

OCTOBER 2023 | ISSUE 19

# ROCK RIDGE REPORTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF ROCK RIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



EDUCATION TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION

## LAURENTIAN GRADES PREK-6

### FAIRY TALE ZIP LINE CHALLENGE

Second grade students from Mrs. Carey's class used critical thinking and scientific reasoning skills, as well as problem solving and teamwork to construct a zip line using a limited amount of materials to transport a load. This STEM engineering project from Ms. Hall's STEAM class was based on the Little Red Hen folktale.



## CAROLE'S BENCH OF HOPE

The Laurentian community and families honored Carole Kostich, a beloved colleague to the staff, mentor to the students, and friend to all, who passed away suddenly last year, in a dedication ceremony late August. Students and staff introduced "Buddy Benches" to the playground. These benches were purchased with money raised by Laurentian fourth grade students.

Last year, the fourth graders worked together for a month, staying in at lunch recess, to make bracelets to be sold to purchase a Buddy Bench. Thanks to generous donations, the students raised over \$3,000, which allowed them to purchase not one, not two, but three benches. The benches will be placed at the Laurentian School, the Parkview Elementary in Virginia, and at the new North Star building which will be opening next fall.

These benches will be used to help kids recognize when others feel alone, don't have anyone to play with, or just need some lifting up. When others see one of their friends or any student on the bench, they have the opportunity to show some support, kindness, and friendship.

Carole stood for many things, but most importantly, she hoped that all kids would feel accepted and included. With these benches, Carole will live on through each hero who comes alive as a friend for all.



THE ONLY WAY TO  
HAVE A FRIEND IS  
TO BE ONE.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

## GOIN' ON A LEAF HUNT

The Laurentian fourth grade students explored the woods near the school looking for leaves to make hedgehogs!



# STARBASE DULUTH STEM CAMP

During the week of September 25-29, the Laurentian Elementary fifth graders traveled to the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth each day for STARBASE Minnesota. While there, the students were immersed in STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) lessons and hands-on activities. The students' mission was to plan a successful colony on Mars. Listed below are some of the activities they did:

- \*explored energy sources that could be used on Mars (solar powered circuits; wind turbines),
- \*used coding to navigate a rover on the Mars colony to clear rocks,
- \*used the Engineering Design Process to develop a Mars lander to safely land an "eggstronaut" on Mars,
- \*explored how mass and force are related when launching a rocket,
- \*learned about STEM careers and collected trading cards that tell about the job and the person - many of whom live and work in Minnesota, and
- \*students finished the week with a "launch" ceremony.

The fifth graders were sorry to see the week come to an end. Many expressed interest in returning to STARBASE during the summer to attend STARBASE Summer STEM Camp.



Problem solving as a team - calculating the angle of the rover's turn and how many wheel rotations to move to clear the rocks off the Mars colony site.



Creating a color coded path for our mini robots to travel.



Calculating the rate of the mini robot. Lots of math being used at STARBASE!



Using wind turbines to measure wind energy needed for our Mars colony.

# PARKVIEW

## GRADES PREK-2

### SIGNS, SIGNS, EVERYWHERE!

The kindergartners have been learning how to “read” words through the many SIGNS they encounter in their world:

Stop, Yield, School, Playground, Railroad Crossing, Speed Limit, Bump, Detour, Walk, Don't Walk, One Way, Danger, No Parking, Enter, Exit, Open, Closed. . . Parkview, Target, McDonalds, Super One, Pizza Hut, Caribou, MN Twins, Vikings, Wild and (our favorite) Rock Ridge Wolverines!!!!

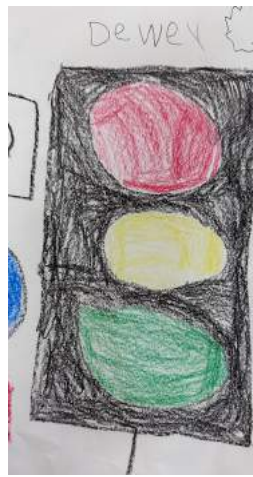
The students have had discussions about the sounds and letters we find in those “sign words” - beginning, middle and end.

They've read books, watched videos and learned songs about signs.

Each class friend created a special sign to share with a study-buddy group, describing what the sign says, its meaning and when/where/why one would find a sign like this.

Apologies to the kindergarten parents/guardians as a “peaceful drive” in the car may be a thing of the past for awhile as the kids excitedly “READ” what they are seeing out of their windows!!! 😊

All the SIGNS are pointing to a new and exciting 2023-24 school year ahead!



## LEARNING LESSONS IN 1ST GRADE

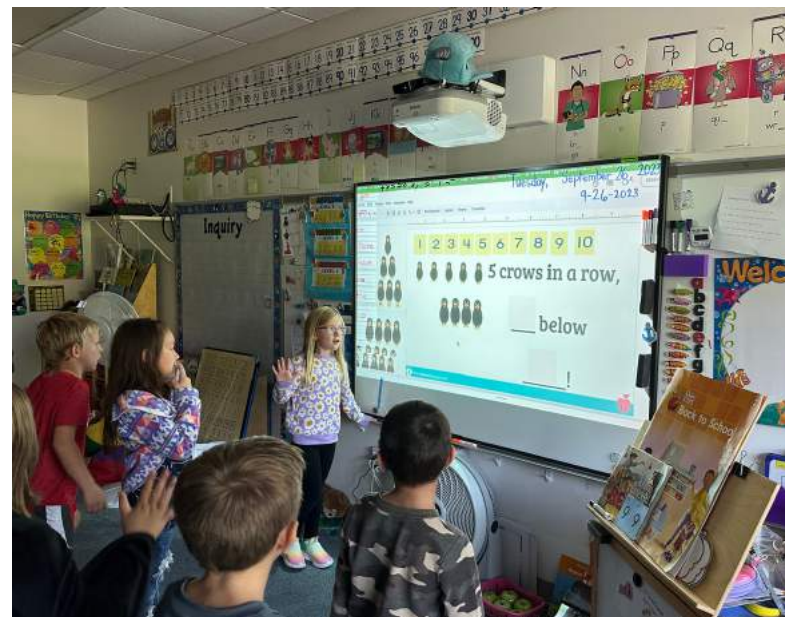
Mrs. Cochems' first grade class enjoyed their first unit of inquiry - exploring what a mathematician is! Students were quite pleased with themselves when they discovered that they are mathematicians, too!

The new math curriculum is running full force! *Math Expressions* is teaching the students to be critical thinkers! Students are being leaders throughout the lesson by being accountable for some of the teaching! The children love leading “5 crows in a row and 2 below”, building partners with their number strips, using their secret code cards, math mountains, and fingersets! On Johnny Apple Seed Day, they even used real apples to make story problems! The greeting that morning was, “You are the apple of our eye!”

To explore what it might feel like when struggles arise in math, because all mathematicians struggle, the class collaborated to build card houses and completed the “Sammy the Worm Lifesaver” experiment. Students grasped onto the concept that we never steal someone else's struggle. We learn best through struggle and problem solving, not by being told the answer.

First grade Literacy Block is rocking! Students are using the Orton Gillingham strategies daily to help them become fluent readers. In Mrs. Cochems' classroom, students write their sight words in red, making the words tactile by using a bumpy screen. They spell words tapping down our arm and write words using Pound and Tap. Writing in the sand helps students to remember their sounds, along with Vowel Tents! Students made special book boxes to store all of their decodable books inside at home. First graders will have so much fun reading for practice and enjoyment at home!





# NORTH STAR

## GRADES 3-6

### LEADERS IN THE MAKING

Sixth grade students can take part in the Leadership Program at North Star Elementary. Being a 6th Grade Leader is not only a valuable experience for students, but also plays a crucial role in fostering a positive school environment. Here are several reasons highlighting the importance of these roles:

**Leadership Development:** Serving as a safety patrol or taking on responsibilities like cleaning up the lunchroom provides students with opportunities to develop leadership skills. They learn how to take initiative, be responsible, and set a positive example for their peers.

**Safety and Order:** Safety patrols play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of students both inside and outside the school. They help manage traffic and maintain order, which is essential for the well-being of everyone in the school community.

**Sense of Responsibility:** Volunteering to help teaches students the importance of taking responsibility for their environment. It instills a sense of ownership and pride in keeping the school clean and orderly.

**Teamwork and Collaboration:** Both roles require working with other students and school staff. This helps students develop teamwork and collaboration skills, which are essential in various aspects of life.

**Character Building:** These roles help build character by promoting values such as responsibility, respect, and a strong work ethic. Students learn to prioritize the greater good of the school community over personal interests.

In summary, students enrolled in the 6th Grade Leadership Program not only benefit the school community, but also provide students with valuable life experiences and skills that will serve them well throughout their lives. It fosters responsibility, leadership, teamwork, and a sense of community that can have a lasting, positive impact.



# RRHS

## GRADES 7-12

### A GREAT START TO THE NEW YEAR FROM PRINCIPAL MARK WINTER

The opening of a new school is something you only get to do once. Rock Ridge wanted our first week to be truly welcoming for all students and staff. To help everyone get to know the space and each other, the Culture and Climate Committee worked to create a very intentional first week of school which included tours, activities, and even a pep fest where everyone had the chance to learn the new school song. By the end of the week, teachers were able to get a feel for different ways to use their new space; students got to know more about their classmates, began focusing on their own strengths, and learned the roles of staff within the school. By the second week of school, we were moving at full speed with students and staff ready to jump into academic learning. Our first year is going to be an awesome one!

The open house day before school started set the tone for the first week. Over 90% of 7th - 11th grade students attended, most with a family member at their side. With this kind support, we will be successful. It was awesome to see excited and awe-struck faces as many entered the building for the first time. We hope that you continue to have that excitement and return to the building often.

### CLIMATE SUMMIT

*Written by the 9th Grade Honors Science Class*

We are the 9th grade Rock Ridge Youth Climate Summit organizers. We are of the firm belief that younger generations should be informed and involved in discussions of climate and ways that it impacts us as a community.

With this summit we are hoping to educate the youth of the Iron Range about climate change and the way it affects the environment around us.



### NOT YOUR TYPICAL HIGH SCHOOL CAREER LESSON

Rock Ridge High School will be dominating the field and taking the lead when it comes to exposing high school students to careers. It's not because of what we have or what we do - it's who we are - we are fiercely united and we are unstoppable!

While we are still in the organizational stage, 22 agencies have committed to showcase careers in public safety, law enforcement, corrections, and the military at our first ever career expo in October. The community engagement has been incredible! For agencies, it's a great way to build relationships and connect with future career seekers. For our students it's a great way to be introduced to careers they know little about. We're asking agencies to send representatives who are eager and confident to engage with junior high and high school students. Ideally, students will be able to see demonstrations or participate in interactive presentations. Agencies will have the opportunity to inspire and awe 1200 youth who are exploring possible careers. If that means representatives are repelling from the building, simulating a water rescue, demonstrating with sonar equipment in the pool, or arriving in a helicopter, we are going to let it happen.



Students may see a Taser demonstration or have their fingerprints taken. We are providing the space and the target audience, but it's up to the agencies to captivate the students with an experience.

Future expos may showcase careers in STEAM, health care, mining and manufacturing, arts and communication, business and entrepreneurship, agriculture, transportation, and logistics. The possibilities are endless if businesses are willing to deliver. And we think they are. Stakeholders are encouraged to contact Jill Oja, Rock Ridge High School Career Counselor, to discuss possibilities.

## BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Foster's Building Construction class continues their work on the Rock Ridge High School campus. The project this fall is the JV softball field dugouts.



## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH DAY

On Sept. 21st, a group of 9th grade students participated in Youth Mental Health Day. The Minnesota Discovery Center partnered with several community partners to bring a Mental Health event to Northeastern Minnesota. The purpose of the event is to bring 9th graders together throughout the region to learn about well-being, stressors, coping skills. At the event, 9th graders built community and had the opportunity to learn about community support and resources in the area.



Sponsored by  
**ROCK RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL**

Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup>  
9:00am – 3:00pm  
Bus Parked in Parking Lot

Sign up online at [www.mbc.org/searchdrives](http://www.mbc.org/searchdrives) (Sponsor Code 5086)  
Or contact Ms. Clennon to sign up!  
[jill.clennon@rrps.org](mailto:jill.clennon@rrps.org)

Please remember to eat, drink, and bring your ID with your name and photo.  
Appointments are preferred however walk-ins will be welcomed if space permits. \*Full mailing for complete COVID-19 safety protocols.

Save lives! Complete your health history questionnaire online on the day of your donation at [mbc.org/donate](http://mbc.org/donate)



888.GIVE.BLD - mbc.org #memorialbdctry



2023 RRHS Homecoming Royal Court: (Back L-R) Donald Boyer, Luke Hecimovich, Pier Povoledo, Travis Bird, Ian Luecken. (Front L-R) Sydney Spelts, Mylee Young, Kelsey Kramer, Ashley Dahl, Emily Pontinen.





# Community Education Classes

October 2023



## YOUTH CLASSES

**Safe on My Own \$10**

**3:00 - 4:30 PM**

Monday, Oct. 9 North Star Gr. 3-6  
Tuesday, Oct. 10 Laurentian Gr. 3-6

**Halloween Crafts \$15**

**3:00 - 4:30 PM**

Thursday, Oct. 12 North Star Gr. 3-6  
Tuesday, Oct. 17 Parkview Gr. K-2  
Tuesday, Oct. 24 Laurentian Gr. K-2  
Thursday, Oct. 26 Laurentian Gr. 3-6

**Abstract Painting \$15**

**3:00 - 4:30 PM**

Monday, Oct. 16 Laurentian Gr. 3-6

**Sugar Skulls Painting \$20**

**3:00 - 4:30 PM**

Monday, Oct. 23 Laurentian Gr. 3-4  
Tuesday, Oct. 24 Laurentian Gr. 5-6

## ADULT CLASSES

**Financial Foundation Seminar (FREE)**

Tuesday, Oct. 3 RRHS | 6:00 - 7:00 PM

**Estate & Nursing Home Planning (Free)**

Monday, Oct. 9 RRHS | 5:30 - 7:00 PM

**Electric Vehicle 101 \$10**

Tuesday, Oct. 10 RRHS | 6:00 - 7:00 PM

**Moose Painting \$32**

Monday, Oct. 16 North Star  
5:00 - 7:00 PM

**Defensive Driving \$15**

Monday, Oct. 23 RRHS | 4:00 - 8:00 PM

**Noodles with Claudia \$20**

Tuesday, Oct. 24 Messiah Lutheran Church | 6:00 - 7:30 PM

**For more information and to sign up online go to:**

**[rrps.cr3.rschooltoday.com](http://rrps.cr3.rschooltoday.com)**

# Laurentian Elementary Costume Closet

Do you have extra costumes laying around that you no longer have use for? Rock Ridge Laurentian PTA is once again collecting gently used or new costumes, all sizes of kids through adult.

Costumes can be sent to the school or dropped off in at the office September 25<sup>th</sup>-October 12<sup>th</sup>, in a bag labeled "PTA."

**Please join us on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, from 3:00-6:00pm in the Laurentian Elementary Community Room (glass room to the left of the commons area) to shop for a costume! Everyone is welcome to participate; availability of sizes may vary depending upon donations received. Costumes are free of charge and donations are greatly appreciated.**

Our goal is to have costumes available for all students who wish to participate in Halloween festivities. Thank you for helping us pay it forward to our school community!