



# THE HAWKS NEST

February 2021

VALLEY RIDGE ACADEMY

## Letter from our Principal

**G**ood afternoon VRA Families,

Spring weather has arrived and with that comes the opportunity for our students to take Spring Pictures. Order forms for these optional photos were sent home with your child already, and if needed, the Front Office can provide additional copies. Pictures will be taken on March 9<sup>th</sup> throughout the day and for our distance learners who would like to participate, a Signup Genius was sent out. For more information regarding Spring Pictures, please contact Front Office at 904-547-4090.

Please take a few moments to complete our 2020/2021 VRA School Advisory Council Needs Assessment survey by clicking the link below. The survey results will be used to gain feedback and seek input to develop our future school improvement plan. The survey consists of 13 questions and seeks feedback on a variety of school priorities. The survey is now open and will close Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

<https://surveys.stjohns.k12.fl.us/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=81L27625>

High School registration has begun for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Nease registration packets were sent home on February 25<sup>th</sup> with your child. These forms must be signed, dated, and brought to your child's registration meeting with the Nease Guidance Counselor. Parents are invited to attend their child's registration virtually. Dates, times, and instructions on attending virtually are included in your child's registration packet.

Have a wonderful weekend!

*Sandra McMandon*



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## Cellphone Policy Reminder

**P**arents/Guardians, please remind students:



**UPON DISMISSAL, ALL  
CELLPHONES/ELECTRONICS  
MUST REMAIN OFF AND STORED UNTIL  
STUDENTS ARE OFF SCHOOL PROPERTY.  
INCLUDING OUTDOOR AREAS  
WITHIN THE SCHOOL GATES.**

## Mask Reminder

**P**arents/Guardians/Caregivers,  
Please remember students  
coming into school must always  
wear a mask.

**UPON DISMISSAL, FACE  
COVERINGS MUST STAY ON  
– EVEN OUTDOORS –  
UNTIL STUDENTS ARE OFF  
SCHOOL PROPERTY.**



A useful tip is to put 5 masks in your students' backpacks on Sunday night or Monday morning, so they are prepared and remember their masks for the week.

# Valley Ridge Reader

**VRA** Parents and Caregivers,

We invite you to explore the wonderful monthly publication from our Media Center,

## THE VALLEY RIDGE READER

Follow this link to discover the January/February issue:

<https://www.smores.com/wxen>



## Sunshine State Young Readers Awards

The SSYRA Program is a statewide reading motivational program for students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the SSYRA Program is to encourage students to read independently for personal satisfaction, based on interest rather than reading level.

Each year students are challenged to read books from the Sunshine State Reader list, for a total of 15 books.

VRA rewards readers in grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> with Brag Tags for each book read. Students who read all 15 books are declared Winners of the SSRYA Awards.

These awesome students will enjoy ice cream treats from:



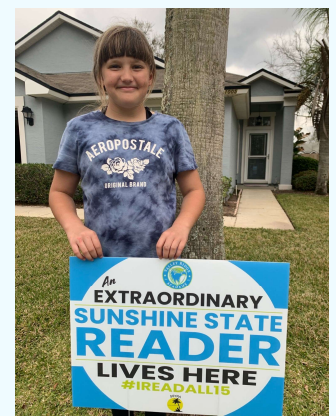
They will also receive the ultimate Brag Tag to add to their collection:

**I READ THEM ALL!**



For the period of Jan/Feb,  
*Congratulations go to:*

**CALEB BUCKLEY AND SARA DRESBACK**



# Character Counts! Celebrations



**K-8** classrooms/homerooms celebrated Character Counts! on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>. One student from each class was nominated for demonstrating the pillar of



**Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Show empathy • Express gratitude • Forgive others and show mercy • Help people in need • Be charitable and altruistic**

Each nominee received a certificate, VRA magnet, and a bag full of fun rewards!

*We are so proud of our kids of character!*

## **Kindergarten –**

Eljona Gilaj, Shane Spellman, Eli White, Bradley Townsend, Knox Gonzalez-Pagan, Hudson McGowan, Caylee Youmans, and Ryan Gopal.

## **First grade –**

Dylan Noboa, Skylar Mooney, DJ Schallick, Paisley Gebhardt, Ella Busch, Miles Bedwell, and Leo Folladori.

## **Second grade -**

Zoey Nguyen, Joey Fusco, Liam Fanning, Jan Japzon, Jameson Bayliss, Ashley Jezik, Annabelle Auslander, and Juliet Aspen.

## **Third grade –**

Makenzie Marvel, William Sadlo, Lucas Klabacka, Mason Zveare, Kendal Anderson, Lexi Carlson, and Julianna Sullivan.

## **Fourth grade –**

Alyssa Payne, Annabelle Power, Navin Sridhar, Elmin Didovic, Harper Picklesimer, Bryce Kotchkowski, and Braxton Hewlett.

## **Fifth grade –**

Evelina Susak, Ruby Schantz, Caleb Marvel, Presleigh Gottlieb, Brayden Edele, MaryCathryn Pollard, and Mason Dunn.

## **Middle School –**

Caroline Castellon, Michaela Peinsipp, Madison Marrero, Valentina Garcia, Myliegh Hart, Trevor Ruiz, Reese Heineman, Isabel Bostic, Sayan Bhattacharya, Bella Kimball, Marco Vasquez, Sydney Minx, Holly Plott, Jordyn Ammons, Lily Craig, Abigail Napoles, Lucas Cunningham, Devin Fugiel, Lauren Higgins, Katie Grehl, and Eli Burgin.

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VRA celebrates the pillar of  
**TRUSTWORTHINESS**  
during the month of March.



# VRA Students of Character

*We applaud you!*





# VRA Students of Character

Well done, Hawks!



# VRA Students of Character



## Band Concerts

### Beginning Band

VRA had a great socially-distanced Beginning Band concert on Saturday February 9<sup>th</sup>. Sixth graders and beginner players demonstrated their acquired skills as a Band and charmed the audience with solos and small ensemble performances.



### Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Jazz Band

Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders delighted their audience with three additional performances on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. The programs included popular music pieces and some student selections.

*Congratulations to Mr. Burk  
and these musically talented  
Hawks!*



### Upcoming Events

3/23 @ 5:30 pm – 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Concert.

5/22 @ 10:00 am – Spring Concert.

6/3 @ 6:00 pm – Band Awards.



# Middle School Art Room

If your 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade art student has been coming home covered in clay dust, thank you for your understanding!



Our year long Middle School Art classes have been hard at work finishing our ceramics unit. We pulled the pottery wheels out and have been "throwing bowls" for weeks now. Check out some of our Fruit bowls created by 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.



To see **MORE GREAT VRA STUDENT ART** please follow me on Instagram #VRApicassos and make sure you have your students **ARTSONIA** account activated - you can get this from their Art Teacher.



This is the world's largest online Student Art Gallery and a great place to see your student's virtual art portfolio and purchase thoughtful, unique, and custom gifts for family and friends with your child's artwork professionally printed on them.

Proceeds from the sales of these items come directly back to the VRA Arts Department to help purchase much needed art supplies for this school year.

Thank you for supporting the ARTS at VRA!

Stay Well!

*Lauren F. Bayliss*

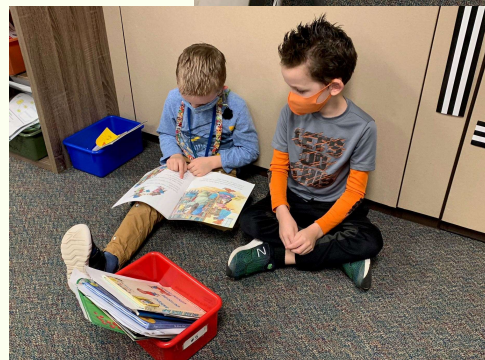
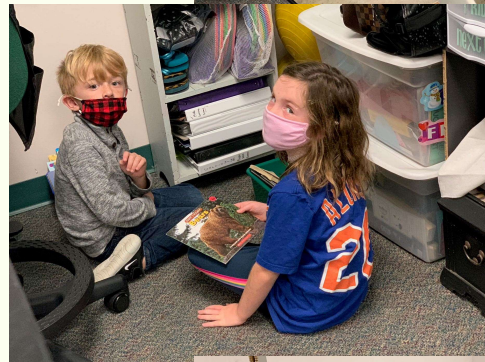
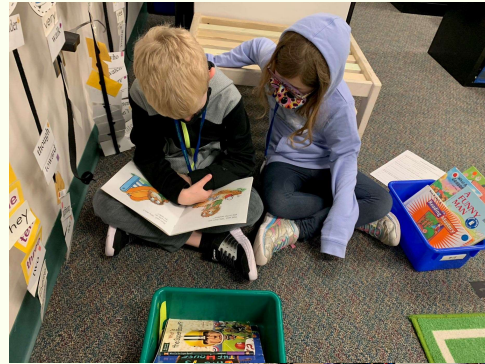
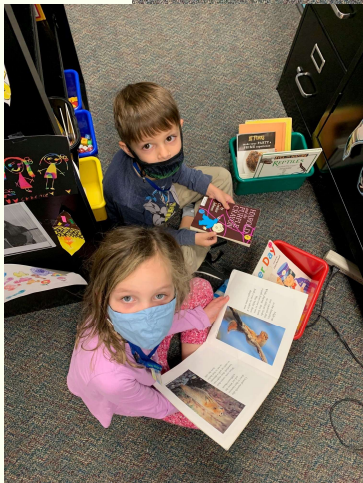
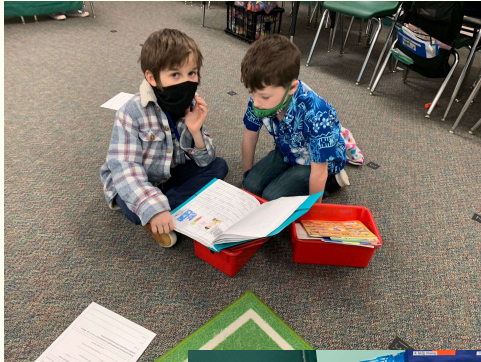
*The healing power of Art - Creative activities can relieve stress, aid communication, and help arrest cognitive decline.*



# Fun at School – Ft. Ms. Kovacs' Class

## Reading Literacy Week – Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>.

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! is an annual, week-long event aimed at raising awareness about the significance of literacy skills. The celebration encourages Florida students and families to make reading a part of their daily routine. This year's theme, "Find Yourself in a Book," is about connecting with a book and taking a journey with its characters.



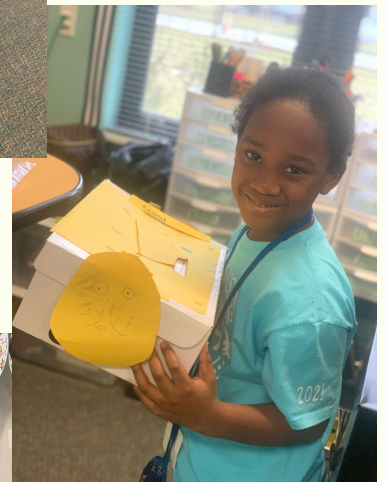
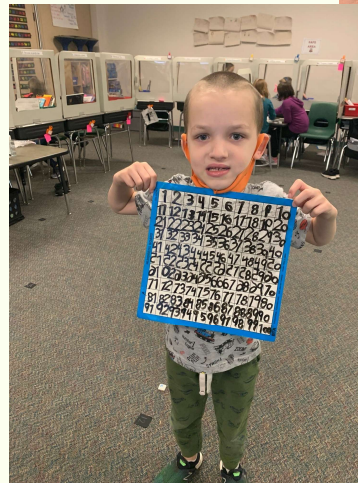


# Fun at School – Ft. Ms. Kovacs' Class

## 100<sup>th</sup> Day of School

The 100<sup>th</sup> day of school is an exciting time in the elementary classroom! The 100<sup>th</sup> day marks a special opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate major milestones in students' academic achievement.

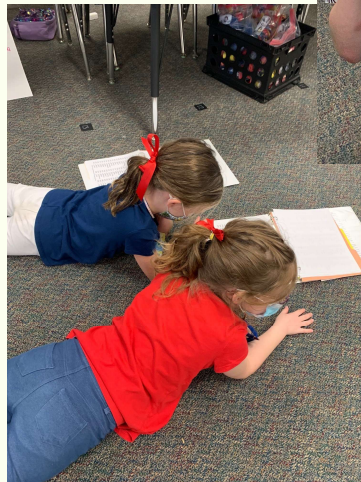
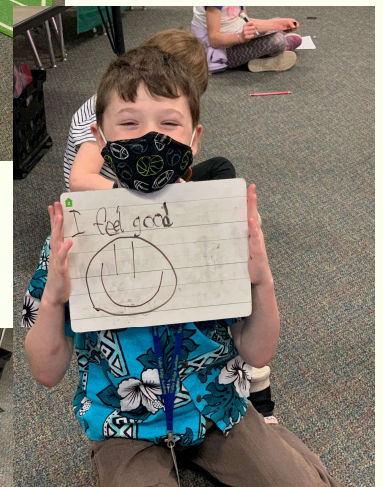
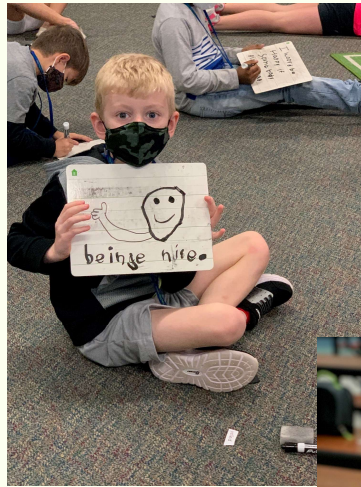
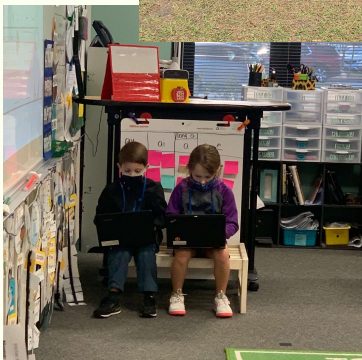
Students might be challenged to write 100 words, count to 100, sing songs about 100, or write 100 reasons they love their school! It is common to see students and teachers dress in costume to pretend they are 100 years old! The countdown, along with the day itself, provides a great opportunity for teaching math, and many other cross-curricular activities.





# Fun at School – Ft. Ms. Kovacs' Class

## Learning and Fun



# FEMA National Youth Preparedness Council

## NATIONAL YOUTH PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL APPLICATION PERIOD NOW OPEN

Do you know a young leader with a passion for disaster preparedness and community service?

Teens from communities across the Southeast may now apply for FEMA's national Youth Preparedness Council (YPC). Young leaders who apply and are accepted will have the opportunity to share their perspectives, feedback and opinions on disaster preparedness with FEMA and grow their leadership skills.

Students in 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grade may apply online at:

[community.fema.gov/applytoYPC](https://community.fema.gov/applytoYPC)

To apply, youth must submit a completed written or video application, two letters of recommendation, academic records and a list of extracurricular activities. All applications and supporting materials must be received by 11:59 p.m. PT, on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Students who apply for the national Youth Preparedness Council also will be considered for Region IV's Youth Preparedness Council.

Teens are encouraged to share their academic achievements, future goals, ways they have positively influenced their communities, and any leadership experiences. Council members are selected based on their passion for preparedness and helping others,

community involvement, and their aptitude for working as part of a team and as a leader. New council members will be announced in May.

To learn more about the YPC and the application process, visit:

[ready.gov/kids/youth-preparedness-council](https://ready.gov/kids/youth-preparedness-council)

### Contact Us:

If you have any questions, please contact:

fema-r4-stakeholder-  
relations@fema.dhs.gov

### Follow Us:

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FEMA Blog on [fema.gov](https://fema.gov), @FEMA or @FEMAEspañol on Twitter, FEMA or FEMA Español on Facebook, @FEMA on Instagram, and via FEMA YouTube channel.

Also, follow Acting Administrator Bob Fenton on Twitter @FEMA\_Fenton.

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### Mission:

Helping people before, during, and after disasters.



# FEMA