



THE HAWKS NEST

October 2020

VALLEY RIDGE ACADEMY

Letter from our Principal

VRA Families,

The 2020-2021 school year has seen so many changes on so many fronts. The implementation of COVID safety protocols and procedures has altered the look and the routine running of the school. The inclusion of distance learning has shifted the way students and teachers interact and engage in instruction. However, through it all, the Valley Ridge Academy community has approached each change with a positive attitude and willingness to excel.

Change is inevitable and can often cause discomfort as it forces us out of our comfort zones. Stepping into the unknown is frightening because we do not always know where we will land. Change is also an opportunity for growth and exploration. Everyday we speak to the students about a Growth Mindset. About approaching obstacles with a positive attitude and willingness to try, try again and to always learn from any setbacks. While I have always believed in the Growth Mindset philosophy, it is gratifying to see it occurring firsthand in the students, teachers, parents, and community each day.

It has taken everyone in the community doing their part to ensure that this school year has been successful. There is no doubt that it will continue to take everyone coming together to see that the remainder of the school year is as amazing as first quarter!

So, while this year may look and feel slightly different in many aspects, and the traditions that we are so accustomed to each year such as the Fun Run, Book Fair, Character Counts! Celebrations, Hawk Shop or sporting events may look and



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Letter from our Principal (cont.)

feel different, our focus and goal has not changed. We continue to strive to create a safe and nurturing environment that inspires and challenges students while developing lifelong learners through collaboration, citizenship, creativity, and reflection.

Go Hawks!

Sandra McMandon

Staff Appreciation

We want to thank our wonderful PTO members and school community for treating our staff this month to a variety of yummy snacks. It has been very much appreciated by all.



Thank you for all you Do!

Character Counts! Celebrations

As part of VRA's Character Counts! Program one pillar of character is featured every month. During the month of September VRA highlighted the pillar of **FAIRNESS**:



FAIRNESS



TRUSTWORTHINESS



RESPONSIBILITY



RESPECT



CARING



CITIZENSHIP

Teachers, parents, volunteers and students discussed the meaning of this important value:

Play by the rules • Take turns and share • Be open-minded; listen to others • Don't take advantage of others • Don't blame others carelessly • Treat all people fairly

VRA was proud to celebrate elementary and middle school students nominated by their teachers for exemplifying the virtue of **FAIRNESS**

Kindergarten –

Makenna Pflieger, Christian DeBlasio, Adeline Napiontek, Hannah Wierda, Hannah Aspen, Vincent McCann Jr., Caleb Magiera, and Michael Hatcher

First grade –

Luke Lewis, Jackson Shanks, Ellie Ishee, Olivia Vega, Rocco Auslander, Kinley Klabacka, and Lilly Lyons

Second grade -

John Garro , Addison Kelly, Mason Rosa, Leo Hill, Brooke Dorow, Ellis Mckenzie, Kaleb Fanning, and Avery Price

Third grade –

Paige Rueppell , Addison Paster, Abigail Klose, Arianna Cox , Henry Young, Addyson Knight, and Jack Balger

Fourth grade –

Tenley Gammon, Brady Weber, Reese Peterson, Jay Folladori, Brooke Simoneau, Kieran Cruz, and Giovanni Caffey

Fifth grade –

Mallory Vasquez, Mia Lee Chong, Sierra Whitlow, Matthew Ishee, Allison Carrino, Jeffery Cant, and Ella Olsen

Middle School –

Daniel Reyes, Kara Yeaton , Harmony Anderson, Keyarra Worthen, Chloe deMotive, William Johnson, Reagan Manning, Ariel Brown , Brittin Haines , Samuel Thornton, Landon Gebauer, , 67, Julia Procacci, Dylan Kinsey , Abigail Jones, Sophie Eagan , Cailey Price, Sim Deligero Jr., and Jax Drayton

VRA Students of Character

We are proud of you!



VRA Students of Character

Well done Hawks!



VRA Students of Character



Congratulations!



Blessings in a Backpack



is a non-profit organization that helps feed school children in the United States who are at risk of going hungry on the weekends. Its mission is to mobilize communities, individuals, and resources to provide food on the weekends for elementary and middle school children across America.

Blessings in a Backpack is partnering with Valley Ridge Academy to provide snacks to our students. We at VRA would like to extend the opportunity for any school age children in your home to receive a weekly snack to supplement what you already provide.

This school year snacks will be delivered to the student/s' classroom every two weeks.

If you would like to be considered for this program, please email or call Mrs. Schoolfield in Guidance at Diana.Schoolfield@stjohns.k12.fl.us/(904) 547-4111 letting us know the following information:

- Student name/s
- Student grade/s
- Homeroom teacher/s name

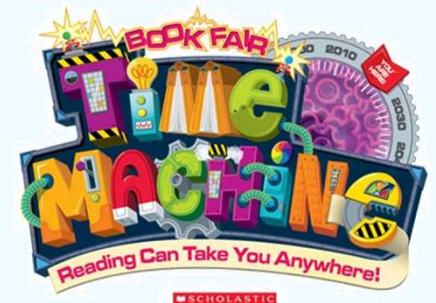
Even if your child has received snacks in the past we must know if you want him/her to continue to receive them.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to support our students!

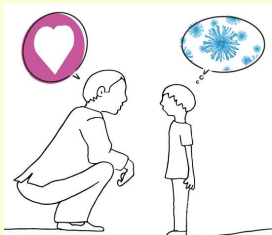
Book Fair

Our Book Fair is online from **October 5th-18th**. Support our school and help your child discover new books, favorite characters, complete series, and more! You'll love the fun new option to shop for Book Fair exclusives directly from the interactive booklist and enjoy free shipping on book-only purchases over \$25.

It's a new school year... let's instill a new-found love of reading!



Talking to kids about COVID-19

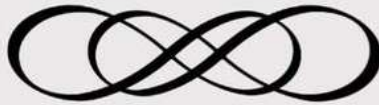


A PARENT RESOURCE

Visit the following page for more information:

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/mental-health/covid-19/>

FDLRS Parent Webinar Series



The FDLRS Network receives its priorities from the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services and works in collaboration with districts and families to best provide quality programs and services at the local level in an effort to reach the indicators in BEESS Strategic Plan supporting the success of ALL learners.

FDLRS also supports Florida's Goals of: Higher Student Achievement, Skilled Workforce and Economic Development, Seamless Articulation and Maximum Access and Quality Efficient Services.

FDLRS Administration Staff

Support Personnel: Wendy Beasley and Ashley Futch

Coordinators: Sara Gaines, Shannon McCosker, Susan Saunders, Kim Seth and Tracy Umpenhour

Administrator: Mary Ann Ahearn

WEBSITE: www.fdlrs.org and www.fl-pda.org

Fridays with FDLRS A Parent Webinar Series

The FDLRS Administration Project and Associate Centers Network are proud to offer a **series of parent webinars** to take place virtually over the 2020-2021 school year.

- August 21st – Keeping Your Kids Safe on the Web
- September 18th – Understanding ESE: An Overview
- October 16th – Accommodations
- November 20th – Basic Behavior Principles for Success
- December 18th – Social Skills: Teaching Replacement Behaviors
- January 15th – Components of a Quality IEP
- February 19th – Transition for Secondary
- March 19th – Technology Tools for Beginners
- April 16th – How Understanding Learning Styles Helps When Parenting
- May 21st – Resources for Parents and Families

These topics have been selected in response to requests for information, needs assessment results and priority areas identified from the ESE Parent Survey conducted by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS).

The **90-minute webinars** are conducted during lunch hours, from **11:30AM – 1:00PM EST** on a designated Friday for parents/family/professionals. All sessions will be recorded and posted on the www.fdlrs.org website for access at your convenience at a later date.

These webinars are **free of charge and open to all parents/families/professionals of working with children with disabilities or those with unique learning needs**. We ask that you register at least 2 weeks prior to the event. The URL will be sent to you in an email the day prior to the webinar. **Registration for all webinars is located at:**

<http://www.fdlrs.org/free-parent-webinars-fridays-fdlrs>

You may register for one or all the webinars at your earliest convenience.

We look forward to “seeing” you soon! If you have any questions please email ahearnm@nefec.org or call 386-312-2265.

UNF Physics Photo Contest



Submission Period: Sept. 1st through Oct. 23rd

Finals on Facebook: Nov. 2nd through Nov. 13th

Winners announced: Nov. 16th

Submit to: Dr. Jason T. Haraldsen, j.t.haraldsen@unf.edu

Subject line: 2020 UNF Photo Contest

This competition is on an honor system. Therefore, it is expected that all participants will act fairly and not tamper with votes (this includes purchasing of votes and reactions). If a photo is suspected of this, then it is possible that their photo may be disqualified. Votes should be from real accounts.

UNF Physics reserves the rights to post and use photos on Facebook and other social media outlets, as well as in other media outreach for the department and university. Photographs must be owned by the participant, original, and cannot be found online. By submitting a photo, you are agreeing to these terms.

UNF Physics Photo Contest (cont.)

2020 UNF Physics Photo Contest

Submit your pictures today to the University of North Florida Physics Photo Contest. To compete in the contest, you must submit your photo to j.t.haraldsen@unf.edu by October 23rd. Your photo must demonstrate/encompass/involve a concept of physics. These can be in any category of picture (natural or contrived). Animated and/or photoshopped pictures are NOT allowed. However, photos that are a combination of multiple photos are acceptable.

All votes for the top photos will be verified. Fake or robot votes from fake accounts will be disqualified. Along with your photo, you must include a title and a small description (up to 100 words) of the physical concept involved in the photograph, your name and school/institution, and corresponding email address. Furthermore, photographs must be owned by the participant, original, and cannot be found online.

Who can enter?

This contest is open to any and all students in the greater Jacksonville area (Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, and surrounding counties). This includes college, high school, middle school, and elementary school students. Middle and elementary school participants should have their parents submit their entry or have a class entry through their teacher.

How will judging work?

All entries will be evaluated by a committee of UNF Physics Faculty. From the original entries, the UNF Physics Faculty will choose the top 10 photos to go to the final round. In the final round, the photos will be uploaded to the UNF Physics Facebook Page. The photos will then be voted on by the fans and followers of the UNF Physics Facebook Page. The only metric for votes is how many likes or reactions the photo gets! In the event of a tie, the photo with the largest reach on Facebook will win.

What is the takeaway?

There will be a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards. The awards will be a \$50, \$25, and \$10 gift card for Amazon.com, respectively.