

“My education began with a set of blocks which had on them the Roman numerals and the letters of the alphabet. It is not yet finished.”

– Calvin Coolidge

Vermont Humanities Council
2009 ANNUAL REPORT



In 2009, the Vermont Humanities Council presented and supported 1,250 lectures, book discussions, literacy programs, and other humanities events in 145 Vermont communities, including towns in every county. In all, VHC reached tens of thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds, and donated more than 19,100 books to children and adults.

We hope to see you soon at a VHC event near you.

A Lifetime Changed by Learning

Different as VHC's myriad programs and events are, they all testify to the value, power, and pleasure of learning throughout life, and to the unique way that engagement with the world of ideas has of contributing to richer lives, stronger communities, and a more humane society. That is true for VHC's many public events and the hundreds of events for targeted underserved audiences.



Peter A. Gilbert
Executive Director



Sylvia Robison
VHC Board Chair

One man in a Vermont prison told us, for example, “My favorite part [of the program] was how [the instructor] was able to draw from me some hidden talent that I had.” Another told us that he learned for the first time that “a book can be more than a book sometimes . It can also relate to personal experiences.” Would that they had learned those things earlier in life.

It could be a teen parent who's surprised to learn at a Never Too Early workshop that she should read with her toddler every day even though the child can't yet talk, even

though he doesn't understand every word — because, among other things, that's the way children learn language. There are at least two lives dramatically changed.

Middle school students at weeklong summer humanities camps and adult literacy students tell us often that it was VHC programs that caused them to discover that learning is fun, that reading and books can be immensely rewarding, that they are capable of learning, that their thoughts and reactions to what they've read have merit, and that their comments are valuable contributions to a discussion. These are important — even life-changing — discoveries.

All of us — young pups and old dogs alike — can and do learn new tricks, new things, new skills. Indeed continuing to learn is one of the things that keeps us vital — at every age. Learning is too important and too rewarding for society to relegate it to schools alone. The best learning, in and out of school, piques curiosity — because it begets further learning, often a lifetime of learning. That's what VHC's programs and events do — they pique curiosity; they encourage and enable a lifetime of learning in an interactive, social context — because we all gain from thoughtful exchange with others.

Thank you for your support for the Vermont Humanities Council and for your interest in helping make the culture of this small, green corner of our country be one that honors learning, thoughtfulness, and civil discussion about important ideas and issues.

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A Lifetime of Learning through...

Reading

Vermont Reads—A Statewide, One-Book Community Reading Program

At the heart of Vermont Reads is learning for all ages—an intergenerational, educational exchange that fires up communities in creative, thoughtful, experiential, and fun ways. In 2009, Julie Otsuka’s *When the Emperor Was Divine* opened windows onto a part of history many of us know little about—the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

When the Emperor Was Divine tells the powerful and transformative story of an American family displaced by war—on American soil. Without rancor or political agenda, Otsuka’s novel quietly describes the everyday details of the wartime internment of a Japanese-American family.

People in 74 communities explored themes that the book inspired, including loss of identity, stereotyping, civil liberties, modern American history, Japanese and Japanese-American culture, the World War II homefront, and the “other” in American life.

Community members learned about Japanese poetry forms, origami, Ikebana flower arranging, tea ceremonies, and kite making; held film screenings and adult and teen book discussions; and attended discussions about how the political climate during WWII led to internment and what Japanese schoolchildren today learn about the war in school.

Many of the programs were hands-on. They included Japanese painting techniques in Londonderry; Hina Matsuri, a traditional doll festival celebrating a young girl’s growth and happiness in Manchester; a demonstration of Kyodo, traditional Zen archery, in St. Johnsbury; Japanese folktales in Essex Junction; music on the Koto, a traditional stringed instrument, in Fairlee; and a student-written and performed theatrical presentation of a chapter from the book in Montpelier.

Vermont Public Radio broadcast a weeklong, five-part Vermont Reads series of programs covering such topics as the violation of civil liberties, life in the internment camps, the impact of the internment, and what life was like once internees returned home.

Julie Otsuka visited Vermont in the fall, appearing at the St. Johnsbury Athenaeum for a book reading and talk and also at the Burlington Book Festival.

For participants in VHC’s literacy programs, Vermont Reads provides a way to learn about history, different cultures, and ethical issues—all while strengthening reading and comprehension skills. More than 200 people participated in Vermont Reads programs for targeted, underserved audiences—at summer Humanities Camps for middle schoolers, adult

“I have seen my shyest students speak out, and have seen students who hate reading enter into lively, thoughtful debates. We had wonderful discussions about the effect of fear, prejudice, racism, stereotypes, and hatred—as they are found in the novel and in our lives. Thank you for giving my students such a wonderful opportunity!”

— Virginia Dugan, Vermont Adult Learning, Rutland

“The students I work with, immigrants and refugees, are fascinated by American history. Gaining insight into America’s past is invaluable, as is discovering that the U.S. is not a perfect democracy. The students who have experienced war and “internment” or stays in refugee camps could relate very much to the circumstances of the family in *When the Emperor Was Divine* and recognized their common humanity.”

— Jenny Gundy, Vermont Adult Learning, Colchester

literacy centers, low-income community centers, and prison and probation sites.

For example, at the Milton Middle School Humanities Camp students read books and engaged in activities related to the theme *This Land is Your Land / My Land*, exploring what it is like to grow up in America's diverse society.

English Language Learners found the program particularly enriching. They enjoyed reading a story and learning about the history of their new country. One student spoke about how she was surprised that that history contains racism, and much pain and sadness.

Through the Community High School of Vermont, inmates at the Northeast Regional Correctional Facility spent a week exploring the book. They learned about

the internment through readings, film, and discussion; they participated in a Japanese tea ceremony, learned about haiku, and wrote their own poems.

This type of historical learning allows for reflection upon the students' own lives. One participant said that the greatest thing he learned from the program was how acts of injustice can have the deepest kind of effect upon the heart—and how the injustice can also affect those connected to the one violated.

Launched in 2003 with *Witness*, by Karen Hesse, Vermont Reads brings together scores of communities and thousands of people of diverse ages, reading abilities, and experiences to read and discuss a book of high quality and to participate in community-based activities related to the book.



NICOLE PFISTER

A seventh-grade student from Flood Brook Union School in Londonderry practices his Japanese painting technique as part of Vermont Reads. Students also wrote poems that capture the characters in the book.

“The most rewarding activity was the community discussion. The students felt they were exposed to a part of history they had never heard about. Our community read is a great way to bring the community together, while at the same time presenting new ideas and facilitating discussion.”

– Bonnie Stuart, librarian, Maclure Library, Pittsford

“As a result of Vermont Reads, we strengthened ties with the Bennington community, particularly the Bennington Free Library.”

– Andrea Robare, project coordinator,
Southern Vermont College, Bennington

Vermont Reads is Active throughout the State

Books distributed: more than 4,000 free copies

Communities: Alburgh, Arlington, Ascutney, Bellows Falls, Bennington, Bondville, Bradford, Brattleboro, Bridport, Burlington, Canaan, Castleton, Chelsea, Chester, Corinth, Cuttingsville, Dorset, East Corinth, East Middlebury, East Montpelier, Enosburg Falls, Essex Junction, Fairlee, Greensboro, Groton, Guildhall, Guilford, Hartford, Hartland, Highgate, Hinesburg, Jacksonville, Killington, Lincoln, Londonderry, Ludlow, Manchester, Manchester Center, Middlebury, Middletown Springs, Milton, Montpelier, Moretown, Morrisville, Newbury, Newport, Northfield, Orwell, Peacham, Pittsford, Poultney, Quechee, Readsboro, Roxbury, Rutland, Shrewsbury, South Duxbury, South Londonderry, St. Johnsbury, Starksboro, Vergennes, Waitsfield, Wardsboro, Warren, Washington, Waterbury, Wells River, West Fairlee, Westminster, Weston, White River Junction, Williamstown, Williston, Woodstock

Humanities Camp: Milton Middle School

Vermont Department of Corrections: Caledonia Community Work Camp (St. Johnsbury), Northeast Regional Correctional Facility (St. Johnsbury), probation and parole site in Burlington

Other special audiences: Burlington Housing Authority / Skills for Life, Central Vermont Adult Basic Education (Morrisville), Howard Center Westview House (Burlington), Mercy Connections (Burlington), Project Rocking Horse (Newport), Vermont Adult Learning (Chittenden County, Rutland)



VHC Thanks its Vermont Reads Collaborators

Underwriter: NRG Systems; Supporter: Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation; Media Partner: Vermont Public Radio



A Lifetime of Learning through...

Lecture and Discussion

First Wednesdays, Literature and Medicine, Reading and Discussion, Speakers Bureau, Fall Conference

Across Vermont—on virtually any night—people gather in libraries, community centers, schools, town halls, state parks—and even hospitals—to enjoy taking part in an education that, as Calvin Coolidge wrote in his autobiography, is “not yet finished.” This never-ending quest for knowledge and the joy of learning is at the center of the Vermont Humanities Council’s community programs.

Whether it is a talk about the shipwrecks of Lake Champlain, a literature discussion that uses mystery novels as a lens to examine American culture, or a discussion about the colorful history of the American flag, VHC offers something for all Vermonters to explore and enjoy, especially as they discuss topics with one another.

FIRST WEDNESDAYS. This eclectic, once-a-month humanities lecture series has become a vibrant part of nine communities: Brattleboro, Burlington, Manchester, Middlebury, Montpelier, Newport/Stansstead, Quebec, Norwich, Rutland, and St. Johnsbury. Most Vermonters are within an hour’s drive of a First Wednesdays series.

From October to May, Vermonters gathered in these communities to expand their horizons about such topics as the life of Allen Ginsberg, the legacy of Samuel de Champlain, happiness, Ikebana and contemplation, writing Mark Twain’s biography, the great camps of the Adirondacks, the history of herbal medicine in America, Iran and the Obama Administration, a journalism fellow’s two years in Pakistan, and Bill Lee on his adventures in baseball.

LITERATURE AND MEDICINE. Literature and Medicine offered healthcare providers at nine of Vermont’s fifteen hospitals a new perspective on their

life’s work. The program uses literature, poems, and essays to stimulate discussion about issues central to this critical profession.

For example, at Copley Hospital in Morrisville, a doctor, hospital administrator, social worker, board trustee, hospital librarian, and several nurses sat down to talk about the *Scalpel and the Silver Bear* by Lori Alviso Alvord and the *Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* by

“The Reading and Discussion program that the VHC makes possible helps us in our mission to serve our community not just as a brick and mortar archive—but as a dynamic and inspirational community organization.”

— Ken Linge, library director,
Blake Memorial Library, East Corinth

“This program has allowed me an opportunity to read two books that I would not have selected on my own. As an adult, these books have put a real-life perspective on how people lived (and died) in these times.”

— participant, Influential First Ladies,
Walden Community Library

Anne Fadiman. The talk about books quickly turned to the importance of listening and truly seeing patients, especially when one needs to cross cultural communication barriers. They also read about Dr. William Ostler, who revolutionized medical education in the United States by espousing the radical notion that if one listens to the patient, one will discover that he's providing the diagnosis.

READING AND DISCUSSION. Nearly 2,200 people read and discussed books at 175 scholar-led programs on themes such as Vermont writers, short stories, Shakespeare, gastronomy, Pulitzers, World War II, revenge, the seven deadly sins, and the long-lingering effects of war. There is even a series titled B.I.G. Books, which explores works of literature of a certain size and heft that can be daunting to tackle on one's own.

SPEAKERS BUREAU. This venerable program drew 5,852 people to 141 events held at libraries, historical societies, and other community centers throughout

Vermont. They gathered for talks as varied as “Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin: the Odd Couple,” “The Vermont Civil War Songbook,” “Alec Turner: A Trek from Slavery to Freedom,” old-time fiddle music, and how the guitar conquered America.

FALL CONFERENCE. Over two days in November, 190 people fed their appetites for lifelong learning with Food for Thought, VHC's fall conference. Sessions varied from purely pleasurable and informative encounters with food to deep conversation with Dr. Nils Daulaire about the “Future of Food in a Hungry World.” A special treat was a conversation about food, cooking, and culture between legendary food and fiction editor Judith Jones and Dara Goldstein, Williams College professor and editor of *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture*.

These numerous opportunities to lead a lifetime of learning brought the joy of discovery to Vermonters in towns large and small in every corner of the state.



ROBERT MCIVER

First Wednesdays lectures are eclectic and engaging. Topics range from the colorful history of the American flag to a gripping account of Nicholas Schmidle's two years as a journalism fellow in Pakistan.



COURTESY USAID

“Wonderful to have Mrs. Lang in our community. The Vermont Humanities Council makes it possible to bring entertaining and informational programs to small Vermont towns. Thank You!”

– attendee, Agatha Christie: Creator of Miss Jane Marple and Hercule Poirot, Haston Library, Franklin

“If there was one theme that surfaced, it was the importance of really listening to and seeing patients. During our last discussion a nurse who worked with cancer patients said, “There's something beautiful about every single [patient's] story.” She added that the privilege of listening to these stories is what made her want to come to work.”

– Judith Yarnall, scholar, Literature and Medicine, Copley Hospital, Morrisville

“This was a moving discussion. One participant described how the book about Iraqi exiles in the U.S. made her think in a new way about the experience of a family in Danville that had also moved there from a similarly war-torn country.”

– Suzanne Brown, scholar, Gastronomy: Novels About Food and Culture Pope Memorial Library, Danville



A Lifetime of Learning through Literacy

Correctional Centers, *Welfare Brat*, Humanities Camps, Never Too Early

VHC’s literacy programs for targeted audiences make a tremendous difference by making possible a lifetime of learning for participants. Children and adults served by these programs learn lifelong skills and the long-lasting joy of books, discussion, and writing.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to change my life...and for being patient, and not giving up on me.” Such comments are not uncommon from those who attend VHC’s literacy programs. The programs serve children just beginning their education, middle schoolers, and adults who have somehow missed out on educational opportunities or for whom English is not their native language.

CORRECTIONAL CENTERS. Correctional facilities are not often places of hope and reflection. But in VHC’s humanities-based literacy programs in prisons, hope, reflection, personal growth, and enthusiasm for learning are widespread.

VHC scholars, including several who are themselves published authors, use poetry, memoir, and writing to inspire men and women to read aloud, find the poets within themselves, and experience the pleasure that comes with learning.

These programs strengthen reading, writing, and speaking skills and raise the bar for what the men and women can expect of themselves. Participants find increased confidence and improved personal interactions with others. But it isn’t just the skills they learn; it is the realization that, as one correctional facility teacher said, “reading and writing can change lives.”

WELFARE BRAT. The experience is personal for the women in this initiative focused around Mary Childers’s *Welfare Brat*. It brings opportunities for inspiration, self-knowledge, and self-confidence as these women strive to rise out of poverty and other challenging situations.

Childers’s memoir gives an honest, often heart-breaking but hopeful account of her childhood in

the Bronx in the 1950s. By pursuing her dream of education, Childers rose out of multigenerational poverty to earn a Ph.D. in literature; she now works as ombudsperson at Dartmouth College.

Throughout the fall, women served by social service providers in Alburgh, St. Albans, Milton, and Winooski read and discussed the book. Women in the Northwest State Correctional facility also took part. Childers made six visits with audiences totalling 120. She discussed her childhood and her pursuit of a dream of a different life. Participants had the opportunity to make connections between their lives, the book, and each other.

“Thanks again to the Vermont Humanities Council for providing such wonderful, enriching literacy programs. They are VERY much appreciated!”

– participant, *Never Too Early*, Montpelier

“We learned more about the students in this ideal teaching situation. They all do have a desire to learn. It was amazing to be a part of the success they were feeling.”

– Kelly Henzl Sapier, teacher, Stowe Middle School

“Your programs in Vermont prisons offer support to teachers in Corrections, a breath of fresh air, and hope that reading and writing can change lives.”

– Mary McCallum, Community High School of Vermont teacher, Southern State Correctional Facility, Springfield



Above, women at a *Welfare Brat* program in Alburgh at the Northwest Counseling and Support Services Parent Child Center pose with author Mary Childers (fourth from left). Below, humanities campers from Richford Junior-Senior High School explored books and hands-on activities with *Food for Thought* as a theme.



Childers inspired these women, many of whom share multigenerational poverty, absent fathers, alcoholism, and homes where education was not honored. They welcomed her honest and straightforward approach—one that is empathetic but also points out choices and opportunities for change in the women’s own lives. As one woman said, “I realized that there are many out there who face similar situations and who have the ability and strength to reach their goals.”

VHC is grateful to the Vermont Women’s Fund and the Hendrickson Family Foundation for supporting this program.

HUMANITIES CAMPS. Reading lies at the heart of each theme-based, weeklong summer day camp for middle schoolers. Hands-on activities extend that reading in varied and engaging ways. Eager students at eight Humanities Camps explored *Food for Thought*; a ninth camp explored diversity in America with *This Land is Your Land/My Land*. For many of the kids involved, these camps were the best part of their summer.

In Wells River students toured an organic farm. Burlington’s Edmunds Middle School students learned about Asian food. Fair Haven students volunteered at a food shelf and wrote family food memoirs. In Richford, a birthday cake led to a discussion about how Americans celebrate life milestones with cake.

“*[Mary Childers]* is so real, raw, open-minded, outspoken, and down to earth. She made me realize that even if you have barriers there is no shame in speaking up and asking for help. She gave me the courage and strength to get my life straight.”

– participant, *Welfare Brat* program

“The best thing I learned is that there is a book for everyone and if you look hard, you’ll find it.”

– participant, Humanities Camp, Richford Junior-Senior High School

“After having held my first Open House I don’t know what I was waiting for! This is an excellent program. I mentioned to the parents that a library card is one of the most priceless gifts you give to a child.”

– participant, *Never Too Early*, Bristol

“On the days this class was scheduled, I had a reason to get up.”

– literacy student, Southern State Correctional Facility, Springfield

Milton students read the Vermont Reads book, *When the Emperor Was Divine*, and other books to learn about the ethnic makeup of the United States. They created a diversity quilt, toured the Fleming Museum’s exhibit on Native Americans, explored cultures as diverse as Mexico and Israel, and made photo stories of their own cultural heritage.

Camp week is profound for teachers and students. The campers transcend their normal social groups, and many raise their educational and employment aspirations. And they find that books, learning, and even school can be fun!

NEVER TOO EARLY. This early literacy program trains childcare providers and parents how to use books with young children and promote their children’s cognitive development. Through the trainings, VHC reaches Vermont’s youngest and most needy children. In all, 1,030 providers and parents participated in 371 trainings, and VHC distributed 11,500 books.

New in 2009 was *Peaceable Stories*, an advanced early literacy training program that helps childcare providers learn to use books to promote children’s positive social-emotional development at the same time they nurture early literacy.

Humanities Grants

Enrich Vermont

“MJ Davis, the conservator of Mark Wheeler’s memoir, described the process by which she conserved the memoir—very informative. Howard Coffin is a very powerful speaker and I liked his reading of excerpts of other soldiers’ diaries. It was very helpful in understanding the scope of the horrors.”

— attendee, Mark Wheeler’s
Andersonville Account

“I really appreciated the emphasis the Ways of the Woods mobile exhibit placed on being proud to be from this area. There really is so much heritage to be proud of. Kids often ‘diss’ their town. Perhaps now they realize what the Northern Forest and its communities have to offer.”

— Heather Guerin, Richford

“A tremendous event that brings together writers and readers for a magnificent weekend of literary magic. What a classy and enlightening experience. Burlington should be proud of its annual book festival.”

— attendee, Melinda Moulton,
Main Street Landing,
Burlington Book Festival

Grants to Other Nonprofits

VHC Awards \$35,011 to 17 Organizations

Bookstock: The Green Mountain Festival of Words, Woodstock.

\$1,500 for the first-annual literary festival in Woodstock, offering performances, lectures, workshops, poetry events, and readings throughout town.

Brattleboro Literary Festival. \$2,000 for the eighth-annual three-day literary festival, which features author readings, panel discussions, and other special events.

Burlington Book Festival. \$2,500 to support this fifth-annual three-day literary festival, held in downtown venues and featuring prominent literary figures.

Civil War Anniversary Exhibit, American Precision Museum, Windsor.

\$3,400 for a special exhibit on the occasion of the sesquicentennial of the Civil War.

Freedom and Unity: The Vermont Movie, Upper Valley Arts, Norwich.

\$4,000 to create an educational DVD, Web site, and teachers’ guide for junior high and high school classrooms that expand on ideas presented in the Vermont film, *Freedom and Unity*.

Life in Washington County Video History Project, Johnson State College.

\$1,000 to support a public history and video project on the history of Washington County.



FRAN MORINO

At Manchester Elementary Middle School, a VHC grant to the Opera Theatre of Weston helped fund a program on the theme “relationships teach responsibility,” which is found in the novella and opera *The Little Prince*.

The Little Prince Storybook Opera Project, Opera Theatre of Weston.

\$1,500 to support an educational outreach program to southern Vermont schools about the theme “relationships teach responsibility” in the novella and opera *The Little Prince*.

Mark Wheeler’s Andersonville Account, Peacham Historical Association.

\$1,511 for the preservation and presentation of a Civil War memoir written by Mark Wheeler, a Union soldier from Peacham imprisoned in Andersonville prison in Georgia.

MANGO Online Language Learning, Green Mountain Library Consortium, Statewide.

\$2,000 to help support the implementation of the interactive online language learning program MANGO, which will be made available to patrons through member libraries.

Teacher’s Workshop, Weston Playhouse Theatre Company. \$3,000 to support a workshop for middle and high school teachers on Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*.

13th Annual Green Mountain Film Festival, Focus on Film, Montpelier. \$2,400 to support this popular festival, comprised of multiple film screenings and ancillary events such as discussions and presentations involving filmmakers, writers, and other guests.

To Life! A Celebration of Vermont Jewish Women, DAVAR: The Vermont Jewish Women’s History Project, Rutland. \$1,500 to support an exhibit about Jewish women’s contributions to Vermont.

Vermont History Expo, Vermont Historical Society, Barre. \$1,000 to support the tenth year of this weekend heritage festival, June 26 and 27. The 2010 theme is Back to the Land Again! Vermont Heritage Ways for Today.

Voices from Terezin, Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Burlington. \$3,000 to support a week of events, including symposia, an art exhibit, and two concerts related to the Nazi concentration camp Terezin.

Victorian Roots of Mysteries Reading Series, Bennington Free Library and Baker Street Breakfast Club, Bennington. \$1,200 to support a four-part reading and discussion series using mystery novels based on the Sherlock Holmes style.

Ways of the Woods: People and the Land in the Northern Forest, Northern Forest Center, Concord, New Hampshire. \$2,000 to support a mobile museum exploring life in the Northern Forest.

Yellow Barn Musicological Lecture Series, Yellow Barn Music School and Festival, Putney. \$1,500 to support a summer music program in Putney offering public talks and demonstrations.



KAREN PIKE (WWW.KRIKEPHOTO.COM)

Rabbi Tobie Weisman of Montpelier is featured in the exhibit *To Life! A Celebration of Vermont Jewish Women*.

“The enthusiastic audience of 130 filled the Carriage Barn at Park-McCullough and joined in with hand-clapping and toe-tapping to some of the melodies, as well as participating with comments and questions.”

– Patricia Gordon Michael, executive director, Park-McCullough House, about the Music of Irish Immigrants program

“The Ways of the Woods exhibit was very beneficial for our first and second graders. They learned a lot about the history of the forest and our connection to the land.”

– Kathleen Cowan, Burlington

“Thank you for providing the Storybook Opera Project Tour at Grafton. It really added a lot to the understanding and appreciation of the opera, along with the excellent teaching materials you sent. One of the classes was so inspired after the workshop that they created an improvisatory opera with a story they were reading, singing all the parts!”

– Marcia Oster, Grafton Elementary School, about *The Little Prince* Storybook Opera Project

Vermont Humanities Programs at a Glance

Program	Audience	Number Served (2009)	Location
Reading and Discussion			
VERMONT READS			
Brings Vermonters together for activities related to one book (<i>The Day of the Pelican</i> by Katherine Paterson in 2010 and <i>When the Emperor Was Divine</i> by Julie Otsuka in 2009)	General public and intergenerational audiences, as well as audiences at correctional facilities, literacy centers, and humanities camps	Estimated 10,000+ people in 74 towns participated; 70,000+ people listened to broadcasts on VPR; VHC distributed more than 4,000 free books	Schools, libraries, businesses, other nonprofits, and community centers statewide; author visits to schools and communities
LITERATURE AND MEDICINE: HUMANITIES AT THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE			
A hospital-based reading and discussion program open to all hospital staff	Hospital/healthcare staff	200 people at 9 hospitals	9 of Vermont's 15 hospitals*
READING AND DISCUSSION			
Led by VHC-trained scholars; participants make connections with neighbors by reading and talking about books	General public and intergenerational audiences	2,170 attendees took part in 175 discussions in 36 Vermont towns	Statewide, hosted by libraries or other nonprofits
ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE			
Explores a topic in depth, (Comedy and Satire in 2010, Food for Thought in 2009, and Robert Frost in 2008)	General public	Approximately 150–200 people annually	Held at a central location. (In 2009 at The Essex; in 2010 at the Stowe/Flake, November 12–13)
Talks and Living History			
FIRST WEDNESDAYS			
Once-a-month public lectures featuring nationally renowned speakers, October through May	General public within reach of 9 regional centers	4,579 people attended 70 talks at 9 locations	Brattleboro, Burlington, Manchester, Middlebury, Montpelier, Newport/Stanstead, Quebec, Norwich, Rutland, and St. Johnsbury
SPEAKERS BUREAU			
Speakers and living history presenters are made available for public lectures	General public	5,852 attendees at 141 programs	Hosted at libraries and other community centers statewide
VERMONT PUBLIC RADIO COMMENTARIES			
Humanities commentaries by Peter Gilbert on VPR	General public	10,000–14,000 listeners every two weeks	On VPR and at vpr.net and vermonthumanities.org

*Copley Hospital (Morrisville), Fletcher Allen (Burlington), Gifford Medical Center (Randolph), Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital (St. Johnsbury), Northwestern Medical Center (St. Albans), Porter Medical Center (Middlebury), Rutland Regional Medical Center, VA Medical & Regional Office Center (White River Junction), Vermont State Hospital (Waterbury)



Program	Audience	Number Served (2009)	Location
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Grants

GRANTS TO OTHER NONPROFITS

Grants to nonprofits for humanities programming	General public	17 grants totaling \$35,011 and serving tens of thousands of Vermonters	Museums, libraries, schools, fairs, and other venues statewide
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Humanities-Based Literacy

NEVER TOO EARLY

A professional development opportunity offering early literacy workshops for childcare providers, as well as family literacy trainings for parents	Childcare providers and parents, especially low-income households and teen parents	Over 510 different providers and 520 different parents at 371 events (11,500 free books distributed)	Childcare centers and home care settings, parent-child centers, Head Start, correctional facilities, and low-income family programs statewide
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CONNECTIONS

A reading and discussion program in collaboration with the Community High School of Vermont, the Vermont Department of Corrections, and community organizations	Corrections inmates and probationers; social service organizations helping women raise themselves out of poverty	478 individuals at 65 group events, including 41 in correctional facilities (855 free books distributed)	Held statewide at 7 correctional facilities and probation and parole sites, at social service organizations in Newport and Burlington, and at the Vermont State Hospital
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HUMANITIES CAMPS

Weeklong summer day camps for at-risk middle school students. The camps strengthen literacy skills and build positive peer groups and a love of reading	At-risk middle-schoolers ages 11 to 14	144 students in 9 Vermont public schools (898 free books distributed)	At 9 schools statewide*
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VOICES

Professional development program for Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) staff to facilitate book discussions	AEL staff and students, including refugees and immigrants	21 AEL teachers and 422 adult students served (631 free books distributed)	Adult education centers statewide, including Barre, Bennington, Colchester / Burlington, Middlebury, Morrisville, Newport, Rutland, St. Johnsbury, and Waterbury
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MINI-GRANTS

Awards totalling \$5,000 to support literacy projects	Literacy program participants	18 awards paid for books, educational field trips, and other expenses; 1,200 books donated to literacy programs	Literacy organizations statewide (schools, childcare and early literacy providers, and adult education centers)
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*Albert D. Lawton (Essex Junction), Blue Mountain Union (Wells River), Edmunds Middle School (Burlington), Fair Haven Grade School, Milton Middle School, Richford Jr.-Sr. High School, St. Albans City School, Stowe Middle School, and U-32 (East Montpelier)

Thank You to Our Donors

January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009

VHC received 804 gifts from individuals, businesses, and foundations committed to providing literacy and public programs and events in every county in Vermont. VHC's work depends on the generosity and hard work of many donors and volunteers. We are grateful to each of you.

INDIVIDUALS

Platinum – \$5,000+

Anonymous*
William & Patricia Alley
Judith Buechner
Wolfgang & Barbara Mieder
Elizabeth Steele
Bill & Jane Stetson*

Gold – \$2,500+

Anonymous
George & Laura Heller
Lyn Hutton & Bill Zimmerman*
Kendall Mix

Silver – \$1,000+

Anonymous (2)
Al & Dottie Bergendahl
Al Besser & Gretchen Rous Besser
John & Brenda Bisbee
Peter & Bern Collins+
Gail & Allen Dougherty
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Rutland Teacher John Peterson Receives Swenson Award

Rutland High School teacher John Peterson received the seventh annual Victor R. Swenson Humanities Educator Award, which honors a Vermont educator in grades six through twelve who exemplifies excellence in humanities teaching. The honor brings with it a \$1,000 prize.

Peterson has taught for twenty-three years in Rutland High School's Social Studies Department. He has designed and taught courses in Anthropology as well as an Advanced Placement U.S. History course. He has served as the head of Rutland's Social Studies Department and is president of the Vermont Alliance for the Social Studies.

"John is a teacher constantly in motion," said fellow Rutland teacher (and former student of Peterson's) Jennie Gartner, who noted Peterson's fresh approaches to teaching, the interactive structure of his courses, his enthusiasm, and his humor. "He is always developing new ways to make history real, relevant, and compelling for students"



SYLVIA PLUMB

Swenson Award winner John Peterson with Victor Swenson

There is no teacher I am aware of who is willing to do more for any student's education than John."

Past recipients of the award are Graham Newell of St. Johnsbury Academy, Mary Ann Chaffee of Essex High School, Frankie Dunleavy of Middlebury Union High School, Roberta Steponaitis of Vergennes High School, Jean Berthiaume of Harwood Union High School, and Debra Lynde of Milton High School.

Financial Statements 2009

January 1 through
December 31, 2009



Humanities campers from Richford Junior-Senior High School reading books about food and culture.



Fall conference goers learned about the Japanese tea ceremony from Michiko Oishi.



Richford humanities campers exploring Food for Thought enjoy a homemade lunch.

Revenue and Expenses

Revenue

National Endowment for the Humanities	\$ 574,520
State of Vermont	172,670
Contributions and grants	349,244
Program and other income	170,570
Total revenue	\$ 1,267,004

Expenses

Programs and program management	\$ 845,319
General and administration	248,526
Development	131,906
Total expenses	\$ 1,225,751

Other changes

Change in net assets from operations	\$ 41,253
Nonoperating investment return	92,110
Total changes in net assets	\$ 133,363

Statement of Financial Position

Assets

Cash	\$ 246,596
Investments	189,562
Fixed assets	558,967
Other assets	29,161
Long-term investment	773,889
Total Assets	\$ 1,798,175

Liabilities

Payroll expenses payable	\$ 29,558
Grants payable	23,282
Other payables	40,169
Total liabilities	\$ 93,009

Net assets

Undesignated	\$ 300,997
Investment in plant, property, and equipment	558,967
Board-designated long-term investments	668,849
Temporarily restricted	118,611
Permanently restricted	57,742
Total net assets	\$ 1,705,166

Total liabilities and net assets \$ 1,798,175

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The alphabet blocks featured in this report provided three generations of learning to the family of Steven M. Pappas, whom we would like to thank for their use.



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**Calvin Coolidge and his son Calvin Coolidge, Jr.
build a cart together, July 27, 1920.**

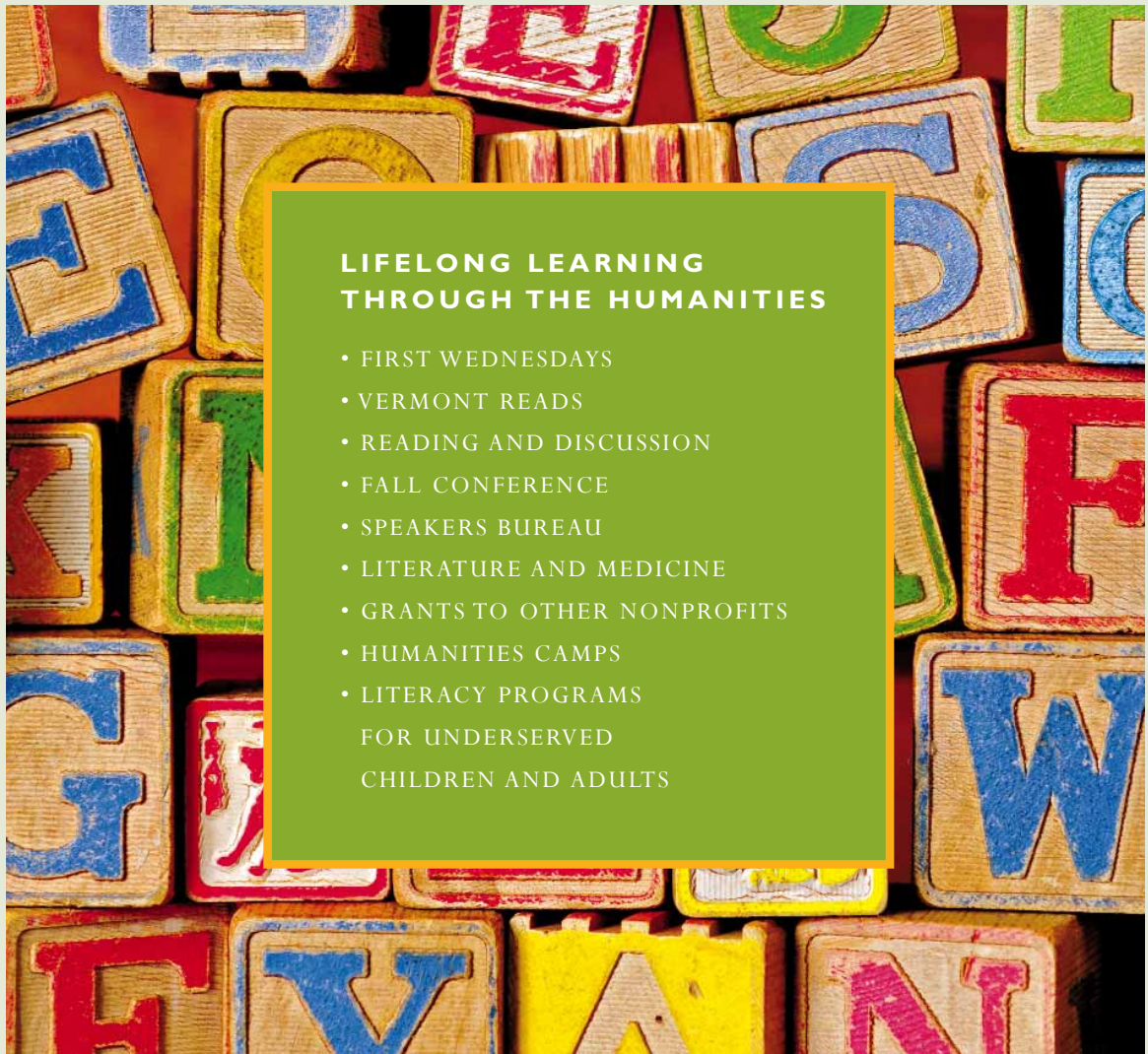
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