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A DIVISION OF
NORTHWESTERN COUNSELING
& SUPPORT SERVICES

Winter 2016-2017

Soar Newsletter



FUN-VENTURE FRIDAYS

The elementary has participated in a variety of activities this fall. For the Fun-venture Fridays, students have gone apple picking, taken a nature hike, helped out at the food shelf, spent time at Care Partners, and worked with the dogs at Northern Greyhound Adoption Center in Fairfax.



While volunteering at the food shelf, students had the opportunity to help with unloading food donated from Hannaford and organizing the shelves. Some students shelved food, while others unloaded pallets of food into specific storage areas. A few even helped loosen the shopping bags in order to make it easier for

individuals when they come to access and receive food. Students were happy to help, realizing this food is given to families in our own community. The group was invited to return again and help.

Students also visited Care Partners where they played games, colored, participated in crafts, and held great conversations.

The clients at Care Partners look forward to students visiting and many students have made connections and relationships with these clients.

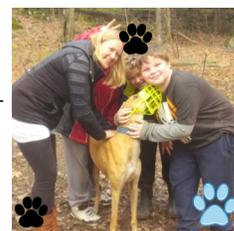
Finally, students also had the opportunity to visit the Northern Greyhound Adoption Center.

The Northern Greyhound

Adoption Center is located in Fairfax, Vermont and currently cares for 12 dogs of various ages. These dogs have retired from the often strenuous and demanding life of dog racing.

At the Northern Greyhound Adoption Center the dogs are loved and cared for while they await forever homes. Students and staff had a wonderful time playing with and getting to know the surprisingly calm and gentle, champion racers.

The students have been invited back again and we are hoping to plan another trip later in the year. If you are interested in learning more about the Greyhounds and/or are interested in adoption you can check out their website at <http://www.northerngreyhoundadoption.org/index.php>.



In September, students traveled to West Swanton Apple Orchard. Students and staff walked a nature trail at the refuge. We were able to stop and learn about geocaching from a student that had been on the trail often and knew where to find a geocache.

Next, the group went to the West Swanton Apple Orchard and they were able to pick a bag of apples to bring home. They sampled apple cider that is made at the orchard, and once back at school, made various apple treats.



Welcome to all of our new staff that have joined us over the last few months. From teachers, to behavior interventionists, and clinicians; we are fortunate to have all of these new faces.

Soar Learning Center Low Ropes and Challenge Course

For two weeks in October, we welcomed a group of BFA high school students to our Ropes Course. This group of individuals, ranging from sophomores to seniors, are enrolled in a Leadership Class taught by Mary Brouillette.

During the months of July and August, we also hosted the St. Albans Town Summer Camp kids.

Students from Soar also spend their fair share of time on the ropes course.



From practicing multiplication facts on the Nitro-Swing, to place value and spelling work on the Telephone Pole Shuffle; students often mix adventure and learning.





All Things Edible

Most days, when students pass through the gym on the way to their vans, there is a delightful aroma coming from the kitchen. The Culinary Connection and cooking classes are always learning new recipes, as well as perfecting familiar ones.

This year, aside from Open House refreshments, treats for Halloween, Board Meetings, and the Friday lunches to which so many anxiously await each week; students have also participated in new events.

Seniors recently earned community service hours for providing snacks to the St. Albans Co-op's Annual Tractor Parade. All of the students have also received in depth training around

canning. Our bountiful gardens yielded produce to make pepper jelly, spaghetti sauce, salsa, pickles, butternut squash soup, and supplied fresh ingredients for many, many recipes this fall.

On the menu have been breads, apple recipes, comfort foods, everything chicken, beginner and advanced breakfasts, fall recipes, and most recently, students brought in their favorite family recipes. One student brought in their family's recipe for maple cream pie to share with and teach their peers.

The classes also as-

sisted the rest of the school in Thanksgiving feast preparations. Each class (K-12) rolls up their sleeves and gets to work in the kitchen making a dish. Sweet potato casserole, mashed potatoes, cranberry bread, stuffing, pies...it is all made by students and staff.

This year, six turkeys, each weighing in around 20 pounds, were cooked for our feast. Prior to eating, each class has a representative stand on stage and share the things for which they are all thankful. One thing we are all certainly thankful for, is our culinary students and staff.



“Students will be bringing in recipes from home as they learn about each others’ favorite, family dishes”



Recipe Corner: Caramel Bars

Ingredients:

- 32 individually wrapped caramels, unwrapped
- 5 tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup butter, melted
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). In a medium saucepan over low heat, melt together the caramels and heavy cream, stirring occasionally until smooth.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the flour, oats, brown sugar, baking soda and salt. Stir in the melted butter until well blended. Press Half of the mixture into the bottom of a 9x13 inch baking pan. Reserve the rest.
3. Bake the crust for 8 minutes in the preheated oven. Remove and sprinkle with chocolate chips and walnuts. Pour the caramel mixture over the top and then crumble the remaining crust mixture over everything.
4. Return to the oven and bake for an additional 12 minutes, or until the top is lightly toasted. Cut into squares while it is still warm.



Fall Events: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Holiday Concert, and More

It seems like every time you turn around, there's another exciting event going on here. From Open House in early October, where our halls fill with family and friends, to most recently our Holiday Concert that brings talent and cheer together, Soar Learning Center knows how to bring out the good times.



On Halloween, students are able to wear their costumes and for a couple of hours they travel to each classroom for a variety of differ-



ent activities. There's a photo booth in one room, a mystery box game in another, and games and crafts galore.

The Thanksgiving Feast is another high point in the fall and one where the whole school comes together to fill the table with delicious, student and staff-made goodness. Each classroom spends time in the kitchen preparing a part of the meal and before we share in the feast, a representative goes on stage to read the things for which their staff and classmates are thankful. This tradition is many years strong now, and very



special to both students and staff.

Finally, this year's holiday concert was filled with great talent and holiday cheer. There was drumming, singing, dancing, guitar playing, ensembles of students and staff, and of course a song chosen and rehearsed 'All I Want for Christmas is You', and they had many audience members singing, clapping, and dancing along with them by the end.



Paquette, many staff mentors and musicians, family and friends for coming to support this event, and of course the hard working students who put in hours of practice time. We hope your holidays brought you great joy and a love and laughter filled new year is in your future.

Special thanks to Lee Trombley, fine arts teacher, emcee, Deana



Elementary STEM Projects

Mr. Pike's and Mrs. Le-Clair's classes meet twice a week to work on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) challenges.

The students work with partners or small groups to plan and create projects that solve problems with which they are presented. Students

work collaboratively to create the "object" and then they present it to the group. Students look forward to these classes each week.

Challenges Included:

- Catapults and sling shots (shoot a candy pumpkin)
- Haunted house (using only materials given)

- Balloon powered car
- Longest paper chain using one piece of paper
- Guitar that makes different sounds (recycled materials and rubber bands)
- Index card tower to support a beach ball
- Bridges, airplanes, pyramids, towers, umbrellas!



High School Students on the Job

This fall, high school students have been hard at work in the community. Our seniors are not only attending school, but several of them are also holding part-time jobs with some serious hours.

Hannaford has provided students with interviews and job shadowing, one of these opportunities resulting in a position as cashier. Leader Evaporator is another site that has hosted trainings and offered students positions.

Out in North Hero, one senior is working 10-15 hours a week at Harbor-side Market. This student does everything from cashier, stocking shelves, cleaning, to working the deli. Finally, we also have a student that, for a short time worked two jobs, at the Dam Diner and Century Arms. Working now just at the latter, he is fulfilling an impressive 32 hours a week.

There are additionally, 15 students participating

in Vocational Rehab., where job shadowing and mock interviews are some of the experiences students gain. One of the projects these students helped complete outfitted Hard'ack trails with bridges and railings. (see page 4 for picture)

The State of Vermont was incredibly impressed with students' work removing a mass amount of troublesome Buck Thorn from these trails.

Badminton Tournament

December 9th, the high school held a Badminton Tournament. There were 18 student/staff teams this year. 34 matches in total were played and the championship game was held the following week, making 35 total matches! Students and staff have been practicing their skills for four weeks in preparation for this tournament. Even the elementary students were able to spectate several matches throughout the morning and during their lunchtime.



THE FALL IN PHOTOS



Kath Berard Brown came to Soar this fall, to provide students with the opportunity to become certified in CPR/First Aid. Many high school students were certified last year, and therefore, this training being offered again, drew great interest. The training was broken into two, separate days; one for the CPR section and one for the First Aid. Almost 15 students participated in this valuable certification course.



Top Left: Soar staff participate in November by sporting their mustaches, grown during the month of November. Movember raises money and awareness about men's health.



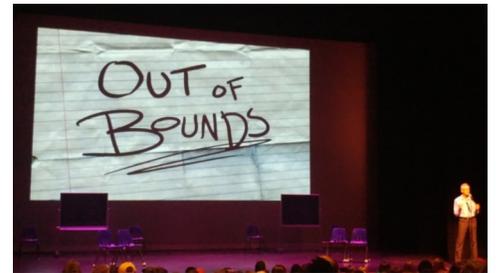
Left: The faux campfire and camp chairs await students from the LEAP program, for a change of scenery in the classroom before vacation.

Right: Pictured is one of the bridges on a trail at Hard'ack. The bridge and railing were completed by Soar students working through a grant from Voc. Rehab.



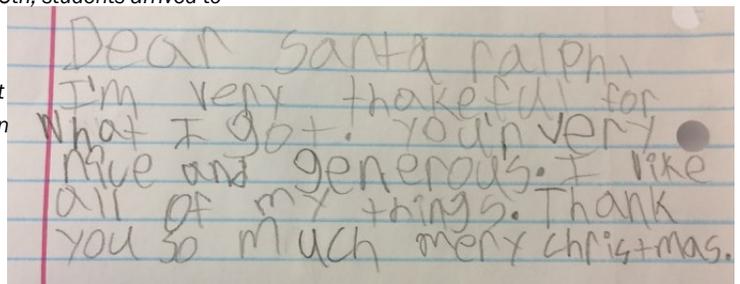
Left: A student and staff in the LEAP program pause for a picture during their busy day.

Right Top: Middle school students traveled to Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center in Stowe, to see *Out of Bounds*. This play put the spotlight on bullying, online safety, and finding friends amidst the many challenges young teens face.



Right Bottom: The Soar-Santa has done it again. On Monday, December 19th, students arrived to bags filled with clothes, toys, and art supplies.

Students were amazed at the generosity of this man and many wrote letters



 to thank him for his kindness.



 **Left:** A student and Holland, certified therapy dog, spend a few quiet moments together while taking in a good book.

 **Right:** The fall book fair, organized by librarian Arlene Thompson, had a theme fit for the most fierce pirate around. Complete with pirate ship and props for taking photos with friends, students were given a wide selection of books for many levels. The majority of students use their hard-earned tickets as their currency for buying books.

