

THE HAWKS' NEST

Valley Ridge Academy

Volume 3 Issue 8
May 2017

Message From the Principal

Valley Ridge Hawks,

It has been a wonderful year and I could not be prouder of all the hard work displayed by all of our students, Pre-K through 8th grade. The fact that this school year has been so successful speaks to the high character that is on continuous display by each one of them on a daily basis. Watching students develop into lifelong learners with a passion for education is such an enriching feeling and I get to see it in a new way every single day here at VRA. It can be seen throughout the school in such activities as the Kindergarten – 2nd grade STEAM projects, the elementary school gardens, as well as the band concerts or Spanish video projects by our middle schoolers. Students with a passion for learning and for demonstrating that learning in an authentic manner is at the crux of our mission here at Valley Ridge Academy.

With an ever growing school the size of Valley Ridge, it is so vital to have the support of the parents and community. I would like to thank all the members of the 2016-2017 PTO for their support in making VRA the best school environment for each student. I would especially like to recognize and thank the 2016-2017 PTO Board:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| President | Molly Molis |
| VP Membership | Tory Eulenfeld and Lauren Kersting |
| Treasurer | Maria Salomon |
| Secretary | Heather Shearon |
| VP Business Partners | Ann Denise Rubino |
| VP Volunteer Coordinators | Stephanie DeVincentis and Mindy Waters |
| VP Committees | Erika Tabeling |
| VP Fundraising | Heather Little |
| VP Pre K-2 | Angela Ray |
| VP 3-5 grades | Dave Scotti |
| VP Middle School | Kim Piety |
| Parliamentarian | Mollie Hazel |



Thank you all for your commitment and leadership to Valley Ridge Academy!

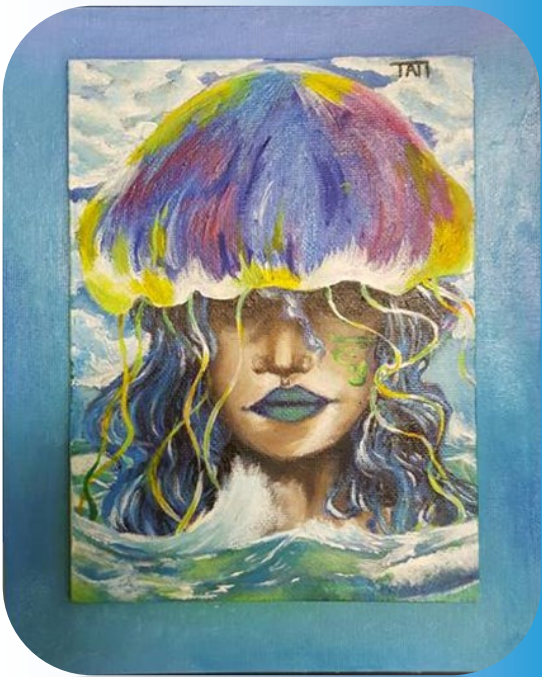


I would also like to thank all the members of the 2016-2017 School Advisory Council or SAC, under the leadership of 5th grade teacher Holly Southworth. The input provided from this team of dedicated parents, business partners, and VRA faculty and staff, is critical in helping to shape the direction of the school in the coming years. I would encourage anyone who is interested and able to join either or both the PTO and SAC for the 2017-2018 school year. The continued support of the community is vital for VRA reaching our goals!

I would like to introduce everyone to our new school mascot, Talon! Talon was named through a school wide vote with Ms. Zitiello's and Ms. Gangi's classes having won a popsicle party courtesy of Coach Hallett for selecting the winning name! Thank you Coach Hallett for your hard work in organizing the naming contest and thank you to our PTO for bringing Talon to VRA.

Congratulations to all of the students, Kindergarten through 8th grade who had their work selected for the Ponte Vedra Education Foundation Annual Art Show that was held on April 30th at the Sawgrass Marriott. Our two art teachers, Ms. Lauren Bayliss (Pre-k – 5) and Ms. Kathryn Frericks (6-8) helped to put on a wonderful showcase of the creative and talented artists here at VRA. Thank you both for your hard work and encouragement with your students.

A very special congratulations to 8th grader Tatiana Donnelly! Her art work titled “Immortal in My Mind” (right) was accepted into the Dali Museum Student Surrealist Art Exhibition 2017 “Surreal Identity”. The student exhibition runs from May 13- August 27.



Hats off to Aditya (8th) and Yash (5th) Singh who represented Valley Ridge at the National Championship Tournament of NAQT in Dallas, Texas on May 12th – 14th. With only two players, Valley Ridge placed 96th out of 160 national qualifying teams. Aditya was awarded an “All Star Award” for placing 6th as an individual out of 789 students! Well done to both students, you certainly represented Valley Ridge with pride!

For our rising 6th grade students, the VRA Stepping Up to Middle School camp will take place from July 24th – July 27th. This camp is a great opportunity for students to come and get familiar with all the changes they will experience as they move to middle school! For registration information, please see the VRA website.



Finally, I would like to encourage parents to continue to monitor the VRA website throughout the summer for information about the upcoming school year. We will post dates and times for all back to school events as soon as they are set. I hope that everyone has a relaxing and rejuvenating summer. I look forward to seeing each smiling face back happy and healthy in August!

Thank you for your continued support and Go Hawks!

Sandra McMandon

Stepping Up to Middle School

July 24-26 Monday-Wednesday 8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

This camp will focus on preparing our middle school students for success by helping rising 6th graders (and any new student) transition to the rigor and responsibilities of middle school.

Click for additional information and to sign up.

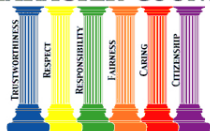
8th Grade End of the Year Events on Tuesday, May 23rd

8:45-9:45am: Award Ceremony in the Cafeteria
12:30: Chick-fil-a/Pizza lunch provided
Dance in the Gym
Yearbook Signing
Many more fun activities

Calendar of Events

- 5/23** 8th Grade End of the Year Award Ceremony 8:45-10:00 a.m. VRA Gym
- 5/23** 5th Grade Field Study to Wild Adventures
- 5/24** Last Day of School for Students!
- 8/10** Students Report to Class

CHARACTER COUNTS!



ST. JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The following students were chosen by their teachers in May for exemplifying All Pillars of Character

Samantha Akers
Liam Angst
Nathan Alounevong
Alexis Avshalumova
Aliya Baghalan
Lane Bickham
Morgan Booth
Brenna Beaulieu
Savannah Crane
Leah Czubati
Malia Davidson
Lucy Davis
Connor Dean
Ellie DiPatre
Lauren Edel
Amelia Evans
Jaedon Fiesta
Ty Gebauer
Carson Gunnell
Palmer Halman

Kimberly Hargrave
Isabelle Hill
Kyra Horn
Nina Howley
Avabelle Hubbard
Camdyn Jones
Nash Kersting
Braxton Kiernan
Addyson Knight
Mae Kruger
Scout Kuo
Olivia Lane
Neida Lahn
Sierra Lavallee
Elliott Lim
Lillian Lively
Christopher Lopez
Amalia Lopez-Esteban
Chloe Lustig
Payson Mahaven

Roni Masri
Phoebe Mills
Aidan Moloney
Chasper Pablo
Keri Pakenham
Simran Patel
Santina Paventi
Harper Picklesimer
Colin Ray
Grady Reynolds
Keeley Rissman
Christian Roberts
Trevor Ruiz
Sienna Sargent
Kira Sass
Milan Sharma
Connor Shelton
Malleesh Shums
Addison Shockey
Morgan Shreve

Isabel Sierra Otero
Marlana Smith
Ashwin Suresh
Lincoln Swindell
James Syme
Caroline Triplett
Myles Trecker
Jonathan Triplett
Tommy Tsoukias
Sydney Valdivia
Dylan VanCannon
Isabella Vitulli
Robert Vohs
Carolyn Wachala
Annabelle Wooten
Helena Wurtz
Reanne Zukowski



What an awesome experience for our VRA first graders to learn more about Character through story book characters. Each first grader was able to memorize lyrics to songs about



character and had the courage to perform in front of their peers as well as our VRA parents. We are so proud of our first graders for memorizing their lines and for trying their best!

(Treat others like you want them to treat you)



“Art Smart is an amazing program that brings art, history, and culture into the classroom.”



“I am a big advocate of artistic outlets for the kids and I think Art Smart is a wonderful program.”



THANK YOU

to the wonderful volunteers who helped make this program a success!

“I am very excited to be part of this program and look forward to having it in my classroom in the future years to come.”

Elementary School to Middle School Grade Transition Resources

As school counselors, we understand the importance of helping your student make a successful transition from elementary school to middle school. These resources align with the [American School Counselor Association Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success](#), which is the guiding framework for school counselors in St. Johns County. It is our hope that the following resources will answer some of your most frequently asked questions and concerns in making this transition. If you have further questions that are not answered by these resources, please contact your school counselor.

Success in Middle School

FloridaStudents.org Hundreds of tutorials and resources are available through this website, and since it was designed by CPALMS, the website of Florida Education Standards, it directly aligns with what students are learning in the classroom.

Take Control of Homework This article provides practical ways for students to manage their homework.

Help Your Disorganized Student This packet gives information on helping students develop skills to be organized at all levels.

Social/Emotional Well-Being

When Your Child Refuses to Go to School This article details students who have school phobia/refusal and helping students manage this anxiety.

Self-Efficacy: Helping Children Believe They Can Succeed This resource gives parents helpful hints on teaching children positive thoughts about themselves and their ability to achieve.

True Grit: The Best Measure of Success and How to Teach It This article lists numerous resources and references showing how your student's level of grit can be a predictor of future success.

Resilience Guide From the American Psychological Association, this guide provides an overview of teaching resilience skills to students of all levels.

Navigating Relationships

Navigating the move to middle school This article addresses how parents can help smooth the road to middle school. It addresses, transition anxieties, developmental changes, and provides parent resources.

Understanding Middle School Friendships This article addresses the complications with friendships in middle school

Helping a child with toxic friendship problems This article discusses the changes in middle school friendships. It discusses the issue of parent involvement in friendship problems

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/back-to-school/kids-biggest-middle-school-fears> This article discussed students' greatest fears. Practical information on combination locks, friendship issues and being different.

April Was Child Abuse Prevention Month

1 in 10 children are sexually abused before age 18. Help us to protect children by learning how to prevent sexual abuse by attending a **Stewards of Children Training**. For more information please click on the link... <http://csapc.org/>

<https://clear-give.com/egive3/index.cfm?page=event&LocID=295001&refresh=true>



FAMILY BINGO NIGHT



To benefit the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support Project. All proceeds will go to fund reward programs for students demonstrating positive behavior at VRA.



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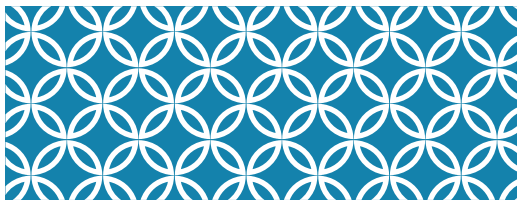
2017-2018 School Supplies

- Kindergarten Supply List
- 1st Grade Supply List
- 2nd Grade Supply List
- 3rd Grade Supply List
- 4th Grade Supply List
- 5th Grade Supply List
- VE Supply List
- MSVE Supply List
- Middle School Supply Lists will be shared at Orientation due to the varying needs of each class.



May is Better Speech and Hearing Month

[Click](#) for meaningful information about your voice.



MAY IS BETTER SPEECH AND HEARING MONTH

Holly Naves, MA, CCC/SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Valley Ridge Academy

Box Tops for Education

Valley Ridge just finished the second and final submission to the Box Tops program for this school year. For the second submission which included the months November through February we turned in 8425 Box Tops and Bonus Box Tops earning \$842.50. We started out strong in the beginning of the year submitting 18,000 Box Tops and Bonus Box Tops bringing the grand total Box Tops and Bonus Box Tops submitted to nearly 26,000 with an earning for this school year of \$2594.40. Please continue to clip the Box Tops all summer long and send them in once school starts again so we can hopefully meet our goal next year! Thank you to all the parents, students, staff and Box Tops committee for your diligence.



FIRST PLACE WINNER-LEWIS 3rd grade 1012 Box Tops

Receive the Box Tops Trophy to be displayed in the classroom for a month

Ice cream party with toppings or Popsicles

Name in the newsletter

Small prize

SECOND PLACE WINNER-HOGAN 4TH grade 548 Box Tops

Popsicles or popcorn party

Name in the newsletter

Small prize

THIRD PLACE WINNER-BEAULIEU 3rd grade 414 Box Tops

Popsicles or popcorn party

Name in the newsletter

Small prize

Questions, Comments, Concerns? Contact Jennifer Fineran at jennifer@beachfive.com



STEM Challenge

Jace Moon won a medal during the district wide STEM Fair at Palencia Elementary on Saturday May 13th.

Students were grouped and given a STEM challenge. They were timed and encouraged to problem solve. Students who completed the challenge within the specified time limits were recognized.



This 2017 Spring season was a fun time with a goal set in mind for each goal to be able to complete a 5K race at the end of the season. We are very proud of our 3rd-5th grade girls for their dedication to their personal and team goals. Thank you to the Girls On The Run coaches Ms. Eagleson, Mrs. Tupper, and Mrs. Kovacs.



Cultivating Kinder" gardeners"

The VRA Kindergarten classes have been working to maintain a garden. The garden provides countless cross-curricular learning opportunities and inspires curiosity. Students are encouraged to help maintain the garden beds by planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. They had opportunities to grow vegetables from seed, as well as prepare and eat them. In addition they were able to observe a number of caterpillars, ladybugs, silkworms, and butterflies in the garden.

Some of the lesson studies involving our garden this year include:

- Life cycle of a butterfly
- Parts of a plant- identifying and eating!
- Composting
- What do plants need to grow?
- Earthworms and worm composting
- Helpful bugs
- Insects

The Ponte Vedra Education Foundation provided funds for many of our gardening supplies. Supplies that were purchased using grant money include:

- Five tier stackable planter
- Seeds- marigolds, broccoli, cauliflower, herbs, carrots, lettuce, cucumber, radishes and more!
- Rain barrel
- Live caterpillars from Insect Lore
- Butterfly life cycle tangible figures
- Watering can
- Bench/storage box for gardening tools
- Soil
- Tomato plants
- Fertilizer



K-2 STEM Day



Our K-2 students had the opportunity to participate in a STEM Day on Wednesday, May 10th. The 1st grade students hosted and coached the kindergarten and 2nd grade students through 4 different challenges involving science, technology, engineering, and math. They predicted and experimented to see which paper column could hold the most books,

used the iPads to write swift codes guiding a character through different levels to collect gems, built bridges using only pennies, and examined completed math problems to find and fix mistakes. It was a great example of student-lead learning where the children had the chance to



work cooperatively in critical thinking and problem solving activities.



Early Act Members visit K9s for Warriors

By Chloe Dresback



On April 26th, 2017, 20 Early Act Club members visited the K9s for Warriors facility. They were greeted by Stephanie Yost. They introduced the backstory to the kids: they train dogs for veterans suffering post-traumatic stress. They then took them inside to the clubhouse, where the “warriors” stay to eat meals and relax outside of the “homes”. They watched a video about a veteran who wrote a letter to his service dog to say thank you. Stephanie introduced the kids to a playful in-training puppy named Luna and they got to pet her. After watching the video and asking other questions, they were whisked outside to a puppy pool shaped like a dog bone and some of the houses.



Stephanie took the kids inside one of the homes, which included four bedrooms (fit with beds, doggy beds, and a food and water bowl holder), a living room and a kitchen. One student asked a question about the selection process. They replied on how you can adopt through K9s for Warriors if the dog doesn't make the cut. They were

taken to the kennels, but didn't go inside them. They did say you have to be 18 and older without an adult and 16 with an adult, but there are other ways you can help.

The Early Act Club donated a hundred dollars and at the visit, donated towels, blankets, and Nylabones. Stephanie and Molly said you can donate towels, toy bones, and blankets too. You can follow them on Facebook and make money donations as well. You can also visit them on their website at www.k9sforwarriors.org/.



There are plenty of information, including a program called Cooking for K9s, so you can cook a home-cooked meal (from home) and bring it to the facility. There, they can serve it to the warriors when they stay.

The Early Act members learned about how important it is to give back to your community. They hope this will be the beginning of a long relationship with the K9 For Warriors organization.

Mrs. Klabacka's 3rd grade class with Mrs. Kovacs' 1st grade class studying the life of a baby chick



and talking about the needs of a baby chick.



Mrs. Klabacka's class was raising the baby chicks in their classroom where they were

able to invite first graders in to discover the hatching of the chicks and then journal about them. These are the classes at "Chick Recess".



CREEKS ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION

CAA is pleased to announce summer sports camps for our members. Additionally, we are pleased to partner with our High Schools on sports camps and fundraisers.

Creeks Baseball Club

Summer Camp 2017 Presented by Luke Marabell

Camp Overview

The Creeks Baseball Club Camp is designed to help you whether you're just a beginner in t-ball or a Travel baseball stand out, this camp is designed to teach the younger and older players the basic skills of the game and enhance the skills they've already obtained. This camp will provide quality instruction to all levels. We aim to make sure the kids have a great time playing the game they love through drill work, competitions, and games. This camp provides instruction in all aspects of the game including hitting, defense, base running, throwing, basic skills, and more!

Coaching Staff

Luke Marabell is in his 8th year as Head Coach of the Creekside High School Baseball team. He graduated from Jacksonville University where he played baseball from 1993-1995. While playing for Dolphins he made 2 NCAA Regional appearances and won a Sunbelt championship. Our baseball camp is led by a team of expert Coaches and Collegiate players. Our staff will insure your athlete will receive position-specific training and development through drills, practice sessions and situational game play. This Baseball Camp is not affiliated or associated with Creekside High School.

Dates and Times

May 30- June 2 (Tues-Friday)

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Rivertown Park

Creekside High School Youth Camps

CAA is pleased to partner with Creekside High School on several youth sports camps.

Please visit: <http://www-chs.stjohns.k12.fl.us/athletics/>

Bartram Trail High School Youth Camps

CAA is pleased to partner with Bartram Trail High School on several youth sports camps.

Please visit: <http://www-bths.stjohns.k12.fl.us/athletics/camps/>



As we near the end of the school year, I would like to remind you that your child's medication should be picked up from the clinic by **MAY 24, 2017**. School policy does not allow for medication to remain in the school over the summer. It will be important for you to make arrangements to pick up your child's medication since medications may not go home with the student. Any medication left in the clinic after **MAY 24, 2017** will be discarded according to policy.

Kim Drayton R.N.
904-547-4104
Kimberly.Drayton@stjohns.k12.fl.us

CLINIC NEWS

Address Change Requirements

In order to update your child's record, SJCS now requires you to complete a "Student Change of Address Form". Along with the completed and signed form, you must submit the following:

Mortgage Statement/Property Deed/Settlement Statement/Closing Documents

OR

Lease/Rental Agreement with names of occupants

(And, if applicable, a Homeowners Acknowledgement Form & Affidavit of Residency Form)

You must also provide TWO of the following documents:

Utility Bill, Property Tax Record, Telephone/Cell phone Statement, Home-owners/Renters Insurance Documents, Bank Statement/Paycheck Stub, Vehicle Registration, Credit Card Statement, Medical Insurance Statement—all showing the new address.

In addition, you must show a valid photo ID/drivers license.



Attention All 6th Graders!!

The T-dap immunization shot is required for all 7th graders and must be recorded on a Florida 680 form. As soon as your student receives this shot, the form can be brought to the front office, faxed (904-547-4095) or emailed to: (paige.lange@stjohns.k12.fl.us) even if the student is still in 6th grade. **Per district policy, all 7th grade students that do not have this shot will not be allowed to start school on August 10, 2017.** Please contact Paige Lange, Registrar at 904-547-4096 with any questions.



Featured Partners of the Month



**SOMETHING NEW
TO SMILE ABOUT!**

NEW ST. JOHNS LOCATION NOW OPEN!
Doctor's Village (Off Race Track Road)
111 Doctor's Village Drive, Ste 400 • St. Johns, FL 32259

ST. AUGUSTINE LOCATION
22 St. Johns Medical Park Dr. • St. Augustine, FL 32086

WILLIAM J. GLENOS, D.M.D., P.A. Board Certified Orthodontic Specialist For Children, Teens & Adults

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Orthodontist Dr. Jimmy Glenos is a native of Florida, growing up in Orlando. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Zoology with Honors at the [University of Florida](#). While in his undergraduate years, he became very interested in dentistry while volunteering at Shands Teaching Hospital at the College of Dentistry in Gainesville. Dr. Glenos then attended the [University of Florida School of Dentistry](#), receiving a Doctor of Dental Medicine, and was one of the first few students to graduate ear-

ly—in less than four years. During this time, he developed a love for orthodontics for children, teens, and adults while working in the department of Orthodontics. He then went on to practice family dentistry in St. Augustine and was selected to attend the two-year post-doctoral program in orthodontics at the University of Louisville School of Dentistry, earning certification as a specialist in orthodontics. Upon completion, Dr. Glenos returned to St. Augustine to establish the first full-time orthodontic office, and since then, has enjoyed creating beautiful smiles for many local dentists, their families and staff, and many adults and children in the community. Dr. Glenos is a board-certified orthodontist for children, teens, and adults, which means he has achieved the highest possible level of recognition as an orthodontic specialist. It requires the orthodontist to undergo an additional series of high-level examinations, both written and oral, and present clinical cases to expert examiners of the board during a clinical exam. Only about 20% of all orthodontists ever achieve this designation. Choosing a board-certified orthodontist helps ensure they are committed to the highest standards of treatment and exemplifies a practitioner's commitment to continue to keep abreast of the latest advances and excellence in patient care.

Orthodontist William Glenos was recently named among “Top Orthodontists in North Florida” by *Jacksonville Magazine*. The recommendation names him as having reached the highest level of ethical standards and achievement.

Dr. William Glenos also enjoys volunteering his services at the Wildflower Clinic in St. Augustine. He and his wife Karen, have two children and a cat named Kitty. They are members of Flagler Memorial Presbyterian Church where they have both served in various leadership positions. Orthodontist Glenos is a supporter and member of many local clubs and organizations and is involved in numerous team and club sponsorships for the local schools and the community. Besides anything to do with orthodontics, Dr. Glenos' other interests include travel and spending time with Karen, family and friends, fishing, hunting, water skiing, kiteboarding, and attempting to fix anything that breaks.



**RAINBOW
PEDIATRIC
CENTER** **904-223-9100**

Prasanthi Reddy
Board Certified Pediatrician



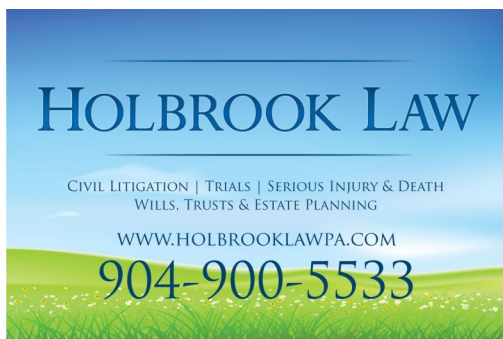
Why did you choose to work at Rainbow Pediatric Center? It chose me! I opened Rainbow Pediatrics in 2004 with hopes of creating a medical practice where relationships are built.

What is your area of expertise? I am a certified in Pediatrics and Travel medicine. I am also a certified asthma educator. I love counseling families who are traveling abroad. I also enjoy developmental pediatrics.

The very talented staff at Rainbow Pediatrics....



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