



THE

RED & WHITE

DECEMBER 2022

A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Vicksburg Schools Families,

As we enter the holiday season, I want to thank you for sharing your greatest gift with us here at VCS. We are so privileged that we get to help teach your children each school day. I am thankful you are here with us. And I am thankful for the collective commitment of our teachers and staff to make our district the best it can be.

I am also thankful for our community. We have so many positive things happening and

it's all because of the wonderful people who live here.

Over the last month, in all of our school buildings, I've watched as our students have helped others. They've held collections, they've raised money and they have worked together to make their schools and community better places.

We have many opportunities over the next few weeks to welcome our community in for

holiday performances and celebrations. You can see the calendar of events in this edition of the Red and White. You can also read about the great things our students have accomplished so far this school year.

I hope all of you have a safe, healthy and memorable holiday season surrounded by family and friends!



Regards,

Keevin O'Neill, SUPERINTENDENT

Everything You Need to Know About Snow Days

HOW DOES VCS DECIDE SNOW DAYS?

V Bulldogs

It's been a while since we'd had a snow day in November, but 2022 is that year!

So how does VCS make the snow day decision?

A lot of factors come into play when it comes to snow days. We like to give our families as much notice as possible to find care for their children. You might notice the last few years we've worked to make the call in the evening, rather than early in the morning. Whenever possible, if the forecast is calling for dangerous conditions, we err on the side of caution.

However, if the call is not made in the evening, our administration and transportation teams go out early and drive the roads across the district to check the

conditions. Vicksburg serves a very large area, including rural roads that don't see a plow for a few days. We always attempt to make the decision before 5:30am. On rare occasions, if weather conditions drastically change, we might be forced to make a late call. Please know we try to give you as much notice as possible.

For snow days, we will always call, email and post on social media. We also report closures to Channel 3, but don't have control over their system, so it is best to check our social media and website first.

Exchange Student's Brother Comes to VHS



Soren (left) and Marlon (right) Meyers at VHS. Marlon came to visit for a Gehrman family wedding this fall.

From Wolfsburg, Germany to Vicksburg, Michigan...

For the first time ever, Vicksburg High School has the sibling of a former foreign exchange student attending school here. And they both stayed with the same host family.

Soren Meyer is a 10th grader at VHS. He is being hosted by Tim and Sarah Gehrman. They also hosted his brother Marlon Meyer for the 2020-2021 school year.

But this sibling placement was never supposed to happen!

First, Marlon had a different

family set up but it fell through right before he was supposed to come to Vicksburg. The Gehrman family stepped in at the last minute to take their very first exchange student.

Second, Soren, who is a little more reserved than Marlon, was adamant he was not going to come to America for high school like his big brother. That is, until he came to visit this past summer and met the entire Gehrman family. "I came for the family," Soren said.

The Germans are a blended family with seven children. They live on a farm. A big difference



Soren and Marlon Meyers at a Gehrman family wedding this past summer.

from the big city of Wolfsburg, Germany. For Sarah Gehrman, adding one more to the mix was an easy transition. "It's been the best experience. We gained a family across the world. My kids gained brothers," said Gehrman.

Soren played soccer at VHS this fall and hopes to try out for Lacrosse, a sport his big brother also played when he attended the school.

This fall, Marlon returned to Vicksburg for a Gehrman family wedding. He visited Soren in school too. Both now highly recommend the exchange student program, saying it has

helped them gain confidence and learn so much about the world. Soren will be in Vicksburg through next summer. When he returns to Germany to finish high school he hopes to get into engineering. Marlon is in his final year of high school and is also interested in becoming an engineer.

And our first ever sibling set of exchange students might not end with Soren and Marlon! They have a younger sister who is 11 and the Gehrman family has already said they're opening to host her when the time comes.

Upcoming Shows at the Performing Arts Center

Indian Lake 2nd & 3rd Grade Winter Concert - Thursday, December 1 - 7pm

Tobey 2nd & 3rd Grade Winter Concert - Tuesday, December 6 - 7pm

VMS Holiday Choir Concert - Tuesday, December 20 - 7pm

VMS Holiday Band Concert - Wednesday, December 21 - 7pm

VHS Holiday Concert - Thursday, December 22 - 7pm

Sunset Lake 4th & 5th Grade Music Program Tuesday, March 21 - 7pm

Sunset Lake 3rd Grade Music Program Thursday, April 6 - 7pm



Socktober Charity Drive at Indian Lake



Congratulations to the students of Indian Lake Elementary for collecting a total of 2,347 pairs of socks for Socktober!

All the donations were brought to the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission to help those in need of dry and clean socks.

The students beat last year's total of 2,247.

The classroom that collected the most socks was Mrs. Schmid's 4th graders with a total of 336 pairs. They had a big boost from Colton Oldenberg, who got his mom's work involved, and collected 200 pairs!

Congrats to all those involved for helping others!



VHS Graduate Survey

ATTENTION ALL VICKSBURG HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES!

The staff at Vicksburg High School is looking for some help from its Alumni.

We are trying to gather information about where our former students are working and what jobs or careers they are participating in.

This information will be used to help us improve our instruction and guide our discussions on programming for our future Bulldogs as they begin their journey to success!

VHS alumni if you could please complete the study by scanning the QR code, we would really appreciate it. Your time could help future VCS students!

Attention VHS graduates!

WE NEED

YOUR

HELP

Scan here:



Reading Together at Tobey Elementary

Fifth graders and kindergartners at Tobey Elementary are working together to find a love for reading.

Fifth grade students from Kristen Glerum's class partnered with

the kindergartners from Tabby Sears's class to help the early readers work on sounding out new words and to encourage each other.

Together they looked at

illustrations and worked together to determine what the books were about.

The students also took turns reading out loud to each other.

The exercise was just as beneficial to the older students as it was to the younger students.



Vicksburg Middle School at MiCareerQuest



Vicksburg Middle School 8th grade students had a chance to attend the MiCareerQuest Southwest event at the Kalamazoo Expo Center. MiCareerQuest Southwest is not your average career fair. In fact, it's not a career fair at all. It's a career exploration experience!

and Calhoun Counties.

The event exposes students to a broad range of exciting, rewarding career opportunities. They also had the opportunity to touch, feel and work with the equipment, tools and technology used by people every day in a broad range of in-demand jobs.

It's the region's largest interactive career exploration event that hosted thousands of eighth grade students in Kalamazoo

The goal is to connect classroom learning with real-world jobs and their requirements.



Honoring Our Veterans

Numerous VCS students took part in the Veterans Day ceremony at Sunset Lake Park.

The VHS chamber choir performed, along with band members, Boy Scouts, and all the 5th graders from Sunset Lake Elementary School.

It was a good learning opportunity for all involved and a beautiful tribute to those who have served our country.



Sunset Lake Gratitude Project

Students at Sunset Lake Elementary spent their November focusing on gratitude!

At their Student Lighthouse Team Assembly, student leaders introduced the Gratitude Campaign.

For 2 straight weeks leading up to Thanksgiving break, the students focused their energy on what they were thankful for. They took time every day to write on post-it notes things they were grateful for. The goal was to fill the giant hearts in the lobby and down the halls with their positive energy.

As part of the gratitude project, the Student Lighthouse Team also collected food donations for Generous Hands, dropping them off just before Thanksgiving.

It was an exercise in positive thinking that helped spread kindness and gratitude throughout the entire building and beyond!



Turkey Learning at Indian Lake Elementary

Students at Indian Lake Elementary turned their Thanksgiving lessons into an opportunity to conduct some research! Mrs. Martens' second grade class conducted data analysis using turkeys they created.

Each student created a turkey

and color coded certain features based on their Thanksgiving plans and what traditional foods they do and do not like.

One student, Joey Vernon, explained, "We are collecting data from our turkeys. If you look here, you can see that if the turkey has tan it means

this person is going away for Thanksgiving. If the turkey has brown, they are staying home for Thanksgiving." He then went on to explain, "We're going to check everybody's data tomorrow. We have 23 people in our class!"

When asked what he liked about this activity, he said, "I like when

we get to learn about what people like and don't like by studying their turkey."

The students combined art, math, social studies and science into the lesson while also learning a little about each other.



NHS Holiday Drive Exceeds Expectations

Congrats to the Vicksburg High School National Honor Society for a very successful holiday donation drive!

They collected more than 1,000 food and personal care items for South County Community Services.

This year the collection drive was a contest between first hour classes at VHS.

South County gave them a list of the top needed items, including packs of diapers, and the VHS National Honor Society assigned them point values based on price and need.

Congrats to the winning class Greg Mills and Lorrie Jancarz!

And great job to all those who brought in items to donate!



Writers Club Partners with Gilbert & Ivy

The Vicksburg Middle School writers club has started a special partnership with Gilbert & Ivy Book Store.

They recently took an after school walking field trip to the downtown bookstore to talk about their favorite books and writers.

The group, led by teacher Chris Laaksonen, learned about certain writing techniques and styles. They also talked about their favorite types of books and were

given suggestions of authors and books they might like to read in the future.

