

The Verona Press

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Verona Area School District



Photo by Maddie Bergstrom

The first VASD Reads event, a program that provides free books to students, families and community members, took place at Sugar Creek Elementary School on Thursday, June 29.

Books for all

VASD Reads, formerly Books on Bikes, returns for another summer of sharing free books with the community

BY MADDIE BERGSTROM
Staff reporter

As school districts across the country continue to challenge books in the classroom, the Verona Area School District is making sure everyone in the community has access to reading materials this summer.

On Thursday, June 29, the district held its annual "VASD Reads," formerly known as Books on Bikes, at Sugar Creek Elementary School.

Through this program, anyone in the community can stop by to pick out a free book of their choice.

During the day, students attending summer school rotated through a room overflowing with different books to take home. Many scholars were so excited about their new books they did

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Inside

See additional photos of the VASD Reads event

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Concerts in the Park returns tonight

Free music from 5:30-8 p.m. every Thursday this month at Harriet Park



It's time to grab your lawn chairs and pack a picnic basket – tonight, a month-long series of live music returns to Verona's very own Harriet Park.

Concerts in the Park, presented by the Verona Area Chamber of Commerce, will take place from 5:30-8 p.m. on Thursdays this July at Harriet Park, 414 Mary Lou Street.

This free event brings together local musicians

and community members for a month of performances in the relaxing summer breeze.

Thursday, July 6 – Frank Martin Busch & the Names

The Names is Frank Turn to **Concerts/Page 10**



Photo submitted

Traffic driving through the recently completed final surface pavement for the inside lanes west of County Hwy G.

US Hwy 18/151 construction update: June 30 through July 7

Public information meeting set for Tuesday, July 11 at City Hall

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has resumed work on US Hwy 18/151 following a break over the holiday weekend.

According to a weekly construction update, the project was on pause from noon on Friday, June 30 through 6 a.m. on Wednesday, July 5 for Independence Day.

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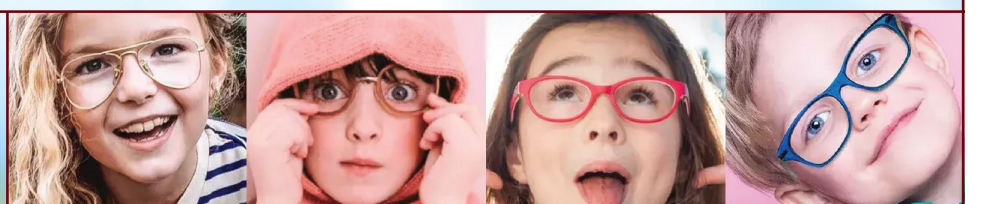


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Books: Community invited to next VASD Reads event during National Night Out on Aug. 1

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Photos by Maddie Bergstrom

District librarian Teresa Voss looks at "The Scooby-Doo! Cookbook" with a student.



After choosing a book to take home, many students were eager to start reading right away.

not take their eyes off the pages while walking back to class.

Sugar Creek librarian Jaclyn Vitela said the event is an effort to keep kids reading throughout the summer to prevent a "summer slip," but also works to build on the district's goal of collaboration and disciplinary literacy. During the first event on Thursday, the collaboration between students was evident as they shared their new books and read together.

"With all the book challenges we're seeing nationally, just to be in a school district that promotes literacy and reading and access to books is amazing," she said. "You know, you hear about these districts across the country where books are being shuttered away, but here we're providing books to the community."

Books for VASD Reads are all donated by community members, teachers and the Madison Reading Project. There are options available for people of all ages, including books for babies and toddlers, all the way up to books for parents and older siblings, Vitela said.

Since the district has a two-way immersion program, books are

If You Go

What: VASD Reads at National Night Out
When: 5-8 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 1
Where: City Hall, 111 Lincoln St.

available in both English and Spanish as well.

VASD Reads is not just for students, however, but the whole community, district librarian Teresa Voss said. Anyone is welcome to attend the events and leave with something new to read.

"It's like the youngest of the youngest to if somebody's 95 and comes in - have a book," she said. "Everybody gets (a book)."

VASD Reads initially began during the summer of 2017 as Books on Bikes, Voss said, where people would bike to different parks in the community with free books to hand out.

"It was great, but we had so much support from the community that we literally had to start driving," she said.

When seeing the success of the program, Voss said they had to rebrand and find sites to host the event at, rather than biking to various locations. The program itself is heavily supported by the district, teachers and families, Voss said.

Since the beginning of the free book program, Voss has enjoyed seeing the sheer joy of those who attend in finding themselves in books, picking out books and sharing what they find.

"Just the expression on kids' faces when they hear that they get to keep their new book forever," Vitela said. "And they get to choose a book that they're interested in a language they want to read."

If you missed the chance to stop by the first VASD Reads event at Sugar Creek, it's not too late to take advantage of free reading material this summer. The community is invited to visit the program during Verona's National Night Out on Monday, Aug. 1 at City Hall.

Contact reporter Maddie Bergstrom at mbergstrom@wisconsinmedia-group.com

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