a near clean sweep at the annual Dawson tourney. We are looking forward to a great finish once again with hopes of more banners to raise in our gymnasium. Thanks go out to the coaches for freely donating so much of their time and talent to work with our kids.

Report cards are being sent home with this newsletter. We hope you find them informative with an adequate snapshot of your child's progress. Please refer to the information chart included to help give analogous comparison to older styles of reporting grades in grade 8 and 9. Please feel free to contact any of your child's teachers if you need clarification of their standing in a course.

God Bless, Edward Frison

### An Advent Prayer

Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love and our minds are searching for the light of your Word. Increase our longing for Christ our Savior and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his truth. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.



# Dates to note for Semester I (Nov.-Dec.)



We've enclosed a November / December Calendar with this newsletter for posting in your home.

## School Council Corner

The annual Fall School Council conference was held in Whitehorse from October 20-22. It was an opportunity for School Council members from across the Yukon to share ideas and concerns and learn about new initiatives in Education. Of particular note was a presentation from Dr Wayne Hammond of Resiliency Initiatives and Don Barbor, Principal of Terry Fox Junior High in Calgary on the Resiliency Framework. More information on this topic can be found at [www.resiliencyinitiatives.ca](http://www.resiliencyinitiatives.ca).

The next School Council meeting will be held on Wednesday November 16th at 7:30 pm in the Vanier Catholic Secondary School Library.

The official 2011-2012 School Calendar can be accessed online at the YTG Department of Education website [www.education.gov.yk.ca](http://www.education.gov.yk.ca)

- Friday, November 4—End of Term 1
- Monday, November 7—Term 2 begins
- Thursday, November 10, 11 am—Remembrance Day Ceremony
- Fri. and Mon. Nov 11 and 14—School closed (Remembrance Day)
- Sunday, November 27—Advent Begins
- Monday, November 28, 11 am—1st Advent Mass
- Monday, December 6—National Day of Remembrance of Violence Against Women
- Wednesday, December 7—LPI exams (Engl. 12 only)
- Thursday, December 8—Pancake Breakfast
- Wednesday, December 7—December Newsletter (with midterm reports) mailed.
- Friday, December 16—Christmas Celebration, Alumni Volleyball Game and Vanier's Got Talent! **Early dismissal ????**
- Tuesday, January 3—Return to School from Christmas Break
- Friday, January 20—Last Day of Semester I / Term II
- Monday—Friday, January 23-27—Exams
- Monday, January 30—First Day of Semester II / Term III

# Booster Cards!

Booster Cards are coming soon! For only \$20, you can get discounts at a variety of places around town. All proceeds go to support student activities. Watch for more info!

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Alpine Bakery         | Plantation Flowers & Gifts |
| Intersport            | Qualita Cleaners           |
| The Kebabery          | Quiznos Sub                |
| Kilrich Industries    | Riverside Grocery          |
| Mad Trapper Alleys    | Terra Firma Art Co.        |
| Midnight Sun Coffee   | Whitehorse Subaru          |
| Paradise Alley        | Yukon Gallery              |
| Pickapeppa Restaurant | Yukon Meat and Sausage     |
| Pizza Hut             | Baked                      |

# 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 fundraise and then go shopping and purchase the items on the "Christmas Wish Lists" of their assigned family.

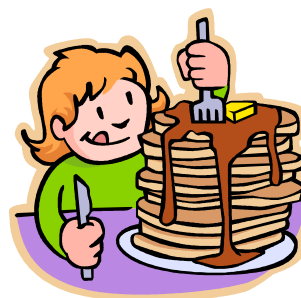
Over the next few weeks our school becomes alive with numerous fundraising efforts. In the coming weeks check the school website for a calendar of events supporting Share the Spirit.

**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.**



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 for purchasing items. Donations can be made to the office.

## DO NOT MAKE BREAKFAST!



on Thursday, 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!

### From the Counselling Office

#### Upcoming Events

Students who are planning on attending post-secondary schools in Canada or the U.S. may now create an account for transcripts and mid-term marks to be sent to selected institutions. You will need your PEN number to create the account.

Go to: <https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/tsw/tsw/student/welcome.jsp>

- November 8th Canadian Armed Forces recruiter will be at Vanier, in the library at lunch
- November 8th Grad Meeting 7:30 PM in the Vanier Cafeteria
- November 11<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Day Ceremony

- November 15th Pearson College applications are **available** online: go to [www.pearsoncollege.ca](http://www.pearsoncollege.ca) for more info
- November 18th Sea of Pink day-wear something pink to show you care about eliminating bullying!
- December 7th Shad Valley applications are due: go to [www.shad.ca](http://www.shad.ca) for more information about this amazing program
- December 7th LPI exams for all students currently enrolled in English 12
- December 16<sup>th</sup> Alumni Day at Vanier!
- December 31<sup>st</sup> Deadline for the Canadian Citizenship Challenge. Great prizes are awarded, including a trip to Ottawa. Go to : [canadiancitizenshipchallenge.ca](http://canadiancitizenshipchallenge.ca)

## Exam time is approaching!

January 24-28 is exam week. There are no classes and all students will be writing exams. Gr. 8 and 9 students will all write midterm exams in English, Social Studies, Math, Science and French. Gr. 10-12 students will write a mixture of government and teacher-determined exams, depending on their course load.

The exam schedule for the week will be determined in early December.

Students can start preparing for exams by developing a study plan and working on practice exams that can be found at [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams) First term report cards may suggest tutoring as an option—this is also an excellent way to prepare for exams.

## Tutoring Program

### Do you need tutoring?

All Vanier students can receive free tutoring from other students for assistance in course work, assignments or organizational skills. Students will be matched one on one.

To receive tutoring the student needs to complete an application in the Skills Room (Room 3).

### Do you want to be a tutor?

Students in Grade 10, 11 or 12 can apply to be a tutor.

Tutors can earn community service hours or an hourly wage. Potential tutors need to come in person to the Skills room and complete an application. Wages range from \$12.50 to \$17.50 per hour depending on grade level.

For more information, please contact Barb Bergsma at 667-5901 (leave message) or [barb.bergsma@yesnet.yk.ca](mailto:barb.bergsma@yesnet.yk.ca)

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

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



## PROGRAMME EXPLORE

- Interested in learning, studying or improving your French somewhere in Canada this summer with Canadians your age and language level?
- Interested in staying on a university or college campus or possibly live with a French-speaking family?

### EXPLORE is for YOU!

#### Requirements:

- \* You want to learn French (no previous French knowledge required!!)
- \* Age: 14-15 (for 3 week explore) 15+ and Grade 11/12 (for 5 week explore)
- \* Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident
- \* Your permanent residence is NOT in Québec

If you are 14-15 yrs old, you can apply for a 3 week program to study French in Québec from July 4th to July 22nd and stay with a French-speaking family.

If you are in Grade 11 or 12 and you are a full-time student, you can apply for a 5 week program to study French on numerous campuses across Canada including Québec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, New Brunswick and BC. Some of these programs also offer credits.

These two programs offer bursaries, which means food, lodging, tuition and activities are paid for.

Deadline is February 28th, 2012 but spots are limited and they are filling up fast. Don't delay.

See Mme Hamel or Mme Ouimet for details, check online at [www.myexplore.ca](http://www.myexplore.ca) or call 1-877-866-4242.

## New Reporting Format

You will have seen on your child's report card more of an emphasis on performance reporting rather than a simple letter grade. In grades 8 and 9, there will be no letter grade at this time as all assessments are based on whether or not they are meeting/not meeting expectations. This is followed by anecdotal comments that reflect where your child is in relation to the learning outcomes set by the Education Department. In grades 10-12, you will still see a percentage grade. However, the comments will be very similar to those given to grade 8-9 students. Please do not hesitate to contact any of your child's teachers regarding their academic performance.

## Vanier Library News

### Vanier Bookmark Contest

In celebration of Canadian Library month, Vanier holds an annual bookmark contest in October. We had many wonderful submissions this year, and after careful deliberation by our panel of judges, the winners have been declared.

Congratulations to Charmaine Dawal our winner,  
and to Joy Gibbs, our runner-up!

Thank you to all the students who submitted their artwork this year.

Come on down to the library to see this year's winners.

### Book Requests

Is there a book you love? Is there a title you have been wanting to read? Fill out a book request in the library and we will add it to our collection.

## OVERDUE BOOKS

If you love a book, set it free...

If it comes back, it's yours...

If it is from the Vanier School Library,

it was never yours so BRING IT BACK!!

### Global Village Craft Fair: the Gift that Gives Twice

The Global Village Craft Fair will be held on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Vanier Social Justice Club will be selling its photo Art Cards, baked goods and..... paper bead necklaces made by women in a women's cooperative from Uganda. (Thank you Ms. Chisholm!)

Hope to see you there and make the Global Village Craft Fair your one-stop Christmas shopping destination.



## NEWS FROM THE VANIER SOCIAL JUSTICE CLUB

### Poverty and Homelessness Action Week:

Thank you to all the students and staff for their support during Poverty and Homelessness Action Week. The Wear a Hat; Warm a Heart Campaign raised \$165 and two giant bags of warm clothing for the Many Rivers and the Outreach Van. The Outreach Van provides food, warm clothing and emergency health and hygiene products to people in need in Whitehorse.

### Halloween and UNICEF



Big thank you also goes out to everyone who donated coins and cash for UNICEF.

### Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> is International Children's Day

To celebrate this day the SJ Club is running a BACK-PACK campaign. One of our club members is linked to a program in Nicaragua aimed at helping kids in school. We are looking for your new or gently used backpacks, duffel bags, shoulder bags or gym bags which could be used to help kids carry their books to school. Drop them off at the office or in Ms. Hamel's room any time from now until the end of November. The bags will be delivered personally to Nicaragua during the Christmas season

# Crusader Volleyball!

Vanier Volleyball players had another exceptional showing this year at the Dawson City Invitational. This tournament is the highlight of the year for many of these students. The games begin almost immediately after the bus arrives at the wintery, cold and quiet town of Dawson. There are two courts going non-stop in the small gym, new games every 45 minutes with nearly all the Yukon schools represented and much cheering from the stage.

Friday night, there was an eventful Halloween dance organized by Dawson, where all Vanier teams and Ms. Peterson (Mr. Canoe Head) arrived in full costume. Gibson was the Hulk, leaving a trail of green paint wherever he went. We had aerobics outfits, Smurfs and everything in between.

The tournament was mostly about team bonding, building memories, spending time together, cheering Vanier to victory and having fun! Vanier was exceptional at the latter, since every year our school stays an extra night in the Downtown Hotel Annex and enjoys a great big pizza and dance party. The 9/10 girls won the dance off this year with the senior boys coming in a close second – you should see those boys move on the dance floor! All was quiet by midnight until Mr. Stoker started telling ghost stories to the 9/10 girls!

Vanier dominated on and off the courts winning 3 of 4 divisions in Dawson. The 9/10 boys and both the senior girls and boys came home with gold! A big thank you to parents Tony Park and the Prenoslos, who drove all the way to Dawson to cheer on our teams, as well as to the teachers, coaches and chaperons that spent Thursday through Sunday with our volleyball players at all hours of the day and night. We would like to specifically recognize Jeremy Staveley for volunteering to coach the 9/10 boys team this year – he has been a great addition to the school! We also enjoyed having two extra coaches this year, Aiden Stoker (age 11) helping out with the 9/10 girls and Noah Connell (age 6) thinking he was one of the senior boys.

**Congratulations everyone on a memorable trip – let's bring a few more banners home from Yukon Championships!!!**



## Youth Counselling

So, you're the parent of a teenager. You might be asking yourself, "How did this happen so quickly?" It's a time of real challenge as we watch our young children begin to "morph" into young adults. We are always confident that they will pick top quality jeans and sneakers but we're not always sure that they will make the same quality choices when it comes to other scenarios in their lives.

No matter how well we feel that we have prepared them or shown by example, we are no longer the single greatest influence in their lives. They will be faced with some of the biggest questions of their lives.....who am I, what's important to me, how do I fit in? It may all seem very dramatic from an outsider's perspective but they are tackling some very serious life issues and developing ways to cope as they go.

For some teens, this will be easier than for others. For a number of reasons, some teens will not be as well equipped to have a smooth transition through the teen years and one of their coping strategies may be to turn to drugs or alcohol. It's a short term solution which as we all know, can lead to long term problems.

For these very reasons, Yukon Alcohol and Drug Services provides counsellors for youth within the school system and at our Sarah Steele location. With some support and direction, youth can learn other strategies for coping and feel encouraged for their efforts rather than defeated for their choices.

Our counsellors are also available to address any concerns that might be affecting youth whether alcohol or drugs is part of the equation or not. Making a connection with a counsellor now may give them the support they need later when they are presented with those difficult choices.

We recognize that this can be a really difficult time for parents as well and welcome your participation. In fact, research has shown that this counselling is particularly effective when parents are also a part of the counselling. This helps the teen to realize that it is okay to seek help when you don't have all the answers and that they are not the "problem." We encourage family counselling and also offer a support group called the "Family and Friends Support Circle" on Mondays at 4:30 also at the Sarah Steele building.

Together, we can.

For more information, call Yukon Alcohol and Drug Services at 667-5777.

