



Vermont Reading Partners

A Volunteer Literacy Program

Student-Tutor Newsletter, December 2011

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VRP Stages First Student Essay Contest

In 2011, Vermont Reading Partners launched its first essay contest entitled "Should Being a Bookworm Make Me Squirm?" with the goal of raising awareness of Vermont Reading Partners among the communities in southwestern Vermont.

Planning for the contest began in late February when Marie Sossi floated the idea to the VRP Board. Aided by Eleanora Devenish, Alice Gilborn, and Carolyn Smith, Marie worked the remainder of the school year researching other essay contests, making connections, and creating publicity materials. By September, schools and students had been informed. By October, no essays had appeared. Then, ten days before the deadline, they began to arrive in the VRP mailbox. Each contestant was assigned a number so readers would not recognize either student or school. The judges got to work.

On Sunday, November 13, 2011, twenty-two contestants representing nine schools were honored at a reception, provided by Vermont Reading Partners, at Mark Skinner Library.

Like the "Naming Ceremony" in *The Giver*, a Newberry Award book by Lois Lowry, a similar ceremony took place during the reception, as the winning numbers were replaced with the names of the contestants.

The Board of Vermont Reading Partners awarded Northshire Bookstore Gift Certificates to the following students:



First Place: *Nichole Schmid*, 7th Grade, Maple Street School, received a \$150 gift certificate.
Second Place: *Sarah Mangiacotti*, 7th Grade, Maple Street School, received a \$75 gift certificate.
Third Place: *James Reilly*, 6th Grade, Maple Street School, received a \$50 gift certificate.

Five **Honorable Mentions**, each receiving a \$15 gift certificate, went to:

Emma LeMay, an 8th Grade student attending Maple Street School.
Amelia Perkins, a 6th Grade student attending Mettowee Community School.
Aggie Bisselle, an 8th Grade student, attending Maple Street School.
Riley Anne Lane, a 7th Grade student, attending Arlington Memorial Middle School.
Rachel Senecal, an 8th Grade student, attending Maple Street School.

All contestants received a thank you letter and a special VRP bookmark.



Participants in the 2011 VRP Essay Contest, "Should Being a Bookworm Make Me Squirm," enjoyed cake and punch during a reception at the Mark Skinner Library.



Marie Sossi and Sebastian Duffee. Sebastian is an 8th grader at Mt. Anthony Union Middle School.

Marie Sossi and the Essay Committee members thank the following individuals who contributed to the success of this event: the contestants, judges, parents, teachers, along with school personnel; Father Tom Mattison, Kathy Sessions, Liz Luca; Shaw's, Hannaford, and Price Chopper Supermarkets; Mark Skinner Library, Express Copy, and finally the Board of Vermont Reading Partners.

Summer Social

Tropical Storm Irene flew in on the day scheduled for the VRP Summer Social/ Auction Fundraiser, but we were able to hold it two weeks later at the Manchester Country Club. Committee chair Carolyn Smith reported the success of the fundraiser despite the change in plans. Fifty-seven attended, thirty-five bid on auction items, and there were twenty winners. Dinner tickets totaled \$2950, donations to the evening equalled

\$2250, and the auction brought \$3867 for a total of \$9067 gross. The sun was shining after a week of cloudy skies, food and presentation were excellent, and everything ran smoothly thanks to the work of Carolyn and committee members Eleanora Devenish, and Marie Sossi. The event will be held again next year at the Manchester Country Club on Sunday, August 26, 2012.

Tutor Training

In September, VRP conducted its annual four day, four module Tutor Training Workshop at the Martha Canfield Library in Arlington. Eight tutors completed the training and will subsequently work with students in the Adult Program, the School Program, or both. Tutor Trainers Koshka Pabst, Sally Brown, Sarah Post, Chris Wetzel, Liz Luca, and Betsy Butler conducted the workshop, along with guest trainer Yana Scelsi. During the workshop, VRP tutors Dick Bailey, Janet Neuschafer, Michele Post, and Karen Tibbetts kindly stopped by to share some of their tutoring experiences with the students. This is always a highlight of the training. The workshop was the usual great success. We extend a big thank you to all of our volunteers for making a difference in the lives of their students.



Back row: Sally Brown, Tutor Trainer; Cindy Krautheim, Bennington; Jackie Kelly, Bennington; Sarah Post, Tutor Trainer. Front row: John Dunn, Arlington; Karen Mayberry, Manchester; Andra Erickson, Bennington; Sonya Burdge, Hoosick Falls; Valerie Oakland, Arlington. Not shown: Jay Venable, Manchester.



The Maple Leaf Marathon

Vermont Reading Partners once again became an integral part of the Maple Leaf Marathon on the afternoon and evening of September 9th and the morning of the 10th. Helping the Lions Club, assisted by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, VRP volunteers registered the runners on Friday afternoon and evening at The Perfect Wife Restaurant and early Saturday morning at the Manchester Rec Park. The Lions Club generously provided a Perfect Wife dinner to the Friday evening volunteers. To say it was delicious is an understatement. Taking part in the Maple Leaf Marathon is one way VRP can say thank you to the Lions Club for their generous contributions to our programs.

Don't Miss the Match

As dependable as winter snow, VRP's annual Reach Your Goal in Reading Hockey Fundraiser will take place on Sunday, February 19 at 4:00 p.m. at the Riley Rink in Manchester. The Green Mountain Boys will take on the Vermont Law Enforcement Hockey Club promising more than a little excitement for all who attend. Always in February and part of VRP's literacy month, this yearly matchup is highly anticipated. Watch local papers for future announcements.

Bookswap No, Bookshare, Yes

In October, the Board of Directors voted to change the name of the Bookswap Program to Children's Bookshare. Bookshares are gently-used children's books donated to VRP by the community. New signs carry the name as well as the following verse, "Take a book to read and explore, share with a friend and come back for more."

Bookshares can be found at the following locations: Stewart's Shops, Manchester; The Helping Hand, Arlington; the Wayside Country Store, East Arlington; Shaftsbury Country Store; Winchester's, Pownal; Nichol's Store, Danby; and Mach's Market, Pawlet. They are also at the following agencies: Head Start, Pownal; Oak Hill Child Center, Pownal; WIC, (Women's Infant's and Children), Bennington; and Sunrise Family Resource Center, Bennington. One of VRP's priorities is to put books into the hands of children who would not otherwise have the opportunity to build a personal library. Anyone wishing to donate gently used or new children's books to this program, please call VRP at 802-362-2323 or email to vrp2323@sover.net.

The Gift of Reading

This Christmas consider giving a gift of reading by donating to Vermont Reading Partners. Your gift will help an adult or child in our community improve his or her literacy skills and open doors to the wonderful world of reading. Donate in a friend or loved one's name, and that special person will receive a holiday card announcing your gift. Or we'll send the card to you and you can present this generous gift yourself. Your friend or relative's name will also appear in our annual newsletter thanking all donors. Just send your donation to Vermont Reading Partners, P.O. Box 72, Manchester, VT 05254, or call 362-2323.

Name:

Gift in name of:

Address:

Address:

Phone/E-mail: