

V.F.A. High School's



Western Vista



19th Annual Edition – December 2012

The fall term was filled with fun and interesting activities that brought the VFA family closer together.



As in many families, the novelty of being together eroded as time went on. Fun and games were replaced by the realities of schoolwork. The brightness and optimism of late summer was replaced by the gloom and darkness of autumn. The barrier of winter stood in the way of the promise of spring and daylight saving time.

Mr. Yee was watching the wormhole viewer he picked up for cheap on Craigslist. It showed what was going on in a parallel VFA High School in a parallel universe. Things were quite different, to say the least! The principal of the school was **Ms. Ryoo**. She changed the philosophy of VFA High from an academic focus to an arts focus. But it wasn't fine arts. It wasn't even performing arts. It was industrial arts. **Ms. Keung's** metalwork students were constructing brass instruments to be used by the school marching band. Ms. Keung was making her own brass instrument – brass knuckles for use in the self-defence class she taught in the VFA night school. **Hai Anh Bui** was using a file to shape some keys for her French horn. She preferred the work done by the coarser flat bastard file to that of the finer second cut file. Of course, the name flat bastard was cool too. The previous term's woodworking class had students making their own wind instruments. Now, the pleasant tones of clarinets and oboes drifted through the school during the breaks between classes. **Jeffery Jong** made the only bassoon. He now carries it around everywhere and is known as the "Bassoon Baboon". He didn't like the moniker. He preferred the higher order primate bonobo. In auto mechanics class, **Mrs. Tajiri** was showing **Alice Lin** and **Kelly Fei** how to replace the camshaft in a supercharged 4.5 L in-line six cylinder engine. Alice muttered to Kelly during the demonstration: "Why are we learning this skill? It's almost like learning 17th century Canadian history. We'll never use it." Kelly replied: "Yeah. When we finish school, the real world cars will all run on electric motors with continuously variable transmissions." In the Construction 12 class, **Kaixin Chen** was installing new joist and cross bracing combinations in the gym to hold up the new retractable roof. The school gave Shaw Cable the naming rights to the roof in return for free dial-up internet service. **Howard Kwon** was assembling the prefabricated trusses that were to become the new roof but was using his martial arts skills to interpret the steps instead of reading the manual. **Nam Pham** was the acting foreman and yelled at his workers: "You are doing it all wrong! Why can't you do it my way – the correct way!! You are all lazy bums. In Vietnam, we would be using bamboo instead of this B.C. softwood crap!!" On the other side of the gym, **Ms. Soo** was supervising her students in Painting 9. Today's class was using a medium density microfiber roller with an alkyd paint. Ms. Soo was demonstrating different techniques in her \$2300 Vera Wang gown to emphasize the point all teachers make: neatness does count! **Jeff Kang** said: "This paint definitely provides much better adhesion and coverage than latex paint." **Jason Zhang** replied: "And the fumes are pleasantly much more intoxicating." Thinning down the paint with turpentine was **Wilson Zheng**. He said: "In Venezuela, we use a petroleum-based thinner made from the largest reserves of conventional oil in the world. Canada is fortunate to have a natural tree-based solvent as well as a math curriculum advanced enough to provide students good numeracy skills for the high tech and high finance world. I never want to go back to Chavez land again!" From the woodworking lab in Room 6 came a symphony of sounds. Students were operating the band saws, hand saws, reciprocating saws, circular saws, hammers, chisels, drills and routers in flawless harmony. **Richard Moon's** use of an orbital sander on his teak dining table was poetry in motion. **Terry Lee's** precision handling of his wood-burning iron to put an intricate design on a lamp base was a sight to behold. Downstairs, on the left side of the hall was **Ms. Tatham** teaching a class on welding and **Mr. Harder** was in a class on the other side teaching riveting. Their once friendly rivalry had become quite heated as the two teachers constantly argued over which technique is the superior one. **Jerry Chen** was clearly on the welding side. He said: "What skill is there to punching out holes and hammering rivets in? Any simian could do that! Having a steady hand with a 3100 °C oxyacetylene torch – now that's talent!!" **William Wu** spoke up in defense of his craft: "Eiffel Tower. Boeing 747. Statue of Liberty. Golden Gate Bridge. Empire State Building. Levis jeans. The most famous things built by people have been built using rivets!" Jerry shot back: "The Titanic used rivets!" William Wu hit back – with his pneumatic hammer. **Derek Fung** was outside in the eating area watching this disagreement unfold. He thought to himself: "This is certainly riveting." **Ms. Chang** was busy placing the students in work-apprenticeship programs. She asked **Tiffany Fung** whether or not she would go to the oil sands in Fort McMurray to further her skills as a hydraulic pump mechanic. Tiffany had a green philosophy and asked: "I think the light sweet crude being extracted from the Hibernia field off of Newfoundland is better for the environment. I hear the people in the Maritimes are very friendly, too." **Mr. Chueh** drove up in the school's 5-ton truck with a load of synthetic stones and cement for use in the Masonry 11 class. **Eason Yao** was in that class and was enjoying learning real hands-on skills. He had tried online courses before but much preferred a real bricks and mortar school. It was a slow time of day in the school office and **Ms. Yeh** was knitting a shaker knit sweater for those cold days that were to come soon. With so much technology going on in the school, Ms. Yeh was much comforted by her simple needles and yarn. Mr. Yee turned off his wormhole viewer and looked at his own universe's VFA High. It was comforting to see the familiar sight of apes in the school rather than the humans he saw in the wormhole viewer. Mrs. Tajiri was the familiar silverback. It was frightening to Mr. Yee to think that humans could ever be masters in any universe. He then reached for his banana as Mr. Harder was coming soon to join him for the daily after school fruit and grooming session. Mr. Yee really liked bananas.

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(The names are entirely real. Only the events have been altered slightly.)

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Social Studies 10 students interviewed VFA High School teachers about what they felt were the most important parts of the *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Equality Rights

Interviewer: Alice Lin

Teacher: Ms. Soo



I interviewed Ms. Soo about the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; she told me a story of her great-great grandfather, her great grandfather and her grandfather. Ms. Soo said that she thinks the Equality Rights are the most important rights to her. She really thinks people from different places should be equal. As long as we are still human beings, we should be treated equally.

Back in the 1900s, her great-great grandfather came to Canada to provide his family with good living conditions back in China. Back then, men who came to Canada were not allowed to bring their family because of the immigration policies. Especially for Asian people, it was really difficult; different languages, low payment, and other discriminations. Her great-great grandfather eventually died in Canada and he never had a chance to see his family in China again. Years

after, her great grandfather came to Canada alone too.

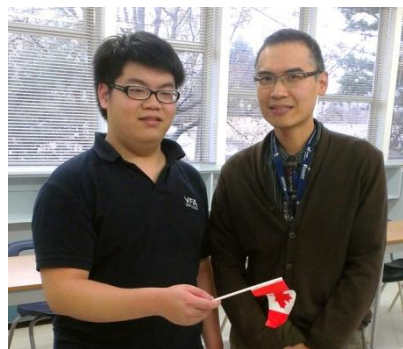
The policies about the Chinese immigrants were once unjust. For example, Chinese had to pay high tax when they came to the country of Canada. After Confederation, the policy changed and her grandfather, who had been living in Canada for many years with her father, finally brought her great grandmother, grandmother, and the rest of the family members to Canada.

Ms. Soo mentioned that to treat each other's cultures equally is very important. We live in a multicultural society, we learn about different cultures and learn how to respect them.

Legal Rights

Interviewer: Jerry Chen

Teacher: Mr. Yee



Mr. Yee felt Legal rights were the most important. Legal rights are clearly rights which exist under the rules of the legal system. It is a kind of law to protect everyone from unfair treatment or wrongful arrest. It could help innocent people get out of court.

Legal rights mean police can only arrest with good reason; police could not just arrest you because you dress strangely or poorly. Also, the legal rights let people have a proper

defence until a judge says he or she is guilty. Even if you are guilty, you still have legal rights, such as fair punishment. The main point is to let every person have fair legal treatment.

Official Language Rights

Interviewer: Hai Anh Bui

Teacher: Ms. Tatham



To Ms. Tatham, a VFA teacher, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is very important. To her, all the rights and freedoms of the Charter are all very important, but the Official Languages Rights of Canada are especially important because this has helped Canada to become a multicultural country.

When Ms. Tatham was growing up, the Charter was not yet published. The French and The English in Canada did not get along very well because of political, racist reasons and many other differences. But then, with the establishment of the Charter, people have grown to be more accepting of other people's cultural differences. People became more open to learning about other cultures and started to learn different languages with curiosity. As mentioned by Ms. Tatham, this has slowly led Canada toward becoming a multicultural society.

Mobility Rights

Interviewer: Howard Kwon

Teacher: Ms. Keung



I interviewed Ms. Keung about which of Canada's Rights and Freedoms she thought were most important. Mobility Rights are important to her because they are very applicable to her. These rights have allowed her to travel easily and have allowed her to work and live abroad which resulted in her:

- meeting many colleagues from all over the world.
- meeting many students from different countries.
- meeting her partner. (because Ms. Keung and her partner have different citizenship)



I asked her "if some rights and freedoms should include all the people who are affected by that "right" and "freedom" and their perspectives?" She thought that is almost impossible because the Canadian government is entrusted to make laws that are "best" for all citizens.

Legal Rights

Interviewer: Eason Yao

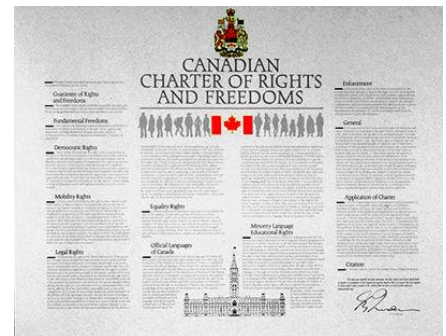
Teacher: Mr. Harder



When I interviewed Mr. Harder about which of Canada's Rights and Freedoms he thought were most important, this is what he told me.

Legal rights are very important to me. I think it is important that people charged with offences have a right to a fair trial. This is an important right for wealthy and well-educated people. But I think it is also very important for people who don't have that much money and haven't had the chance to be well educated.

Wealthy and well educated people will always have enough money and education to get a fair trial. I think poorer people deserve this right too. It is much easier for poor, disadvantaged (with not enough money and education) people to become involved with the police and prison system. We must be careful to treat everyone equally with regard to this. All people should be treated equally, regardless of money and education.



A Review of the Grade 10 Social Studies Play, *The Battle of the Plains of Abraham* By Alice Lin

On September 26, my classmates and I performed a show- "The Battle of the Plains of Abraham". It's actually fun when you have a performance with your classmates. I thought we all



put in our full effort during the performance, and we all memorized our lines and actions well. The performance was excellent, or that is just what I think.

The most important thing is that we'll never forget this important period in Canadian history; it's good to memorize a serious thing in a funny way.

The best part of the performance was



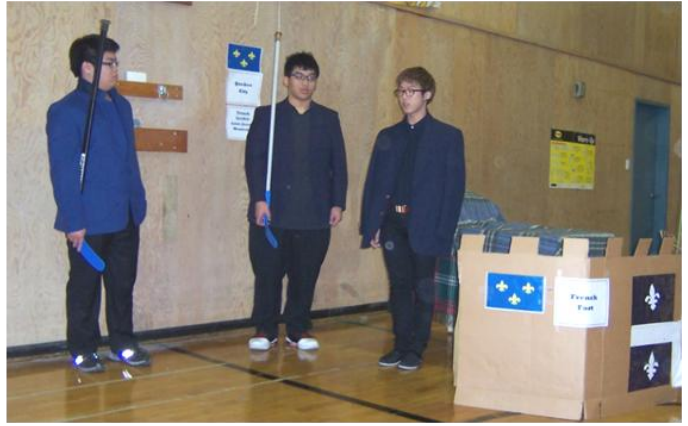
when I heard the audience laughing. I want to say thank you to all my classmates and I appreciate those audience members who really paid attention to our performance. In my opinion, it would be better if we could improve our stage props.

Although it was just a short show, we could still improve our props such as, "the British ship", "the French fort" and so on. It would make people feel more excited when they act in or watch a show. I'm actually not good at acting in a play. I acted as a British soldier. Before the show, I could hardly imagine that I could play a soldier, but that was funny. I learned not only acting skills, but also Canadian history in this performance.



Homecoming picnic
September 14





Plains of Abraham act
September 26



Rock Climbing

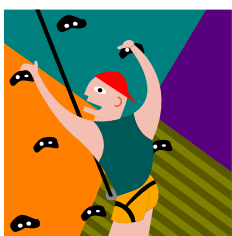
Climb On!

By Jeffrey Jeong

VFA is a high school near Joyce Station. On October 4th, VFA students went to Cliffhanger, a rock climbing centre. We were excited to go rock climbing because most of us had never gone rock climbing. When we arrived there, we were more excited, because we saw the walls. We wanted to climb them. Before we climbed, we needed to learn some safety vocabulary. If we don't know the safety vocabulary, we could fall. After that, we played some fun games!

One rock climbing word is "Climbing". When you say "Climbing", the staff member says "Climbing on". Then you started to climb. The second word is "Tension". When the staff member says "Ok" you take a rest in the middle of climbing wall. The last word is "Lower". When you finish climbing, and you want to go down, then you say "Lower". He says "Lowering" and you lean back and walk down slowly.

After, we played some games, we played one where we put our right hands on the rope and we couldn't let it go. You needed to untie the knot without letting go. I forgot what it was called but almost all the VFA students played that game together. After playing games, we took a challenge. The challenge was to try to climb up using only specific handles. The second challenge was to try to climb up the easiest wall without using



your hands. Finally the last challenge was when you start from one spot and go to left and reach the end. In the last challenge, you could step on any handles.

We learned a lot at Cliffhanger. We learn how to tie a safety harness and how to climb fast. We also learned how to get tired so fast and have fun. It was fun. I think it's the best sport I've ever played. I love rock climbing. What about you?

Rock Climbing – OMG I'm So Scared

By Wilson Zheng

There it was; a big wall ready to be climbed by me. My heart started to pound really fast. I was really nervous. Our school had made a trip to Richmond to go rock climbing. I love how our school has trips to places I've never been to. This was the first time I had gone rock climbing and after I was really sore.

Sometimes, it can be really challenging because you use all your, body to climb. I asked the employee if I would fall and he said that I wouldn't so I put my hand up and started to climb. The start was easy but then it got really hard. In some parts, I would have to jump from one side to the other. Sometimes, I would get stuck and would ask for help. They would tell me which rock to go to. Finally, I was at the last rock and I screamed "Hello". I'm really glad our school made this trip, now I can tell my mom this story.



My body hurt so much after climbing. When I finished climbing approximately 4 to 5 walls, my hands started to hurt a lot. I didn't feel them and didn't have power. I couldn't climb anymore.

Everyone should be scared if you go rock climbing for the first time. My body was never so sore before. It was a new experience for me. Be serious and take care of yourself.

Rock Climbing is one of the Biggest Challenges for Me

By Jeff Kang



When I was in elementary school we went rock climbing at a university. That climbing wall was from two to five floors high. I only remember climbing about three levels and then I quit. Since that time, I never had gone rock climbing, until at VFA, I had another opportunity. Rock climbing is the hardest sport, but finishing the wall is the most satisfying achievement you can have. In September, we went rock climbing in Richmond. At the beginning, our coach taught us how to climb. I saw Hai Ahn, another student, was the first one to climb. Then I saw someone else – Eason, go to the top, so I told myself I could do it. While I was climbing, the coach said, "You know there is a thing called love. Go!" It was so funny. Finally, I made it to the top. When I touched the highest rock I was so happy. I think almost everyone climbed twice but I couldn't because my hands had no power to make a fist. I never felt that, rock climbing was so

hard. Rock climbing is tiring sport and challenging. I think I could do it better if my hands had more strength. I also think rock climbing is a very good sport to train your hands muscles.

Climb Up or Fall Down **By Derek Fung**

Last Thursday, at 12:00, Vancouver Formosa Academy went rock climbing in Richmond. The principal wanted the new students to try this. We went with the teachers Ms. Keung and Mr. Yee. We took about three buses to get there. The VFA students and I had a lot fun together. We needed to use special

equipment. For some people it was easy to scale the walls and for others it was hard.

Is it simple to climb a wall? For some strong students it was so easy. These people had a lot of fun because they were so fast getting up. Climbing is so tiring. If you do it slowly it is easier. If you climb quickly you waste a lot of energy. A friend of mine climbed up in about 15 times. He has a lot of energy and powerful muscles. When we climbed, we laughed and made jokes together.

Rock climbing is difficult for some weaker participants. All the students tried this and we had a good time together. Some students

fell a little on the rocks but they tried to climb to the top. We need to spend about 70% of our energy. When you climb up about four times, you start to become so tired. A friend of mine was stuck and she didn't know which handle she needed to grab so we helped her. At some places, the wall was on an incline and it was so arduous. It was the first time I had gone rock climbing. I think we had a good time together. All the students were able to climb a little. Some students were too shy to shinny up and others were hardcore. I like to climb because it is fun. Rock climbing is awesome!

School Sports

School Sports **By Howard G. Kwon**

At school we play a lot of sports. I've played badminton, basketball, soccer and other sports. And I won the badminton and soccer tournaments before. School sports are good because they are good for health, they help us make good relationship with friends, and they are fun. In Korea in high school, we just went out at lunch time and played basketball and soccer, but there was no badminton and no ping-pong and no competitions with other classroom students. I like to do sports now because after the competition with friends our relationship is better and that is good for my friends and me. If VFA had a taekwondo team and had some equipment at school, I would want to have this kind of competition with friends. Basketball and badminton are good for



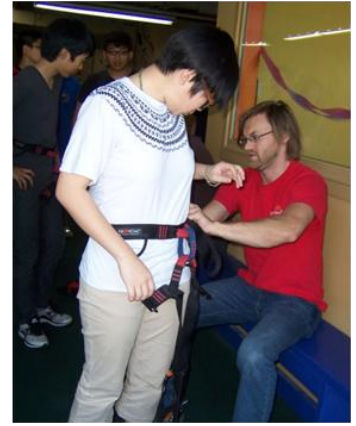
partnership. I think we have to do more sports that we didn't do before. In the summer, we can play kick ball and in the winter, we can play in the snow or do a physical fitness test. Physical fitness tests are very good because some students don't know how much they grow and how their body mass index changes, and how much stamina they have, so we have to do physical fitness tests. School sports are good and very fun.

School Sports **By Nam Pham**

As we know, our school has many kinds of sports such as hockey, soccer, volleyball, basketball, and so on, but there is only one sport that most of the students love the most: badminton. When you look at me, you can tell I have really big glasses but my eyes

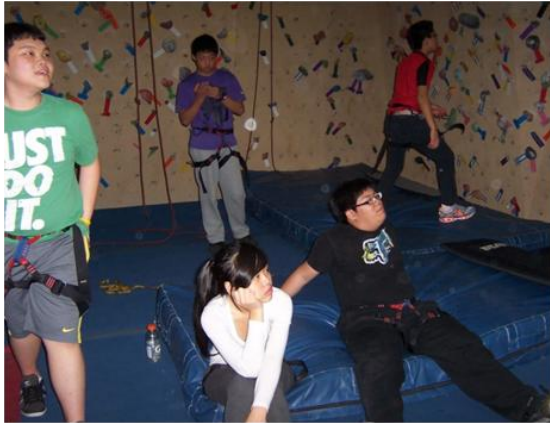


work very well because of playing badminton. In our school, most of students like to play badminton when I invite them. First, badminton is organized fun for cool people. In fact you can find out how cool you are when you play all sports and badminton makes you feel stronger. Second, badminton is an easy sport you can play no matter your skill level. You can learn some skills from your friends or you will find out your style in badminton by yourself. It is really fun that you can play with other people and have a lot of good times. Finally, badminton helps you to get fit, because when you play badminton, you need to run, jump, use your hands, your arms, your shoulders. I have found out that playing badminton protects you from heart disease, especially heart attack. And playing badminton helps you look and feel good. I think badminton is great to play at school.



Rock climbing
October 4





Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day By Tiffany Fung

Thanksgiving Day is special because we can serve good food. On Thanksgiving Day everybody eats. People eat turkey on

this day. Turkey is part of a big meal on Thanksgiving Day. People also eat mashed potatoes, salad, cranberry sauce, and some vegetables. These foods are the most popular foods on Thanksgiving. Some people have different tastes but, almost everybody eats delicious food and carves a turkey.

Not all people celebrate Thanksgiving, and to some people they just like it because they get to eat a big meal on a holiday. Some people don't like Thanksgiving because they say that it is like a normal day, but I love it. This day is important because we say thank you to God. On this special day we have games or food that we can share. Thanksgiving Day is a day for thanks and great food.

Thanksgiving Day By Jeff Kang

Thanksgiving Day is a day when we want to say thank to the First Nations people, because when people outside of North America had just arrived to the United States it was too difficult to stay alive. However, the First Nations helped them. The First Nations taught them how to hunt and farm.

Thanksgiving Day is not a very significant day to me, because



Thanksgiving Day is not in my culture, so his day is just a day that we can eat a big dinner.

My favourite foods are turkey and mashed potatoes. Last time we ate lots of delicious foods at school in room

7. I love those foods. It was our school's Thanksgiving meal together. In the end, everyone had to say a thing that they were thankful for. I said, "I'm thankful for my mom, because she let me come to Canada and learn lots of different things."

Thanksgiving Day By Richard Moon

On Thanksgiving Day, all of VFA students and teachers had a great meal. We met in the Art room at 2 p.m. We waited for 20 minutes for food. The food was made by grade 11 and 12 students in Mr. Harder's Foods class.

There was a giant turkey, mashed potatoes, soup, juice, and gravy. My favourite food was turkey. It was made well done and the gravy tasted good with the

turkey.

I sat with Ms. Ryoo, Ms. Tatham, Jason, Jeff, and Nam. I learned table manners. Some of them I knew, but some of them I didn't know. In addition, it was very hard to have table manners. After eating the delicious food, Mrs. Tajiri stood up, and made us tell what we were thankful for. I told everyone I was thankful for my family.

Jason was eating like a homeless person. He liked the mashed potatoes. The most strange was Wilson took some of the food for his lunch the next day. It was funny. We also had pumpkin pies for dessert. I think we had a great time with our friends and teachers. I hope we can have an event like this again. Did you have a great time too?

The Thanksgiving Day By Jason Zhang

Thanksgiving Day is a day to say thank you for the things you are thankful for. On that day we had a Thanksgiving lunch in the school. I also want to talk about the difference between the American Thanksgiving and the Canadian one.

At my school's Thanksgiving lunch we ate many things. My favourite were turkey and mashed potatoes. I think they taste good because of the gravy we had. I still remember that last year we talked about what we were thankful before we started to eat. This year we said thank you when everyone was able to get some food.

Americans celebrate this holiday in late November, but Canadians do it on the second Monday of October. It is because we are on the north side of America, so the harvest time is earlier. That is why we celebrate it earlier than Americans do. I think Thanksgiving Day is good because we have many foods to eat and we are thankful for that.



Korean and Canadian Thanksgiving

By Jeffrey Jeong

I feel there are a lot of differences between Canadian and Korean Thanksgiving. First, the food is different. In Canada there is turkey, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie for dessert. In Korea there is a lot of food such as *kimchi*, Korean sushi, *bulgogi* and stew. The table manners are different too. In Canada, there are a lot of rules on how to eat. You shouldn't lick your knife or reach for the food. It is all quite confusing. In Korea we have some rules too, but not too many. The oldest man starts to eat first and then the ladies. You shouldn't leave the table during the meal. I still don't get why Canadians have so many rules for eating. Now I have a question for you. Which Thanksgiving would you prefer: Korean or Canadian? It's your choice.

The Bigger the Turkey – The Happier the Family

By Derek Fung

Thanksgiving is a harvest festival. On this day we need to use our good table manners. Canadians celebrate this holiday earlier than American Thanksgiving because Canada is further north. Thanksgiving is always on the second Monday of October. Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving by having a big dinner with family. This holiday brings the family together. We eat food and we show our appreciation for the gifts and people in our lives.

The big meal is great. At dinner, some families pray together before they eat. On Thanksgiving, we always have a roast turkey. Families eat and share this big bird. They

pass the bird to each other with the gravy. Fathers carve the turkey standing up and then they give the first serving to the mother because she cooked the meal. On this holiday, families and friends enjoy this big feast.

We also express our gratitude for food, families and friends at this time. Before or after eating, people need to give thanks. This moment is so important because you show you are very lucky to have a family and friends who love you. You need to be serious. At this time, we



give thanks to keep our families and friends all together. Our parents try to teach us to be grateful. They teach us to love the people who take care of us and love us.

I like this holiday because we share a meal with our family and friends and everyone is thankful. This year was the first time I experienced this holiday. I think Thanksgiving is a great holiday because this day tries to keep our families together. Thanksgiving is amazing!

Delicious Thanksgiving

By Wilson Zheng

Thanksgiving is a harvest festival. People have a big feast at home, school or work. It's celebrated on the 2nd Monday of October. Canadian Thanksgiving is celebrated earlier than the American Thanksgiving because it's farther north. On Thanksgiving Day, you have to use your best table manners. Thanksgiving is a day to show your appreciation. The table is covered with many plates and a special bird, the turkey.

Turkey is a big bird that is eaten normally for Thanksgiving. It's really delicious. It's a strange big

bird that can't walk. It's fat and has a lot of meat. When people roast it, they put stuffing inside. The turkey is a symbol of Thanksgiving in North America. The meat in the body is white and in the legs is dark meat. I feel a lot of gratitude that I was able to have 3 helpings this year.

There are many beautiful dishes on the table, all cooked by my auntie. The turkey is the main dish. It's cooked for a very long time until it becomes juicy and roasted. It's a long process. There are many condiments and many steps. The turkey is served with mashed potatoes, stuffing, and vegetables. For sauce, there is gravy and cranberry. Good and delicious desserts are next, such as apple pie or pumpkin pie with whipping cream on top. I appreciate that I have food to eat because some people don't, so I'm glad I do.

There was no space on the table because there were many dishes and the turkey. I think that you should be glad that you eat this because it's special and you eat it only once or twice a year. I was really full when I ate turkey. Enjoy your meal because I sure did.



A Special Turkey Dinner

By Kelly Fei

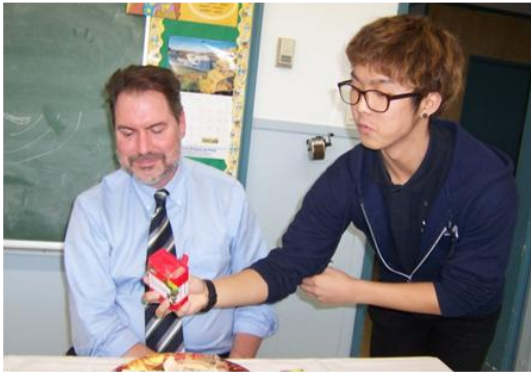
On October 5th, our school had a Thanksgiving dinner. This was the first time I had heard about this festival. Canadian Thanksgiving is celebrated on the second Monday in October. Canadians usually have a dinner with their family. I'm very happy I had a chance to enjoy this dinner. It was a good experience. Good table manners and traditional food are part of Thanksgiving.

Canadian table manners are different than Chinese table manners. In Canada, you cannot pick



Thanksgiving party
October 5





your teeth at the table. You should go to the washroom. In China, it is common to do this at the table. In Canada, you use a knife and fork but in China we use chopsticks. Here, you cannot talk with your mouth full but in China we like talking and just say anything interesting at the table. I think each culture has a different way of eating.

Canadians eat a turkey for Thanksgiving. It is an important dinner with bread stuffing and squash. In China, we usually have meat, vegetables and soup. When we finish, we always eat fruit like oranges, apples and grapes. Canadians eat pumpkin pie. It is very famous here. We don't eat dessert in China. The Chinese think it is not good for your health.

On Thanksgiving we should thank God, our parents and our friends. I'm very glad my parents work hard to send me here. They have always taken good care of me.



Movie Reviews

Life of Pi By Eason Yao

Last Tuesday, we went with our communications class to a movie theatre at Metrotown to enjoy the movie of the book, *Life of Pi*, that we read in class. This was my third time to go to the theatre. We met our former classmate Andy there and he

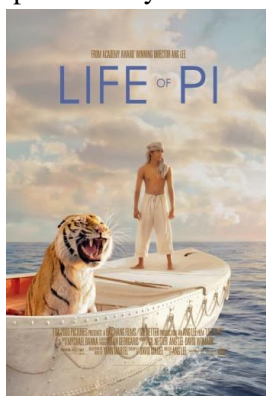


said he wanted to join us. At the beginning of the movie, Pi still remembers that during his childhood he wanted to feed Richard Parker (a tiger) with his hand and his father stopped him and made an example to show him how horrible and ferocious a tiger is. The middle of the movie is about Pi and the tiger—Richard Parker. Pi tries to survive with that horrible tiger! And there's a survival book and some snacks on the boat but at first Pi is scared of that tiger so he uses a lifebuoy, life vests and some paddles to make his own raft on the

ocean to keep that tiger away from him! But Pi tries to feed the tiger and control it. He catches fish and feeds them to him. All of this is what Pi faces when he is about 16. I think the strongest image is the part in which Pi stays on the lifebuoy and put it in the paddles and stays there so he can save himself in the storm!

Movie Review—Life of Pi By Alice Lin

I've been reading the great novel by Yann Martel—*Life of Pi*—for more than one week, with my lovely classmates and my teacher, who always tries to encourage his students to read more. During this term the movie of *Life of Pi* is coming out and is directed by a famous director—Ang Lee. Let's just say we are lucky because the movie just comes out when we all finish reading the novel. And our teacher decided to take us to the movie.



The movie is great. I guarantee to the people who want to have an experience of a great adventure when you watch the movie, and the

amazing scenes will take your breath away. I always think that for every novel which has been made into a movie, the novel is usually much better than the movie. And I do think the novel is much better than the movie this time.



But Ang Lee's movies have never disappointed me.

And the same is true this time. I love this movie because I felt marvellous when I watched it; there are some scenes I'll never forget for the rest of my life. When Richard Parker (the tiger) shows up in the cage, although I knew it wasn't real, it still caught my eye; I looked into his eyes. How beautiful he is. That is God's creature. I would have cried if the camera lingered on that beautiful tiger for a longer time. There are so many wonderful scenes when Pi is on the Pacific Ocean. Ang Lee lets us see the different look of the ocean: morning, afternoon, night, and the beautiful sunset. I can't describe the details I've seen; they are so great that I can barely express them. This film, *Life of Pi* shows our amazing mother nature. How many people can see its beauty?

Fall Calendar of Events

September 5	First day of school for Fall Term
September 14	Homecoming Picnic at Norquay Park, Vancouver
October 4	Rock climbing at Cliffhangers in Richmond
October 5	Thanksgiving turkey meal at school
October 8	Thanksgiving Day (no school)
October 17-18	Mid-term exams
October 19	Professional development day (no school)
October 31	Halloween Party at school
November 9	Remembrance Day ceremony at school
November 12	Remembrance Day (no school)
November 30	Christmas tree decorating at school
December 7	Career and Education Fair, downtown Vancouver
December 12-14	Final exams and last day of classes
December 14	Christmas Party and visit from Santa
December 17-21	Special Activities Week
December 21	Last day of school for Fall Term





Halloween party
October 31





Halloween

My Halloween By Terry Lee

It was my first Halloween.

Everyone wore a Halloween costume. They were dressed as ghosts, witches, vampires, zombies and others. I was a witch. Later on, we carved pumpkins and made Jack o' Lanterns in room 8. Most people dug out the pumpkin seeds and carved out a face on the outside. However, I carved an Alphabet X. Why did I carve out an alphabet X? Because I wanted to make it look different.

After that we had a party. I enjoyed it very much. It was an amazing Halloween party. I liked the mummy game the most, because I got to be a mummy. This Halloween party was a nice new experience.



My Halloween in Canada By Tiffany Fung

I was very excited to attend the Halloween party at VFA, because I never had a Halloween party before. People celebrate Halloween on October 31st. This year everyone wore their own costume. My costume was very funny, because Ms. Ryoo helped me to dress up. My costume was a crazy wig. She told me that on Halloween, you can dress up as anything. All the teachers' costumes were funny, too. Mr. Yee was a cow. My classmates kept asking for milk. Mr. Harder was a poor guy. Ms. Tatham was an astronaut woman. Ms. Ryoo was a

witch. Ms. Soo was a pirate. My friends' costumes were really good.

Everybody got ready for the party. Mr. Yee took photos for us. Mrs. Tajiri said that two people won the best costume, and they were Jerry and Nam. After that Mrs. Tajiri said that we had to choose partner to do a pumpkin carving. Everybody had a partner, but I didn't so I made my Jack-o - lantern with Ms. Ryoo. She helped me so much. When I finished the pumpkin, we took them to the gym. I helped Ms. Ryoo to clean up our work space. When everybody was finished, we went to the gym. The pumpkins had a candle inside. The pumpkins looked very bright and beautiful. The teachers decided which pumpkin looked the best. The winners were Wilson and Jeff. They won a lot of things. Then Mrs. Tajiri gave us rolls of toilet paper to create a mummy. Richard's team won, because their mummy was most well made. Finally, we had to clean the room, and that was my Halloween party.



throwing eggs at people's houses. I think most people will give those kids candies, because they think the kids cute and don't want to get tricks.

On Halloween people also make Jack- o'- lantern. That is by using pumpkins to carve out a scary face on it and putting a candle inside. People make it, is because there was a man named Jack. One day he was drunk and he tricked the devil to climb the apple tree and get him an apple. After the devil went up, he quickly cut out the sign of cross on the tree. Jack made the devil swear that he wouldn't get down. After Jack died, he couldn't go to heaven because he was a mean, drunken man. He also couldn't go to hell because he tricked the devil. He can only go back to the place he came from but the way was long and the night was dark, so he ate a turnip and devil gave him the fire from the hell. So Jack put the fire in the turnip and used it as a light. Later people found out that pumpkins could be made into Jack -o - lantern.



Halloween By Jason Zheng

Halloween is the day we go to other people's homes to get candy. We also make Jack -o' -lanterns on that day. At night kids usually wear Halloween costumes and go to other people's places and say "trick or treat". If you give the kids candies, they will leave and go to the next house. If you don't, they might trick you. Traditional Halloween tricks are putting toilet paper on their trees and

do fun things with your friends, such as making Jack- o -lanterns and going to trick or treat.

Ghosts' Day By Richard Moon

In the ancient time, people believed that ghosts walk around us on October 31st, so they had to dress up same as the ghosts. This day is

called Halloween or Halloween (a contraction of "All Hallows' Evening"), also known as All Hallows' Eve.

At lunch time on Halloween day, we dressed up as Halloween ghosts. I was going to wear a Yao Ming mask, which is very famous and funny on Facebook. Unfortunately, when I made it, I realized I made it wrong because I couldn't make 2 holes for my eyes. As a result, I

wore a black witch costume, a black fedora, and as black wig. My friend said I looked like Michael Jackson.

After the lunch hour, all the VFA students and teachers met in room 7 with their cool costumes. I think the best costume was Mr. Yee's cow costume. It was cool and cute. Every Halloween, Mr. Yee surprised us. We ate and talked during the party. We also played games such as "Toss the spider" and "Trick or Treat." We made Jack-o'-lanterns as well. Derek and I were a team. We made a strange Jack-o'-lantern, and maybe that is why we weren't the winners,

but it was very good experience to make a Jack-o'-lantern.

My first Halloween was fantastic! I had a lot of fun that day and I hope we would have more parties like this Halloween party in the future.

My First and Probably the Last Halloween in Canada

By Jeff Kang

Before the Halloween party I was thinking about what kind of costume I could wear. At first, I wanted to be a soldier. I checked out every store nearby my house, but I couldn't find it. I decided to not wear any costume to the Halloween party. Thankfully, Ms. Tajiri had some costumes for us to wear. There were a lot of costumes that I could choose, but I couldn't decide what I should wear. At that time, Ms. Ryoo came to help me. First, Ms. Ryoo put a crazy blue wig and put a crown on my head. Then she said, "You will be very funny in the picture." I put on some more stuff. I added a pair of huge glasses and kimono. At that time I saw teacher's costumes. Mr. Yee was a cow,

Mrs. Tajiri was a Viking, and Ms. Tatham was a robot. At the



Halloween party, we did a lot of things. First, we carved a pumpkin to make Jack o' Lanterns. Wilson and I were a team. We decided to carve a ghost on the pumpkin.

Making a Jack o'-lantern involves four steps. First of all, we need to cut out a hole. Second of all, take out all the pumpkin seeds and clean out the inside. Thirdly, carve out a design on the pumpkin. Finally, put a candle inside. At the end of the party each team wrapped the toilet paper on a person to make a mummy. Jeffrey, Nam, Alice and I were a team. Our team chose Alice to be the mummy. Jeffrey and Nam wrapped the toilet paper on Alice very fast, but they wrapped her too tight, so Alice couldn't even move and participate in the race.







Remembrance Day

By Terry Lee

Remembrance Day is to remember those who were involved in war, those who died, fought and families of soldiers as well as those on the “homefront”. November 11th is Remembrance Day. We remember this day every year. The wars which involved Canada included World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War and present and future conflicts. We should remember this day because we know about the soldiers who fought and died to make peace.



By Kelly Fei

Every year on November 11th is Remembrance Day. Remembrance Day is a day to remember those who were involved in war. Those who died, fought and also to remember families who had family members fighting in the war. We also must remember those “on the homefront”.

World War 1, World War 2 and the Korean War are important battles in which Canada was involved. Canada is also involved in present conflicts.

This year on Remembrance Day, our school had a school assembly. We watched a slide show and read the poem “In Flanders Fields”. We lit candles to remember the people who fought and died in the war.

I think we should have Remembrance Day. This day is important for us to remember the soldiers. We cannot make the same mistakes we did in the past. When we have war, many people lose their family and might not have a

safe place to live. We should do our best to maintain peace all over the world.

By Derek Fung

What is Remembrance Day? It is a day to remember those people who were involved in wars, those soldiers who fought and died and all those who made sacrifices to help others in different countries.

Remembrance Day is on November 11th of every year. Canada’s involvement included World War 1, World War 2 the Korean War and present conflicts.

In our school, we did many things to commemorate this day. We lit candles representing the major battles that involved Canada and lit candles for all other battles and countries that have fought in the past and present. We also watched a slide show about how people fought in the wars, how they died, and the cemeteries in which soldiers are buried. We read the poem “In Flanders Fields” and wore a red flower called a poppy.

By Richard Moon

Remembrance Day is a day to remember people who were involved in wars such as World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War and present conflicts that are happening in the world. We shouldn’t only remember the soldiers who fought for us. We should also remember families of soldiers and women who worked instead of men during the wars. So, on November 11th, VFA students



and teachers gathered in the gym for an assembly. We lit candles and watched a slide show about

Remembrance Day.

I think this day is good for people who don’t have experience of the wars. They can think about who they are and be thankful to soldiers who fought for their countries and for the world. For example, I didn’t even know that Canadian soldiers fought in the Korean War and I am thankful that Canada fought for my nation. Will you remember those who fought for freedom?

By William Wu

Every November 11th, people in Canada have a day named Remembrance Day. The day reminds us to keep remembering the people who died, fought in the war and their families as well as the women who worked in place of men on the “homefront”. We recall and appreciate their contributions during World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War and several present conflicts happening around the world. They put their lives on the line for us.

We had a school assembly on Remembrance Day. We lit candles to show our gratitude, watched a slide

show and wore poppies to show respect. We were also silent for one minute to remember this important day and all that it represents. I felt sorry for those who have died because I hadn’t any value for my life which has been protected by them. Now, I wish there were no wars because I don’t want to know about anyone who dies because of them.



Volunteering

Working with Seniors By Hai Anh Bui

Volunteering is a good opportunity for people to gain life and work experiences especially for young people like me, who have not yet got a paying job. These days as part of my Grad Transitions class at school, I am volunteering in a seniors' house called Health & Home Care Society of BC. I go there every Friday from 5 pm to 7 pm. My tasks



Health & Home
CARE
Society of BC

include setting up tables for people who are elderly, serving them food, cleaning up the tables after they finished, then talking to them, and trying to keep them company. I find it is really interesting to work with elderly people because they are very different from me, my friends, or other people around me. After working there for a while, I can feel that they are sometimes lonely, so they are usually very happy and grateful whenever someone helps them to do something. Sometimes, I feel really bored because after dinner, the people just want to watch news and some of them even want to go to bed at 6:30. But I try to do my best for them. Anyway, I think this is a good opportunity for me to learn something about elderly people and about a working environment. And this work also fulfills my need of 30 hours work experience for my Grad Transition class as well.

Why I Like Volunteering By Kaixin Chen

As part of my Grad Transitions class at school, I go to volunteer every Sunday afternoon. I'm very glad that I can go to a senior house to volunteer. It actually helps me learn how to take care of the senior citizens, and of course it gives me more experience to help seniors in the future.

At first, I was very nervous when I knew I was going to be volunteering. I do not know why I felt nervous: maybe it's because this was my first time take care of seniors. Seniors have a lot of needs; I need enough patience to help them and I really do have enough patience to help them and they are also nice to me. Some people think that seniors have a bad mood but I want to say it's actually not that

bad. Once you want to help them do something or actually help them, you need to know what they want and you can try your best to help them. But actually, I do not have too many things to do. The thing I do a lot is talk to them, listen to them, and play guitar for them. They think I'm good, and I feel very proud of myself. I'm very happy that people say I'm good because it means I'm actually good at something.

What can I say—I just feel thankful I can help them because I think some senior people feel lonely.



What I can do is just stay with them. I really want to make them happy or not feel lonely when I stay with them. I hope I can volunteer for them, even after I graduate.

Volunteering By Jerry Chen

I am Jerry Chen, a grade 12 student who studies at VFA. As part of my Grad Transitions class, I go to a Family Respite Centre every Sunday to volunteer with senior citizens. At first I thought it would be like learning how to take care of those seniors, but not entirely; I basically just need to talk with them, play with them, and join them to help them do something.

I am not a person who is good at looking for a subject to talk with people, so I play card games with them. It feels nice and slow when you are playing with them, and it is a good experience and opportunity to try and relax.

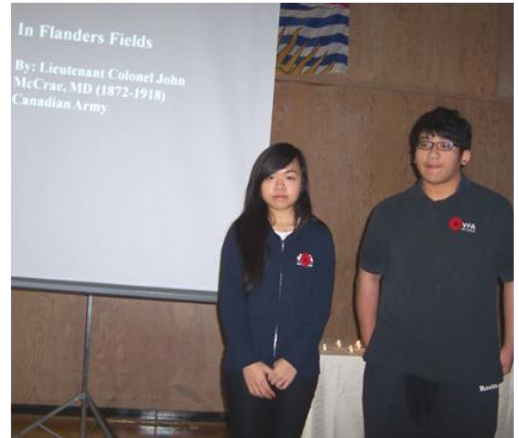
They are kind of different than others who need to be taken care of. Some of them slowly lost their intelligence and need to do or think to stop dropping their intelligence. And playing card games or mah-jong is what we have been doing for a long time and it really works.

The Family Respite is a really good place for them. Some of them live in a nursing home. I feel that the family hotel is a good nickname for it. I feel I'm just like a waiter in that hotel. I feel good and it is a good volunteer place to go to.

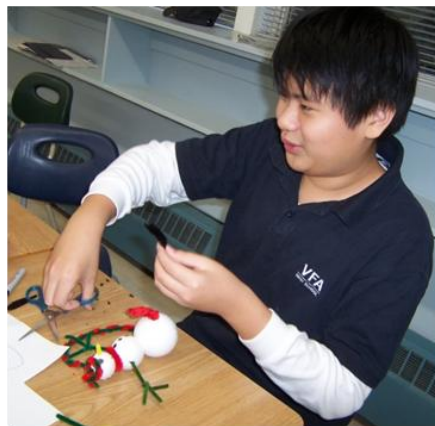




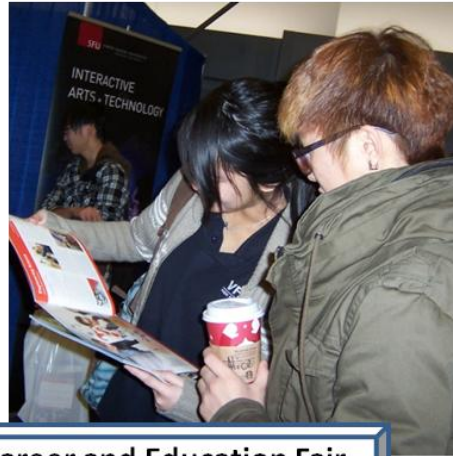
**Remembrance Day ceremony
November 9**



In Flanders Fields
By: Lieutenant Colonel John
McCrae, MD (1872-1918)
Canadian Army







**Career and Education Fair
December 7**



The Last Word

I would like to thank everyone involved with the making of this *Western Vista*. All of the students contributed one or more pieces of writing. They have steadily improved their writing skills throughout the term and will continue to do so. It is always interesting to read fresh views on Canadian culture and school events. I hope I get a chance to see some of the writing they will do a year or two from now because I am sure it will be even better.

The teachers spent a lot of time helping each student with his or her writing. Thank you to Mrs. Tajiri, Ms. Tatham, Ms. Soo, Ms. Keung, and Ms. Ryoo for editing and proofing the students' writing. Thank you, Mr. Harder, for your efforts in getting your class' writing to me and for our daily conversations about "stuff".

This was a fun term. The Foods and Nutrition class fed us very well two times. Once was the picnic and the other time was the Thanksgiving party. You can see by the photos that we all enjoyed their food. I even had the privilege of trying the different foods they made each Friday as part of their class. My stomach and I appreciated their generosity!

The rock climbing seemed daunting to some at first. They were unsure of going up even though the harness and ropes made it 100% safe. After some persuasion, students started climbing the walls – but, coming down was then a new problem! Eventually, everybody got the hang of it. A few students went up and down more than a dozen times!

The Halloween party was probably the highlight of the term! Everybody was dressed in crazy costumes – even the teachers! The students carved pumpkins and played silly games. A lot of snacks and candy were eaten. It was a memorable afternoon.

On a more serious note, we learned what Remembrance Day is and what it means. We thought about how lucky we are to live in a peaceful country. We heard poetry and saw pictures about the horror and sadness of war.

The senior students also started to think more and more about their futures. They went to a career and education fair to learn about the different options available to them after they graduate from high school. Some of these students will be done in only another term or two. Time really is going by fast!

I was fortunate to be able to teach some of the old-timers at VFA this term: Alice, Eason, Kaixin, Nam, Howard, Jason, Wilson, Jeffrey, and Jeff. It is nice when we have a good group of returning students to help the newcomers settle in. I have enjoyed teaching and getting to know some of the new students: Hai Anh, Jerry, and Tiffany. I look forward to teaching some students for the first time in January: Richard, Kelly, Derek, Terry, and William. The students we have this year are a top notch bunch. They are kind, polite, and good-hearted people who get along well with each other and with the teachers.

I wish everyone a relaxing and safe holiday break. See you in 2013!

Mr. Yee
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Western Vista



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