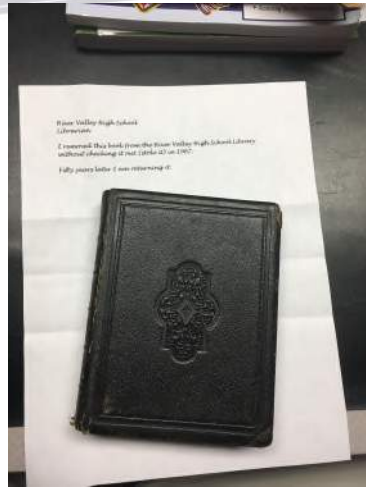


# Mustang News



River Valley School District  
www.rivervalleyschools.org



February 2017  
Issue

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS ON THE RADIO

River Valley School District Board of Education meetings are recorded and broadcast over WRHC 106.7 LPFM. The scheduled broadcast times are Mondays at 10:00 a.m.



### Facility Use

Our District facilities are available for use by community groups for meetings and other events. In many instances, the use of District facilities is available for little or no cost. For more information, please contact the office of the school building that you would like to use.



## From the Superintendent . . .

As we near the end of February, it won't be long before we reach the end of the third marking period and with it the arrival of warmer weather. We have been fortunate so far in that we have had a fairly mild winter and only two snow days. However, Michigan weather can still surprise us as it has done in the past.

I would like to welcome our newest River Valley staff members:

- Rose Bailey MHS Culinary Arts
- Jamie Goering MHS Math
- Heather Pruet Preschool Teacher Assistant
- Stacey Vetter MHS Student Services Secretary
- Jim Wiseley MHS Assistant Principal/Athletic Director

As you know, the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the opening of River Valley High School is taking place throughout this school year. The time capsule has been opened up, and the items are being displayed in a display case by the gym. Recently, the MHS administration received a book and a note (pictured above) from an alumni who took the book from the library in 1967. Thank you to the mysterious alumni for the safe return of this book.

Congratulations to the following students who qualified for the BPA State Competition in March—Kielli Byers, Mason Derkacy, Nicole Gibson, Teya Haughey, Ashley Jones, Katharine Kersey, Hannah Korbel, Allyson Olson and Leah Zandarski.

All community members are invited to attend our "Community Lunch Program" which will be held three more times this school year—March 9th at Chikaming, April 19th at Three Oaks, and May 25th at the Middle/High School. The cost of the lunch is only \$2.00, and a brief program is put on by our students.

This year's spring drama production *Arsenic & Old Lace* will be held March 23, 24, 25 and 26 in the MHS auditorium. Mrs. Ehlert and the students have been working hard preparing for this production. Our 2017/18 community calendar will be distributed in August. Once again we are running a photo contest for the calendar, as well as accepting advertising from interested community members. Information regarding advertising in the community calendar can be found inside this newsletter.

As always, if you have any ideas, thoughts, questions, or concerns please contact me at 269-756-7675.

William J. Kearney



## SCHOOL VISITORS

Parents and community members are encouraged to visit our schools. During the school day, please enter at the front entrance of the building. All other doors are locked to maintain a safe and secure environment for our students and staff.



**“Building Healthy Communities”**

- River Valley Elementary staff recently applied for and was awarded the “Building Healthy Communities” grant from the State of Michigan. Both Chikaming and Three Oaks schools received a cart of outdoor equipment that can be wheeled outside for recess and a banner to display in the buildings.
- The equipment carts are handy for keeping the playground items accessible for all of the students to play with. The carts make it easy for staff to get the equipment in and out of the buildings. Congratulations to the elementary staff for working together to apply for this grant opportunity.



Submitted by Cory McLaughlin



**Problem Solving at Three Oaks**

Students at Three Oaks have the opportunity to work on a “Breakout” activity during strategy groups. Several clues to math problems are given to students to solve. Students work together to solve the problems that are given. When a group of students are able to get all of the locks off their main box, they have solved the math problem.

Submitted by Jeanne Carter



**WATCH D.O.G.S. PROGRAM  
(Dads of Great Students)**

Our elementary buildings currently have four dads that are volunteering as Watch D.O.G.S. Our Watch D.O.G.S. help in classrooms, go out to recess and assist students during lunch. They are a great help to our staff and the students really enjoy having the dads in our buildings.

Tim Volstorf has been a Watch D.O.G. for the past five years. He is a great addition and really shows our students what “doing your best, caring for others and loving your school” looks like.

If any dads are interested in becoming a Watch D.O.G. please contact one of the elementary offices. Mrs. McLaughlin (Chikaming) and Mrs. Bronson (Three Oaks) would be happy to help get you set up as a Watch D.O.G.

Submitted by Terry Bronson





#### FOURTH GRADERS VISIT LANSING

A total of 48 students were able to visit the Michigan Historical Museum and State Capitol in Lansing this month. The students learned about important events from Michigan's history by visiting the Michigan Historical Museum. The visit tied in directly with the fourth grade curriculum expectations for our students; and included photos, stories, artifacts and other primary sources from the state of Michigan and the Great Lakes Region. A first hand review of Michigan's natural resources and the effects of migration and immigration to the state of Michigan were also observed through the presentations at the museum.

The students also enjoyed spending time at our state's capitol building in Lansing. The trip to the capitol building allowed the students to gain a first-hand perspective of how our state government operates. Some of the highlights of our visit included a viewing of the governor's office at the state capitol building. We also met with Senator Proos and were invited for photos with the senator on the Senate floor. The students also visited the House of Representatives where they were publically recognized as visitors to the state capitol by Representative Pagel. The curriculum expectations met by our visit to the capitol allowed the students to better understand the purposes of government, the values and principles of American democracy, the structures and functions of our state government, and the roles of each citizen in American democracy.

The students and staff at Three Oaks Elementary School are very grateful for the generosity and kindness shown by The Pokagon Fund. Thank you for allowing our students the experience of such a great trip! The students have not only gained new knowledge and understanding about our statehood and our political system; but have also built positive memories that will stay with them well into their adulthood. Thank you for your support and for providing the children of our community such a positive learning experience. Once again, thank you for everything!!

Submitted by Brad Hoekstra



#### Sixth Grade Incredible Edible Cell Project

Recently, Mr. Bertrand's 6th graders constructed an edible cell model using different food items to represent various cell structures found in plant and animal cells. The activity helped students learn more about the different parts of a cell and their function.

Submitted by Mr. Bertrand





## SCHOOL BUS REMINDERS



### GENERAL RULES FOR TRANSPORTATION

- Be on time at your designated bus stop. Drivers have a schedule to meet and cannot wait for tardy pupils. If the bus cancels its lights or pulls away, **DO NOT CHASE THE BUS**. This is how accidents happen.
- Cheerfully obey the bus driver's instructions. Friendly, respectful people get along better.
- Students are expected to display good behavior while on the bus. Quiet conversation is fine. When approaching a railroad crossing, students are to be silent until the bus is safely across the tracks.
- Always remain seated while a bus is moving. It may be necessary to sit three to a seat. The bus driver will assign seats at the start of the school year and those assignments may change on occasion, due to behaviors.
- Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to enter or leave the bus.
- Eating or drinking is not permitted on the buses except for special occasions approved by the driver.
- Musical instruments, books, projects or other personal items must be held by the owner. We encourage parents to transport on days large items must be taken to school.
- Stay off the roadways at all times while waiting for a bus. Form a single line and board the bus one at a time. Remember to respect the property of others while waiting for the bus.
- Hands and heads are to be kept inside the bus at all times. There will be no unnecessary disturbing noises or vulgar/profane language.
- Students are expected to get on and off the bus at their designated stops **ONLY**. A bus pass for the driver or a call to transportation is expected if it is necessary to get on and/or off at another location, even if it is on the same bus you normally ride. This practice is not encouraged due to the bus loads.
- When crossing, students must be 10 ft. in front of the bus. You must wait for the driver to signal. Students may then cross only in front of the bus. A student should **NEVER** cross the road behind the bus.
- Animals, glass containers and helium balloons, are not allowed on the buses.
- Students are expected to help keep the buses clean. Dispose of paper and other unwanted items properly.
- Students are asked to report any damage they see to the driver. Vandalism is a serious issue and will be addressed as soon as possible.
- Riders are expected to be considerate to all other passengers and to the driver at all times.
- Misconduct on the bus will not be tolerated. Drivers are in charge at all times and are required to report this behavior to building principals. Riding privileges may be suspended.
- Remember...school bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Misconduct may result in the loss of this privilege. Our buses have camera systems and are viewed by the supervisor and principal if necessary.

**Questions regarding transportation can be directed to :**

**Jennifer Templeton, Transportation Supervisor**

**269-756-7899**

**269-756-9541, extension 1023**

**[jtempleton@rivervalleyschools.org](mailto:jtempleton@rivervalleyschools.org)**



### River Valley Students Head to Washington

Four River Valley students—Helen Donner, Mazie Clark, Annette Donner and Katrena Klopfenstein (pictured left) participated in the 2017 Presidential Inauguration Parade on January 20, 2017. The students are members of the Mid America Cowgirls Rodeo Drill Team, which was selected to participate in the parade. Congratulations to these students for this 'once in a lifetime' opportunity.





**“Read Across Michiana” Comes to River Valley**

On Thursday December 1st, our elementary students were treated to a special guest. Cindi Clawson, from WNDU, read to our K-5 students. “Read Across Michiana” involves reading in 90 schools in 30 days. Chikaming and Three Oaks were stops #80 and #81. Our students loved meeting a TV celebrity and listening to a great story read by her. Thank you to Cindi for showing us that “you care for others and love our school” by reading and sharing your time with us.

Submitted by Terry Bronson



The River Valley Post-Prom Committee will be hosting a Donkey Basketball Game on Saturday February 25th starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Middle/High School Gymnasium.  
 Advanced tickets are \$6.00  
 Tickets at the door are \$8.00  
 Free donkey rides at halftime for children 12 years and under with a paid parent admission.



**DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

Listed below are updates from the December and January District School Improvement Team meetings:

**Elementary School Buildings**

- A report was provided on the “Adaptive Schools” training that was attended by the grade level chairpersons. This training included hands on participation for a variety of strategies for teachers. This training aligned well with the professional development provided by Joyce Jackson.
- The focus for the second semester will be to dig deeper into the *Essentials for Literacy* instruction documents, with a focus on strengthening our Tier 1 instruction.
- Benchmark testing took place in January, and the PLC teams will meet with Berrien RESA staff to review student growth and action plans, to improve Tier 1 instruction and interventions.

**Middle/High School Building**

- The PLC teams are working with Berrien RESA staff to focus on powering the standards, with the essential standards embedded into the power standards.
- The transition to standards based grading is progressing. The team is building policies on six best practice focus areas. Behavior grading will be implemented building-wide during second semester.
- The grade level action plan system has been revised to be more efficient with data. Teacher teams utilizing the document have more meaningful collaboration regarding student-specific interventions.

**Other Discussion Topics:**

- The District’s webmaster is taking the necessary steps to make the District website ADA compliant.
- The District will be implementing new procedures regarding background checks for volunteers. The District will utilize Background Investigation Bureau (BIB) to conduct background checks on volunteers.
- There was discussion about how we could reduce the burdens on teachers and improve teacher autonomy. It was suggested that it would be helpful if we could reduce the redundancy of data collection.

## Welcome to our newest River Valley Staff Members



Jamie Goering  
MHS Math



Stacey Vetter  
MHS Student Services Secretary



Heather Pruett  
Preschool Teacher Assistant



Jim Wiseley  
MHS Assistant Principal/Athletic Director



Rose Bailey  
MHS Culinary Arts



February is "Healthy Heart" month. Elementary students learned about healthy habits and participated in Jump Rope for Heart.



### Giving Back to our Community

Mr. Cook and several elementary students delivered a car load of food to our local food pantry before Thanksgiving. The elementary schools held a food drive the week before Thanksgiving in an effort to give back to our community and help our local families.

Submitted by Terry Bronson



**A BIG "THANK YOU" TO THE VICKERS THEATRE FOR HOSTING ALL OF OUR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS FOR OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY MOVIE. THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR LOVE FOR OUR SCHOOL. IT IS SUCH A FUN TREAT FOR OUR STUDENTS. IT HAS BEEN OVER 10 YEARS OF GREAT TIMES AND GREAT MEMORIES.**

Submitted by Terry Bronson

**“Home of the Mustangs”**

RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
15480 Three Oaks Road  
Three Oaks, Michigan 49128  
www.rivervalleyschools.org

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POSTAL CUSTOMER**

Main Number: (269) 756-9541

Chikaming Elementary: (269) 426-4204

Three Oaks Elementary: (269) 756-9050

Middle/High School: (269) 756-7872

**Notice of Nondiscrimination**

The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of the Protected Classes of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information in its educational programs or activities, including employment policies and practices. The following individuals are designated as the District’s Compliance Officers: Mrs. Heidi Clark, Elementary Principal or Mr. Patrick Breen, Middle/High School Principal, 15480 Three Oaks Road, Three Oaks, MI 49128, 269-756-9541.

**Upcoming Dates:**

- February 22-23 Evening Parent/Teacher Conferences
- February 24 No school—students and staff
- February 27 School Board meeting—MHS Library 7:00 p.m.
- March 7-10 MS and HS Band Festival—LMC
- March 9 Community Lunch Program—Chikaming 12:00 p.m.
- March 14 MHS PRIDE Night—6th/9th Grade Orientation 6:00 p.m.
- March 16 HS Student Congress Blood Drive
- March 17 Early Dismissal for Teacher Training
- March 23 -25 HS Drama—“Arsenic & Old Lace” - MHS Auditorium 7:00 p.m.
- March 26 HS Drama—“Arsenic & Old Lace” - MHS Auditorium 3:00 p.m.
- March 27 School Board meeting—MHS Library 7:00 p.m.
- March 30 6th Grade Solo Festival—MHS  
Elementary “Fiesta Night”—MHS Cafeteria 5:00 p.m.
- March 31 Half day for Students—End of Marking Period 3
- April 3 No school—Spring Break begins
- April 10 School resumes
- April 14 No school—Good Friday
- April 19 Community Lunch Program—Three Oaks 12:00 p.m.
- April 23 NHS Induction Ceremony—MHS Library 2:00 p.m.
- April 24 Pre-school Round Up—Three Oaks 6:00 p.m.  
School Board meeting—MHS Library 7:00 p.m.
- April 26 Kindergarten Round Up—Chikaming 6:00 p.m.
- May 10 Spring Band Concert—MHS Auditorium 7:00 p.m.
- May 13 Elementary Super Saturday—Three Oaks
- May 17 Spring Choir Concert—MHS Auditorium 7:00 p.m.
- May 22 School Board meeting—MHS Library 7:00 p.m.
- May 23 MS Oration Contest—MHS Library 6:00 p.m.
- May 25 Community Lunch Program—MHS 1:00 p.m.
- May 29 No school—Memorial Day
- May 31 Senior Awards Night—MHS Auditorium 7:00 p.m.



“Like us” on Facebook to stay updated on the various events and happenings of our district.



**Walkers Welcome**

The Middle/High School halls are open to walkers from **3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday when school is in session.** Signs designating the walking route are posted in the halls along with the distance for each loop.