



# VIKING HORN

DECEMBER  
2024

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Aleece Belinger, Special Projects Coordinator at Ealy Elementary, poses in front of several donated food items that were exchanged for books in the recent "Read to Feed" project.



### PERFORMING ARTS TAKE CENTER STAGE



Whitehall high school and middle school students in band (photo above) and choir (photo below) recently performed winter or holiday shows in the high school auditorium. They were both great performances, highlighting the complete educational experience offered by WDS. Awesome job, performers!



### READ TO FEED IS A WIN-WIN FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Ealy Elementary recently held its "Read to Feed" project, in which students received books in exchange for canned goods and other food items that were distributed to those in need in the community. Headed up by Special Projects Coordinator Aleece Belinger, Read to Feed grew from 1,014 donated items and books in 2023 to 1,242 of each in 2024. 'Tis the season for giving. What a wonderful project by Aleece, students, and everybody else involved!



### SPREADING CHEER WITH FOREST OF TREES

The Holiday Night planned for earlier this month for Ealy and Shoreline elementary students and families was canceled because of inclement weather. However, that did not stop students and staff from spreading holiday cheer. Near the Ealy gymnasium, a "Forest of Trees" was created with ornaments on the trees featuring inspiring messages encouraging students to care for themselves and others. The theme of the Shoreline trees is "How I take care of myself." For the Ealy trees, the message is, "How I take care of others." Despite the cancellation, the project still included a ukulele and sing-along concert in the Ealy gym.





## CLOSE-UP GROUP VISITS WASHINGTON D.C.

The Whitehall Close-Up group of 24 students, led by Jen Dennis and assisted by Brian Milliron, took a trip to Washington D.C., on Nov. 9-15, 2024. The group visited many sites and landmarks, including the Washington Monument; the Supreme Court; National Holocaust Memorial Museum; George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate; Gerald R. Ford statue at the Capitol; 9/11 Pentagon Memorial; People's House Museum, a replica of the White House; changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; and much more.



## FROM THE HELM

### MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Whitehall Community,

As the holiday season approaches, I want to take a moment to share my gratitude for the progress our students have made so far this school year. Their growth and achievements are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, families, staff, and community.

While we know that things may not always be perfect, please know we are doing our very best to make this school year a meaningful and positive experience for every student. The feedback shared during our recent community nights has been invaluable, and I'm grateful for the time many of you took to voice your thoughts. Your input will help us continue to make improvements as we move forward together.

This season is a time for reflection, gratitude, and hope. I am truly thankful for the strength and support of the Whitehall community, and I look forward to the opportunities ahead as we work to build a brighter future for all our students.

On behalf of Whitehall District Schools, I wish you a joyful holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,  
CJ Van Wieren

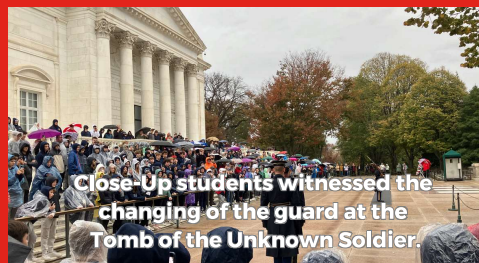


Whitehall Close-Up students pose for a group photo in front of the Supreme Court during their trip to Washington D.C., on Nov. 9-15, 2024.

Close-Up students pose for a group photo in front of the Washington Monument.



Close-Up students pose for a photo in front of the Gerald R. Ford statue at the Capitol.



Close-Up students witnessed the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.