

V.F.A. High School's



Western Vista



22nd Annual Edition – December 2015

V.F.A. is trying the *sunny ways* approach to schooling!



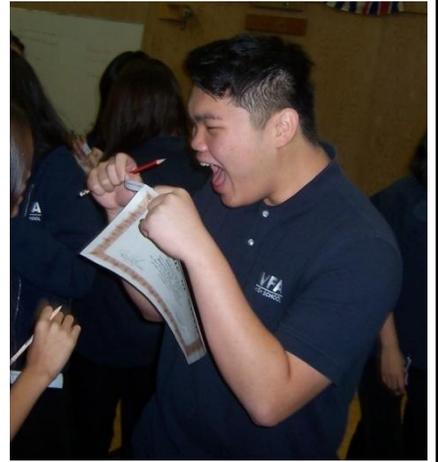
The honeymoon with sunny ways only lasted a few weeks. The school reverted back to the old ways of lots of classroom work, lots of homework, lots of projects, lots of quizzes, lots of big tests, lots of exams, lots of uniform rules, and lots of rules about rules. In otherwords, V.F.A. became a no-fun zone once again.

It was the evil empire trying to gain control of all its colonies versus the rebel resistance. **Kelly Jurisova** did not like the galaxy-wide decree that all citizens must wear blue or white polo shirts and blue hoodies emblazed with the name of the empire: V.F.A. **Ruby Ly** secretly wore a t-shirt that had the refrain “Freedom from thought control!” under her polo shirt. **Tracy Dinh** secretly wore leggings with images of Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi under her repressive dress pants. Monitors throughout VFA had the Emperor **Ms. Tajiri** making announcements and propaganda statements. “This is a repressive regime,” said **Paul Chen**. “Yes it is,” replied **Nelson Li**. “We have parties all the time. Every week we have to celebrate something. What’s next?” **Zin Nguyen** said: “American Thanksgiving and Black Friday.” **Steve Cheng** said: “We must put a stop to

this. We have a right to social justice and a right not to go skating at Killarney Arena every week!” **David Hsiao**, the wise sage of the group, added: “The school you desire, gone it is. Consumed by the Emperor. A fork in the road we come to, we must take it.” **Loc Nguyen** was wondering why David was channelling both Yoda and Yogi Berra at the same time. In another area of the school - in a classroom far, far away – **Wilson Zheng** and **Jason Zhang** were discussing plans for a rebel counter attack and debating the merits of working for those other evil empires: McDonald’s vs. Dairy Queen. **Darth Mr. Yee** was patrolling the hallways during lunch. He was using the Force to close and lock classroom doors. When he came upon **Helen Pham**, **Emily Lam**, and **Thu Nguyen** still in Room 3, he used his powers and said: “You will find the air a little bit easier to breathe in the lunch room!” The three girls quickly agreed and left, thankful for the oxygen now filling their lungs. **Mr. Harder**-Solo drove up in his space ship-truck and told **Eric Chen**: “My *Millenium Seagull* can hit light-speed in 5 seconds!” Eric thought: “Has light slowed to 20 km/h in your universe?” The rebel students were mustering their forces in the computer lab. **Gavin Shan** was trying to deactivate the force field around the principal’s office but was having trouble. “Why does the school wi-fi not work when you need it the most!?!?” he despaired. **Iris Xu** complained: “Why is this planet so dripping wet?” **Bobo Huang** added: “Why is this planet so cold?” **Mr. Lee** had enough of their whining and said: “Be thankful you are not going to school on Tatooine! It’s terribly hot there. You have Tusken Raiders to contend with. And they only have dial-up internet.” **Eason Chen**, because he had a Shaw account, was tasked with helping Gavin. “We need weapons,” said **Jason Lin**. “Take down the fluorescent light tubes and use them,” suggested **Tiffany Fung**. **Dinh Pham** added: “Don’t forget to make a buzzing sound as you swing them.” The group was ready to advance on the Emperor’s headquarters. **Brian Du** was contracted to do a cameo at this point in the story but his scene was left on the cutting room floor. **Ms. Tatham** said: “I hope we don’t run into daleks or cybermen. I hate them. I just hate them!” **Ms. Lee** turned to Ms. Tatham and bellowed: “A Whovian is among us! Obviously a casting mistake. Arrest her!” The leader of the group, **Michael Ly**, told **Andy Chiang** to stay behind and guard the computer room. Andy cried: “Do you have no confidence in me? I’m not a C3PO or a Jar Jar Binks, you know!” **Yuka Huang** and **Amy Kim** were arguing over who would play the princess role in this action-adventure of theirs. **Ms. Yeh** stepped in and declared: “I am! I was looking good and kicking Imperial butt while you were still in diapers. Plus, I have worked in the Imperial compound and I know a secret way in.” **Jiaxing Shi** was tapped to lead a squad and penetrate the Emperor’s perimeter security. As he was making his way down the front hallway, an apparition of Jedi knight Obi-wan **Mr. Chueh** appeared before him. The Jedi master said: “Use the Force, Jiaxing. If that doesn’t work, use the key under the front door mat.” Beside the first apparition was another of George Lucas who said: “Pay the royalties for this cheap rip-off or I’ll sue you!” The gains by the rebels were hard and slow. **Josh Zhong** said: “Can I get a yellow slip and go home early?” **Ms. Huang** turned around and her blaster went off by *accident*. “Oh...sorry about that flesh wound. What were you saying?” In the midst of the fighting, **Ricky Chen** wondered: “How come there are no Asian characters in the Star Wars universe?” **Mr. Hundal** added: “What about my cousins? I haven’t seen any South Asians either!” The rebels were pinned down. “I will draw their fire,” **Leon Zhang** said. “They will name a school after me and talk about my heroic exploit in Social Studies 10 class.” The force field was deactivated in the nick of time and the doors to the principal’s office were opened. Once inside, **Helen Nguyen** made short work of the Emperor’s body guards. She snapped their limbs as easily as snapping her fingers. **Rachel Qin** had her blaster aimed directly at a defenceless **Darth Mr. Yee**. **Darth Yee** said: “Rachel, I am your --- teacher....” Rachel pulled the trigger and said: “I have had enough of your evildoings and quizzes to last me a lifetime!” Emperor **Tajiri** blasted off in her escape pod. **Uyen Nguyen** followed the pod’s trajectory into the sky and said: “I guess this means there will be a sequel.” **Ms. Ryoo** looked at the drab design of the Emperor’s layer and thought: “We don’t need to raze this dump! It can be saved with a fresh coat of paint and some other cosmetic touch-ups!” **Trang Nguyen** set the explosives and detonators and said: “Now let’s blow this thing and go home.” **Mr. Harder-Solo** said: “Hey! That’s *my* line in this terribly written ode to Star Wars!”

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First assembly of Fall Term
September 9





**Lunchtime soccer game
November 3**



Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving By Helen Nguyen

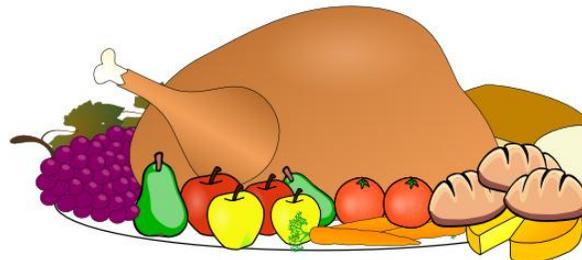
It was the 9th of October, 3 days before the official Thanksgiving Day, and we had a nice Thanksgiving Day Special meal at school. Here, VFA, we gathered together to have a meal as one family. The most unsatisfying thing on that day was that we had classes until the feast started, which was the whole morning and about half an hour in the afternoon. The time finally came; we had an announcement from Mrs. Tajiri for lining up, getting ready for the meal. In the line, the whispers and comments about Thanksgiving Day, especially the food was the majority; no one would talk about marks, and homework at such a time as that. "The food should be good, because I am starving," someone said. "You should have eaten your lunch though," the response from somewhere in the queue was given. Everyone seemed to panic when they received the random number from Mrs. Tajiri, because they obviously did not want to be separated from their group of friends. But it was all good; we need to see a variety of people in our life, so it was counted as a good start by being seated with different people in school. After settling, and hearing a brief introduction about the food, we lined up and waited for our turn to get the food. There were different cultural dishes. "The food is too "white" for me," one said. "It is not that bad," "Are you kidding me?" "I



like the stuffing," "What is your plan for the weekend?". One said after the other, and some even heaped on another: all created a party-like sound. Mrs. Tajiri told us about the origin of Thanksgiving. We wrapped it up around 3 pm. Any special occasion with the school is an unforgettable moment to me, this one was no exception. What can I say, it was, fun.

The Greatest Thanksgiving Day By Jason Zhang

Thanksgiving Day was certainly a great day. This year, I was in Foods 12 class, which is responsible for cooking the food served during the



Thanksgiving party. My classmates and I took an entire week to prepare the foods. My favourite was the ham, turkey, and gravy. One thing that made me feel disappointed was that the only drink I liked was Canada Dry; I expected to have some Coca Cola. I think Mr. Harder contributed the most to this party. He is the teacher of Foods 12 class and he had to come to school early to prepare the turkey and put it in the oven. Overall, it was a great day. We en-

joyed the foods and I made some friends.

Something Different for Thanksgiving Day By Uyen Nguyen

"Wash your hands before come," said Mrs. Tajiri, her voice loud and echoing all over the school. Last Friday, we had Thanksgiving Dinner, which was prepared by the foods class students and Mr. Harder. We had some stuffing, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, and of course we've couldn't have done this if we hadn't met the turkey for Thanksgiving's Day. We had that party in the gym. Everyone had to line up outside of the gym to get the number for their seat. After every student and teacher had their own seat, Mrs. Tajiri gave a speech that was almost the as last year and the year before that. She said that everyone had to say something they were thankful for before having dinner. So everyone, including the teachers, was talking at the same time and made a bunch of low and loud voices mixed together. For me as a part of the foods and nutrition class, I had to stand in the serving position.

After, saying thanks, Mr. Harder gave a speech. Then it was our turn. I really didn't know what to say, so I just said some dumb things and now I don't even remember what I said. After all, people went up and got some food. At first I thought no one would want mashed potatoes and I would be the one standing there and doing nothing. However, it surprised me that mine was sold out. I was like "wow" I can't believe that people like it. It was pretty fun at the begin-

ning, because I was serving food for other people and I felt cool. But I after people finished eating, foods class members had to wash all the dishes. It was fun but also not fun for the foods and nutrition class.

A Lovely Thanksgiving Dinner **By Wilson Zheng**

“Wilson, Help me! I can’t get all of this done on my own. I am super stressed out; be faster,” this is what described Mr. Harder during the week of Thanksgiving behind the scenes. Every single year, it has always felt the same. The stress, pressure, and fear always comes back as soon as the month of Thanksgiving comes by. I, as one of the students from the Foods and Nutrition class, tried helping Mr. Harder out and make his day less miserable. It was a good opportunity for me to learn a lot of the proper procedures of the preparation of all of the food that we had made. I learned a lot by participating in this class; from learning the proper cutting techniques for different vegetables, to being able to cook some of the traditional Thanksgiving dishes. This thanksgiving was surely quite enjoyable compared to previous years. The reason is because I did not only get to eat the food, but also cook it and present it to the school.

Thankfully, Mr. Harder said that this year was one of the least stressful and I am happy that the foods class of this year could make it more enjoyable for him.

Food Day **By Yuka Huang**

There was the Thanksgiving party at school last Friday. Every year, on the second Monday of October, it

is Thanksgiving Day in Canada when you have a big meal with your family, and it is an important day because it gives us opportunity to think about what we are thankful for. We had a lot of great food such as turkey, salad, mashed potatoes, pumpkin soup, drinks, and pumpkin pies, which were made by the foods class. Nelson, who sat at the same table as me, seemed to love mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie a lot. It was the third year I had experienced this meal, but I felt like every year the decorations are getting fancier and fancier. I enjoy it: the most important reasons were we could eat food for free and we were dismissed early. It is a wonderful event I can experience in Canada, whereas in Japan, we don't have ceremonies for food like we do in Canada. I wish my mom and my dad were here so we could have to spend time together, but they are eating delicious food in Japan, so who cares?

Anyways, I am thankful for everybody and everything around me. Without any of these, I would not be who I am right now.

A Nice Time Together **By Ruby Ly**

Thanksgiving is a special day for people to sit together, eat, talk and be thankful for everything. This was my second time in Canada to join in this day with my school. As usual, my school celebrated this day earlier with a nice meal and the weather was a little bit cold in fall. The students



were separated and compelled to sit with people they don't usually talk to and one teacher, and the meal started with many questions from Mrs. Tajiri to choose which table would go first. We had a lot of food which had been cooked by the foods class: turkey, gravy, salad, and more. That was a very good meal. Also, I had a good conversation with Mr. Harder and I learnt something from him. We talked about many things: plans for the long weekend, some books to read, and how to cook the turkey. It will be better if the school puts on some music next time. We finished the meal with pumpkin pie, but I didn't really like it. At the end, we helped to clear the room. Even though the meal went by so fast, it will still be one of my favourite memories.

My Experience of Cooking the Thanksgiving Meal **By Tiffany Fung**

One week before Thanksgiving, our foods class with Mr. Harder had to cook for everybody. We planned to cook for 40 people. We came up with some ideas that were appropriate to the theme. We had to cook stuffing, cranberry sauce, carrot soup, roasted vegetables, salads, gravy, turkey, smoked ham, and mashed potatoes. It was a hard week because we had to peel, cut, peel, cut, peel, and cut some more. Uyen and I had to peel and cut the squash. At first, it was hard because of the lines in between the ridges, but then it got easier because we had fun with it and did not give up. Everything was hard to peel but we had fun with it because everybody was there to help and have fun. On the special day, Uyen and I had to go buy some more vegetables for the salad because it wasn't enough. Good thing they ate it all. On that day, we had to preheat things, make the turkey, ham, gravy,



Thanksgiving party
October 9



and the mashed potatoes. It was really busy because we had to walk back and forth to get the food ready on the tables but it was a relief that everybody ate and liked it. Everybody had to pick a number so that people knew where they were going to sit: and I sat with Mrs. Tajiri, Helen, Josh, and

Eric. Later, we had to speak in front of everybody about our experience of being in this cooking class. Then, after everybody finished eating, we had to cut some pumpkin pie with some whipped cream. Finally, after everybody finished eating the dessert and had some talk, our foods class

had to clean up. Uyen had to wash a lot of dishes but then later I helped her out because it was a lot. After we cleaned up, other students had to take the tables and chairs back to their rooms. I hoped they had a great time as much as me.



Student Vote

My Voting Day and the Important Choice

By Bobo Huang

On voting day, Oct, 19th, 2015 we had an election in our school. We needed to vote for the candidate who we wanted to vote for. But we still had classes on that day. All of the students were waiting for Mrs. Tajiri to call us to go to the gym and vote. Students needed to line up to get a ballot. When we got the ballot, we also had to show our photo ID to Mrs. Tajiri, so she can make sure the person is on the list to vote. But actually, all of us are too young; we were just practising how to vote. After we got our ballot, we could go to the station separately and put a mark beside the name of the candidate we liked. Then we folded it and kept it private, then put the ballot in the ballot box.

The reason why I voted for the party that I did was because the

leader of that party is the most handsome guy. I think that was the only reason why I voted for the party, even though I don't know any of them.

I don't think there are many difference between Canada and Taiwan. I didn't care about it when I still lived in Taiwan, so I don't know everything about election. I am not sure who the candidates were or what were their promises. I also heard that although they make promises to people sometimes they won't actually do it. They just wanted to get some money from that job. In Canada, I think people care more about who is going to do what they promised to people. So I think those candidates are always honest than those candidates in Taiwan. Those people in Taiwan always think about money, but in Canada, they really want to help people to get better life.

I think I learned how to vote from the voting day. Although I have tried how to vote before but that was the time when I was in

grade 5 or 6. I couldn't remember that clearly and that was very different than this time. It was a good thing to let students practice how to vote, even though it was not real. It was a good experience for us. The most important thing is we need to know which candidate is the best choice to vote. In my opinion, if I don't know all of them, I will choose the most handsome one.



Federal Election 2015 in Canada By Michael Ly

The Canadian Federal Election was organized on October, 19, 2015. It was organized to select who will be appropriate for the Canadian Prime Minister by voting. On that day, the citizen of Canada



voted for the party that they believe in. At Vancouver Formosa Academy, we also had a student vote and this is my first time; I can vote for the party that I believe, and I feel a little bit nervous.

At 11:30, the teacher set up the gym for student voting. The students lined up for their turn to vote. Each student needed to have a go card in their hand, because it is used for Identification. Finally, it was my turn to vote, and I was embarrassed because I had no idea how to vote. I stood in front of Mrs. Tajiri's table, and I gave her my go card, then she asked



me some random question. After that, she gave me the ballot and explained to me how to vote for the person that I want to vote for. Then, I went to the secret table, and opened the paper that the principle gave me. When I finished marking the ballot, I put it in the box. I was very happy, and excited, because this was my first time to vote and I felt I was an adult. In my opinion, it is important to exercise the right to vote as a student, because the student will get experience, when they finish voting. They can know how to vote, when they become an adult and make election better. They will not get nervous or confused during the vote and they can help other people who never voted before.

Every country has different ways to vote. In Vietnam, students cannot vote in school. They just vote when they become adults. On Federal Election Day, the students usually think they are not adults and voting is not their job, and that it is only for adults. I think that is not the student's fault; that is the government's fault because they think the students do not have experience to vote and do not have enough

knowledge to know who they want vote for. That is a terrible issue, because with modern technology students will find information that they need to know. That is why Vietnamese students are careless about Federal Election Day in Vietnam.

Finally, I know each country has its own ideas to develop their countries. I respect all the ways to vote even though they're different because I know that all governors - they all want to be successful. Besides, I'm very happy to have a chance to stand there, to vote. That was the first voting in my life and definitely a good experience.

Student Vote 2015 **By Helen Pham**

Few days before the student voting day, I learnt a lot about the political parties, the history, and the ways of voting. Especially, Mr. Lee always kept talking about the election. It was my first voting experience.

October 19 was a Monday; I even forgot that I needed to vote after a "long holiday". However, I patiently tried to think what I should do. Finally, I went to the gym and brought my Go Card. I lined up and waited for my turn to vote. There were four tables. Two of them were used by Mrs. Tajiri. She explained what we had to do and write on the ballots. Even though it wasn't my turn, I listened very carefully. Therefore, I listened more than twice. I also knew that she didn't have to check up because she's already knew the face of each students. I questioned myself, why she

had to do it? Then, Ms. Huang looked at me to make sure if I understood everything. There were two tables left; I got one to put a checkmark for my candidate. I was so nervous because it was a real experience for me. Also, I felt like everyone was equal. They all had a voice and a right to vote. It was definitely really important.

Through the process, I learnt much more about Canadian system of government. I learnt the profile of each candidate, and what they will do for Canada in the future. Moreover, even though the students' ballots will not be counted, the government still said that students had to vote. It could help them get used to it and know who they want to vote. That was also the reason why Mrs. Tajiri pretended not to know me and check my face. Besides, I'm really interested in Canada's education. They are not lessons from the

book, and we can also learn about current events that are happening.

Additionally, I believe in my choice even if my candidate loses or wins. I am looking

for a person who can help students find their jobs after they graduate. Also, that person should have good policies for immigrants and international students. In my opinion, international students don't have enough supportive policies such as high insurance, high school tuition, and less scholarships for them in universities. Definitely, there are a lot of chances for local students. If both students are trying to get a scholarship, I'm sure that the school will be partial towards local students.

The elections in Vietnam and Canada are totally different. In Canada, there are more than ten parties. The citizens can choose which party



they want to vote. In Vietnam, there is only one Communist Party. Therefore, more than 99% of all candidates are selected by Communist Party and most of them are from their own party. That's why Vietnamese people don't have a lot of choices for voting. On the contrary, Vietnam and Canada Prime Ministers are both elected for a five-year term.

The election in Canada is getting hotter every term. Right now, people really care about the government and political system. The amount of people who went to vote this election was sixty eight percent. It was eight percent more compared to the last election.

I learned that Canadians have rights to vote and freedom of speech. I admired the ways the government organise and think for all Canadians. They all know that children are the future of the country. That's why they have lots of good social benefits and policies for them such as no tuition fees up to high school. Canadian system of government is such a great system.

I Missed Voting By Josh Zong

Last Monday, when I got to school, everybody was asking me the same question: "Who did you vote for?" I was still confused why they were asking me this kind of question until I saw there were some voting papers lying on the ground. I realized that I had missed one of the most important activities in Canada.

The activity I had missed was the election of Canada. It was important because it could decide who was going to be the next prime minister. And I had a chance to vote for one of the candidates that I like. Yes, good question, I'm not an adult yet, how can I vote in the election? That was the thing that I really missed: student voting. So even if



you are a student, you have the same right as the people in the House of Commons to vote for whoever you like. In my opinion, I think this is a really good thing because sometimes children can judge things more impartially. And I could imagine how it would be when the



students were voting. The teachers would gather all the students together, and give everybody a ballot, and everybody would vote in private, and then, everybody puts the ballots into the ballot box.

If you ask me whether I regret missing student vote, my answer would be yes. Why? It is because I

had a candidate that I wanted to vote for. So when the next election comes, I will make sure I won't miss it again.

My First Voting Rachel Qin

These words described my feelings during the voting time: "Nervous, excited, unfamiliar and discreet." On October 19th, I got a new experience – Voting. That day is the 42nd Canadian Federal Election Day. Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote. Fortunately, I'm a student in Canada. So, I had this chance.

I came from China, and in my country, the election is totally different from Canada. We have different group and level of people's congresses, the president and the state council are directly elected by the high level of People's Congresses. Let alone vote by School's students. So, it is really fresh to me. Before the voting, I was nervous about my decision. When we were waiting in line, the emotion called "excitement" ran around every part of my body. Follow on; I just left "discreetly" with me for next steps. Such as 'Showed ID, answered the question, signed name, voted and put into the box.' Even though these steps happened in a short time, however, I saved this experience as a VIP into my great memories.

After the voting finished, lots of people asked about my choice. In my own opinion, I made the decision without hesitation, and I could see the hope and progress of Canada

in the future from that party's pledges. I felt so appreciated that I can live here – not only me, everyone has responsibility to make this country stronger and stronger, don't we?

Student Voting Day By David Hsiao

I remember that day, when we (Math 10) were in the middle of the class. We were told to vote. The first question that popped out of my mind is “Why are students allowed to vote even though we can't vote like Canadians?” The voting happened in the gym, so we went to the gym and brought our Go Card for checking our IDs. We lined up in a cue in front of the table and waited until the principal checked your Go Card one by one and then signed your name on the voters' list. After that you received a ballot and you could go to the voting station and voted in private. Once finished choosing party/candidate, we folded our ballot and put it in the ballot box.

The above process is what we were supposed to do on student voting day. Why are we voting even though we can't vote like Canadians do? In my opinion, the government wants students to know more about the governments/parties. And also give students opportunities on how Canadians vote on regular voting day.

When I was choosing the party, I was aiming for a party/government which can pay attention to the middle classes and care more about their country, citizens and other benefits to make the country wealthy. Also, how government interact/face with their citizens well enough, especially in regards to education and benefit on those who need them the most. If the government can't expect students or

younger generation to know more about the government, in the future no one will care about the government and even ignore it.

The biggest difference the governments between Taiwan and Canada is citizens in Taiwan are crazy about the government because there are always new cases reviewed every day mostly in Taipei, New Taipei and other city areas. And the topics are mostly about economics, education and daily politics. When the government made wrong decisions about politics, the fourth estate which is powerful in Taiwan, will debate or fight for it on TV. So that is why citizens in Taiwan are crazy about the government.

In summary, Canada is a democratic country, which means everyone has the right to vote. And voting is now probably the fairest way on choosing a group of people to lead. And from student voting experience, I've learnt the process and other detailed information about voting.

Student Voting By Yuka Huang

There was an election in Canada on October twenty-eighth. It was a very important day when all the adults with Canadian citizenship had a chance to vote to make changes in Canada. Our school, VFA, had a student voting as well.

I thought it was good to have exercised our rights to vote as stu-

dents, so that when we are old enough, we will be ready to vote. Although when we were called out to the gym for voting, many of the students seemed not to know what was going on. I am sure most of them just voted randomly. But surprisingly, the result was the same as the actual one. Unfortunately, I forgot to bring the Go-card so I was not able to vote.

However, if I had a chance, I would probably vote the one I researched for Social Studies 10. The reason is simple. I learned about them in depth, their promises, and I thought that party was suitable. I heard that it's been ten years since the leader of the government has changed. I am looking forward to see how Canada will be changed. I hope they will give us a better environment to live.

I am happy to have this activity. Through this lesson, I learn about the Canadian politics which I was not interested in. Also, it was something I have never done in Japan. These are the reasons why I think it was important.

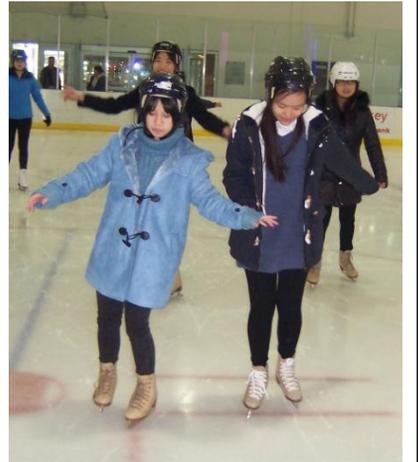
The Significance of Student Voting By Paul Chen

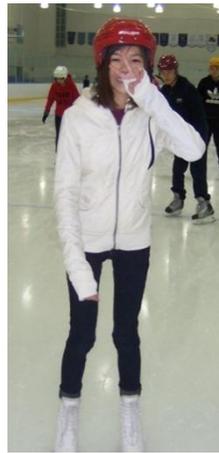
Most countries have voting which is the right of people. We choose to vote who is better to be leader. Canada also has a special election for students. The votes from students won't affect the outcome of real election since we are only students. I think that the governments are wondering how different results will be between students and adults. The research said that the votes between two are very similar. I think the students might have the right to vote one day. That is





Skating at Killarney Arena
November 20





why the government tries to test the election. They might think that most students won't take it seriously but actually not.

The student's voting can make us to understand how voting works. We also can see people published what they will do if he or she becomes leader. They all have different ideas and so do people. The issues need to be very attractive to get the most votes.

I chose the party that doesn't change the taxes. The taxes could let government make a country better. We don't have to make it lower since most Canadians' lives are pretty good.

In Taiwan, we only have voting for adults. There are two groups fighting and the votes from those groups are almost same all the time. I'm not interested honestly, so I ignored some information about government and news sometime.

In conclusion, all of the students will grow up and have the chance of voting. It is important to let the students exercise and realize how voting works and learn about the rights we have.



Voting Day Dinh Pham

Every few years, there is an election in Canada. The purpose: when Canada's government changes, we have to vote for a candidate becoming a prime minister. They also organized a voting day for students, in order to compare the student's voting result to the actual election. So our school had voted. Some students thought it wasn't necessary, some students thought that was just for experience. There were still many different opinions.

However, I thought it was just a normal day.

I can remember how things went on that day. On voting day, October 19th, we were called to gather up in the hallway by the teachers. We got in line, waiting for our turn. We met the principal of our school. We gave her our Go Cards. She asked us some private questions. I think that was just a normal part of the ceremony. Anyway, we received a ballot and marked the candidate who we were going to vote for, in private, and put them in a box.

It was a little bit exciting. It was my first year in Canada, but I was trying an important election, like a Canadian. It was a good experience for me. I was told to search information for the parties by my social studies 10 teacher. I found a lot of information, about their promises, their histories, what they have

done so far and what they are doing now. I thought and considered all sides of each party carefully. Finally, I decided the party I was going to vote for.



On voting day, I felt like I was back in Vietnam. Canada and my country are both democratic. So, it was like, I was trying my first election in Canada. And I could see that if I was voting in my country, it would be the same as how I voted in Canada. Eventually, I realized that I learned a lot more than I thought. I studied about how a government runs, how things are controlled in a country, and how an election happened. I understood more about Canada. For the first time, I knew for sure that I was falling in love with Canada, as much as I love my country.

Even though it was just a trial election, it brought a lot of experiences to me. Hopefully, I can become a Canadian and have a chance to try the actual election in the next few years.



V.F.A. Fall Calendar of Events

September 9	First day of school for Fall Term
October 9	Thanksgiving turkey meal at school
October 12	Thanksgiving Day (no school)
October 19	Student Vote
October 20-22	Mid-term exams
October 23	Professional development day (no school)
October 31	Halloween Party at school
November 3	Lunchtime soccer game at Earles Park
November 10	Remembrance Day ceremony at school
November 11	Remembrance Day (no school)
November 20	Skating at Killarney Arena
December 8-11	Final exams
December 11	Christmas Party and visit from Santa
December 11	Last day of classes
December 14-18	Special Activities Week
December 18	Last day of school for Fall Term





Halloween party
October 30





Halloween Letters to Friends

By Thu Nguyen

Dear Katy,

It was Halloween on Saturday but I participated in our school's Halloween Party on Friday. We had a costume contest during the Halloween Party. I was a Joker for Halloween and I got the prize for the best make-up. Zin, my sister also won the prize for the best make-up. Her costume was a zombie. I thought my costume was very scary but everyone said it was cute. Michael and I made a Jack O' Lantern together. First, we cut the top of the pumpkin and took out all the things inside of it. Then we cut a ghost face on the pumpkin. Finally, we put a candle inside of it. We played some activities to earn candy. I earned lots of candies by playing games. There was a bowling game where we bowled with a pumpkin. Another game was to throw the fake hand in the bowl and answer the questions.

When I come back to Vietnam, on Halloween we can put make-up on each other and dress-up.

By Jason Lin

Dear Adam:

I had lots of fun at Halloween in Canada. Here we had many different kinds of activities. The most important and interesting thing is that everyone need to wear different costume. There were vampires and zombies and lots of scary costumes. Some costumes had blood all over and my costume was a JOKER!!!



This was my favorite role in the movie "The Dark Knight". After we carved Jack o' Lanterns out of pumpkins.

I can show you pictures when I come back to Taiwan and I can also show selfies to my costume. The next day my friends and I went to PNE. Oh my god! It was the scariest Haunted House that I had ever seen!

Also there were lots of scary costumes like Freddy and Jason!!!! They looked very scary!! Hope next Halloween we can celebrate together and go to PNE together. I have never celebrated Halloween before! It is so much fun in here.

By Loc Nguyen

Dear Trang,

How are you my friend? Did you have a fun Halloween in our country? On Friday, October 31st 2015 at my school I had my first Halloween Party in Canada. I had lots of fun with my friends. I will tell you about that party in the bottom of the letter.

We needed to have costumes on Halloween day. I had a costume like a clown and my friends had lots of nice costumes. First, my teacher chose who had the best costume, and the winners' got prizes. After that I, Kelly and Zin (two other friends) carved Jack O' Lanterns. We carved pumpkins

and then we put candles inside them. When we turned off the light inside the pumpkin lighter, they looked so nice. Then we played 3 games for 1 point for each. One game was throwing the pumpkin to knock down the pins. The second game was to throw the fake hand into the bowl; we also had 1 point for this game. The third game was answering the quiz questions; if your answer was right you received a big bag of candy. If you wanted the big bag of candy you could save your points. During the party we ate some chips, drank some juice, and took a lot of photos. In the final game we had too much fun.

This game was called pop the balloons.

This is what we did during our Halloween party. I had lots of fun and I hope when I come back we will do some activities like these, ok!



By Jiaxing Shi

Dear A,

There was a big Halloween party at my school last Friday. This party was very funny. We carved pumpkins, wore costumes, and ate a lot of candies. In this party we also did some interesting activities, such as throw a zombie's hand into a basket, and carve a jack o' lantern. I like the pumpkin bowling the best, because I won many prizes from pumpkin bowling and I've never done it before.

I wish you were here, because Halloween in Canada is always very good. We can go to PNE together; it's a very



big play land. We can also wear costumes and go “trick or treating” and ask for candies. I had lots of candies in my pocket. I believe you will enjoy it. Haunted houses in Canada are much scarier than China’s, because the ghosts and zombies seem very real.

I miss you very much; I wish you can come visit me next Halloween.

By Eason Chen

Dear friend,

Do you know what happened on Friday? It was Halloween! We had a party for Halloween on Friday afternoon. We wore our own scary suits and masks. The activity after our party was to carve our own jack o' lanterns. It was the most excited part of the party because we carved our own jack o' lantern. Next activity was bowling the pumpkin. It was fun because we can throw the pumpkins. At the end I took some selfies with my friends. You will feel like you lived in a strange world if you came to our party. We can meet after the party. We can light fireworks and this is the most fun thing to do at Halloween. We can use fireworks to scare other people. It is very interesting. Maybe we can also go to the PNE Haunted House. We will have lots of fun there. There are very scary haunted houses at PNE. I am sure you will love it. After that, we must go to drink bubble tea. In addition, we will relax and have a conversation. Enjoy a beautiful Halloween.



By Emily Lam

Dear Karen:

Hi! How are you? Did you enjoy your day on Halloween?

I had a Halloween party at my school last Friday. It was really fun because people dressed up in their costumes and their costumes were very interesting. Some students dressed up like zombies, some like vampires and other kinds of monsters. We played games and ate candy. One game we played was that we had to guess how many candies there were in a box. If you were right, you could get that candy box. I also made a jack o' lantern with my friends. We drew an angry face on the pumpkin and wrote our names on it. In addition, we could get candy by playing games, so if you lost you didn't need to worry that you wouldn't get candy. I had an interesting day on Halloween.

I think we can dress up together next Halloween. We can also go trick or treating together next year. Hope to see you next year! Bye!

By Zin Nguyen

Dear Nho,

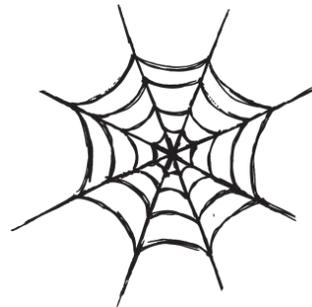
Last Friday, I had a party to celebrate Halloween at my school. We celebrate Halloween every year on October 31st. It's an important day in Canada because we believe ghosts visited the living on October 31st. We wear lots of interesting costumes so that the spirits would not harm us. We played many games and I enjoyed bowling with the pumpkin most. I was very happy because this is the first Halloween I celebrated. When I come back to Viet Nam on Halloween day, we can do this

together. I know that this day is not popular in our country but Halloween only comes around once a year, so why not go all out? If you like scaring people, do it. If you don't, it's just an excuse to party and celebrate! Celebration Halloween is more fun when you decorate the outside of your home with lots of stuff to scare those who dare walk up to your door. All lit up at night, a decorated home welcomes all the little ghosts and goblins. With the addition of some scary music, the little ones will giggle with delighted terror as they knock on your door, yelling “Trick or Treat!” We will have a very happy Halloween.

By Kelly Jurisova

Dear Emily Lam,

I celebrated the Halloween party at my school last Friday. It's the culture in Canada. I was very excited for this party. Some of the activities we played were bowling with the pumpkin, and we answered questions to get candy. Another activity we played was throwing a fake human hand into the pot to get points. We also played a game in which we wore our costumes and sat on balloons to pop them. We ate lots of candy and as well we carved pumpkins. I felt very happy because I had a nice moment with all my lovely friends. HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

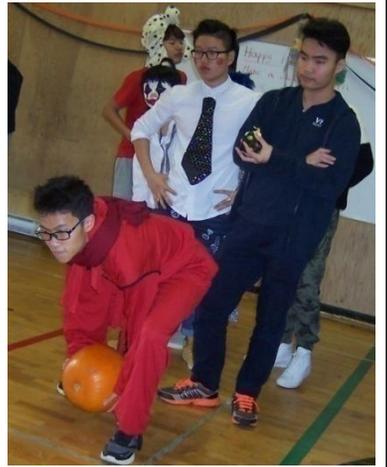


By Tracy Dinh

Dear Ngoc!

What did you do on Halloween? Let me tell you about my Halloween party at my school. My school celebrated Halloween on October 30. On that day we could put makeup on and dress up as we liked. I choose to





dress up as a panda, my favourite animal. I played many games and one of my favourite games was carving the pumpkin. We carved it and cleaned it inside. The last part was to put a candle inside the pumpkin and after turned off the lights. It looked so cool. I really liked Halloween and maybe when I come back to Vietnam, we can carve a pumpkin together.

By Andy Chiang

Dear K,

At my school, there was a party before Halloween. We carved a pumpkin to make a Jack o' lantern.

We also could wear our costumes without our uniform. We guessed how many candies there were in each can, and threw the zombie hands in a bowl. The activities that I enjoyed the most were carving a pumpkin, because I never did that before. Carving the pumpkin requires teamwork. It was a lot of fun. Next year at Halloween we can celebrate together.

If you come to Canada, we can go to PNE, or maybe when I come back to Taiwan we can celebrate it by lighting fireworks. I went to PNE with my friends on Halloween and it was raining heavily, so we didn't go to the last two haunted houses. The haunted houses in Canada are scarier than Taiwan's. The ghosts in the

haunted house come out to scare the people who are walking or talking to their friends.

I was very happy that I celebrated Halloween in Canada with my friends, and went to PNE with my friends on Halloween.



Remembrance Day

My First Remembrance Day By Thu Nguyen

On Tuesday, November 10th, 2015, we observed Remembrance Day in the gym. At the beginning, we lit candles. Wilson, Helen, Steve, and Mrs. Tajiri represented the school to light the four candles that symbolized World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War, and all the wars in the world. After that, there was two minutes of silence. Everybody remembered the soldiers who were dead from the wars. Then we saw the video about the war. There were many people who volunteered for the wars. Nelson, Ricky, and Jason read the poem, "In Flanders Fields." After, all the students and teachers at VFA read it together. Next we sang the anthem, "O Canada". Later, everybody listened to Mr. Yee talk about the wars. After the ceremony, everyone went back to their classes and continued to study.

My First Remembrance Day By Nelson Li

November 11th, 2015 was Remembrance Day. On this day, ceremonies were held across Canada. They are usually held at cenotaphs, and they always take place at 11 a.m. We need to remember dead soldiers. On Tuesday, we went to the gym. At the beginning, everyone stood up to sing 'O Canada', and then Jason, Ricky, and I read "In Flanders Fields" by John McCrae. Next, we watched a video about World War I,



World War II, the Korean War, and the other wars. During these events, over 116,000 Canadians died. Then, we lit candles. We wore poppies because poppies are a Remembrance Day symbol. We felt very sad. We had a moment of silence for two minutes. We remembered dead soldiers and thought

about our future and what we should do. Last, Mr. Yee talked about the war history. I learned a lot of content from Mr. Yee.

My First Remembrance Day By Ricky Chen

November 10th, Tuesday, was our Remembrance Day assembly. At 11 o'clock, Mr. Hundal told us we needed to go to the gym to observe Remembrance Day. When everyone sat down, the teacher told us something about Remembrance Day. After that, students lit up the candles. Nelson, Jason, and I read a poem about Remembrance Day called "In Flanders Fields". The principal asked everyone to read this poem loudly. Finally, Mr. Yee talked about the history of Remembrance Day.

Remembrance Day By Amy

November 10th, Tuesday, was our Remembrance Day assembly. I went to the gym. For the first time, I sang "O' Canada". I don't know about Remembrance Day or the soldiers of

the events, but it was a sad ceremony. I felt a little bit sad. We read "In Flanders Fields". First, Nelson, Ricky, and Jason read it, and then, the VFA students read it together. Mrs. Tajiri talked about candles and why we were lighting them. The honour roll students, Steve, Wilson, Helen, and Mrs. Tajiri first lit the middle big candles, and then another student lit candles. We learned about Remembrance Day, soldiers, and poppies from Mr. Yee. We had a two

minute silence. I didn't know about the importance of Remembrance Day,

but now I know and I learned about Korea, too, so that was very important to me.

Remembrance Day By Gavin Shan

Wednesday, November 11th, was Remembrance Day. We had a one-day vacation. We didn't get to go to school. It was a good day.

Remembrance Day is a day to remember the First World War and the Second World War. It is a very good and great day. On November 10th, we sang "O' Canada". "O' Canada" is Canada's national anthem. Next we read "In Flanders Fields."

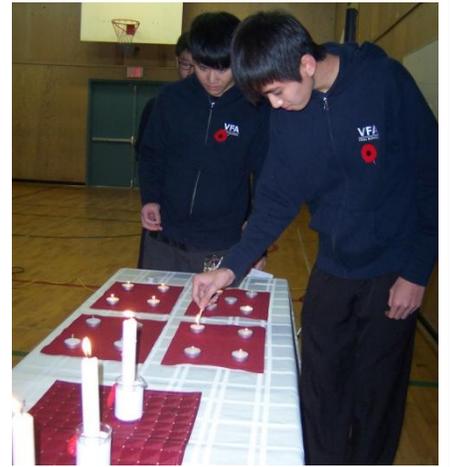
First, three students read. After we finished, we had a two minute moment of silence to remember the First World War and Second World War. Next we watched a video. The video





Remembrance Day ceremony
November 10





told me about the world war and the - many soldiers who died in it. Next, we lit candles. Student delegates and the principal first lit candles. Then we queued up to light candles. Later, there was a teacher and student speech. Mrs. Tajiri talked first. Lastly, Mr. Yee gave a speech. The Remembrance Day assembly was good.



**On Remembrance Day
By Eric Chen**

On Remembrance Day, someone lit the candles first. I felt a little sentimental. Then we watched videos and listened to Nelson, Jason, and Ricky read "In Flanders Fields". We sang "O Canada". It was my first time singing this anthem. Then Mr. Yee talked about the war.

We don't have Re-



membrance Day like this in Taiwan, so I feel very refreshed, and I think it is very good to remember the soldiers in Canada.

**On Remembrance Day
By Steve Cheng**

On Tuesday morning, everyone went to the gym to observe Remembrance Day. At the beginning, we lit candles. The principal told us the candle stands for peace.

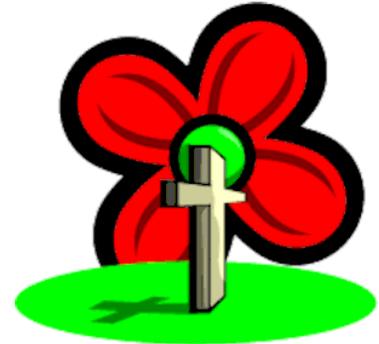
When we lit all the candles, the teacher turned off the light and showed a short video to us. It was a very woeful video. Many people died in the wars.

After we finished the video, everyone stood up and sang Canada's national song. I seldom sing, but that time I tried my best to sing the song.

Jason, Nelson, and Ricky read a poem about Remembrance Day. The poem's name is "In Flanders Fields". It is a beautiful poem and a little sad. When they finished this poem, the principal asked us to read this poem

loudly. I felt that everyone was spiritual. Everyone read the poem very loudly.

**Remembrance Day
By Leon Zhang**



On November 10th, Tuesday, at 10 o'clock, the teacher asked us to take a seat in the gym and celebrate Remembrance Day. At first we sang a song called 'O Canada'. Secondly, the teacher asked Nelson, Ricky, and Jason to read "In Flanders Fields." Thirdly, the teacher asked all the students to read "In Flanders Fields" together. Next, we lit candles to remember the dead soldiers. We saw a movie about Remembrance Day. Finally, I felt very rueful about Remembrance Day. I will remember this day forever.



The Last Word

It seemed like school started just a little while ago. I remember the very nice summer of 2015 was still going strong. We had our first assembly and new and returning students were getting to know each other. We also had a couple of new teachers join the staff: Mr. Hundal and Ms. Lee. I am very happy to welcome the new students and teachers to the VFA family.

As usual, much has happened in the Fall Term. The evidence is shown on the pages of this edition of the *Western Vista*. There have been holiday observances and celebrations. There have been sports activities during the lunch hour. There was an afternoon of skating. Ms. Ryoo's art classes have been doing a mural project in the downstairs hallway. And of course, we had regular school classes too!!

The first big event was the annual Thanksgiving meal prepared by the Foods and Nutrition class. They prepared both a turkey and a ham along with many side dishes. We all thank Mr. Harder and his students for such a great effort to feed over 40 people! We also reflected on the things that we are thankful for in our lives. A very common theme was family and friends. I especially liked talking to the students at my table during our meal and learning some new and interesting things about them.

Next up was the Halloween party. This very colourful and fun event brought out the creativity and merriment in everyone. The effort put in by students into their costumes/makeup and jack-o'-lantern carving was truly impressive. From pumpkin bowling to dress-up games

to trick-or-treating, everybody had a great time!

Remembrance Day, on the other hand, was a solemn event. We thought about the soldiers who fought and died in past wars and conflicts. We remembered their sacrifice by lighting candles and reading poetry. The profound effect wars have had on Canada was discussed both in the classroom and in the ceremony in the gym. This being the 100th year anniversary of the poem "In Flanders Fields", all students and teachers read aloud John McRae's piece. On the actual Remembrance Day at the Memorial Park cenotaph, I was heartened to see some V.F.A. students giving up their holiday morning to take in the ceremony with me.

There was an afternoon of skating at Killarney Arena. We had a couple of good instructors teach us the skating basics. Some students were quite confident on their feet. Others had some pretty big falls! But, they kept getting back up and tried again. By the end of the lesson, all students could stay on their skates and move around the rink.

Other activities included a very competitive badminton tournament and a fun soccer game during a lunch hour. We appreciate the effort Mr. Lee and Mr. Hundal put into organizing the events. Also, the student council has been having weekly meetings and coming up with ideas to improve the V.F.A. experience. Thanks to Mr. Harder for looking after the S.C.

Ms. Ryoo's art classes have been undertaking a huge project on the walls of the lunch room downstairs. From the photos in this newsletter, one can see the mural developing

nicely. Thank-you Ms. Ryoo and all art students for your vision and efforts to beautify the school.

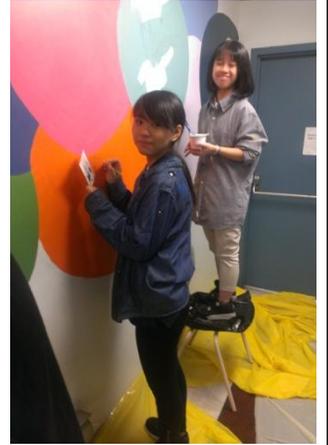
The Winter Term is just a few weeks away. Our principal, Mrs. Tajiri, is constantly busy planning and organizing. There are many new classes starting for the senior students. There are more activities planned such as the annual ski trip (to Grouse Mountain) and the Lunar New Year party. There hasn't been a snowfall in Vancouver for over a year. Will there be one or more during the Winter Term?

Thank you to all the students for contributing writing to this issue of the *Western Vista*. It is a pleasure to read a student's viewpoint on the events that happen at our school. Thank you to all the teachers who edited the students' writing. As always, you made my job so much easier!

I wish everyone a happy holiday break. Enjoy your time away from the grind of school and re-energize your body and mind by having a good few weeks off. Have a very merry Christmas and a very happy New Year! See you all in 2016.



Mr. K. Yee
Editor of *Western Vista*





**Holiday messages
from friends**

Western Vista



December 11, 2015