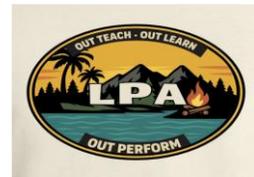


# LPA NEWS



NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 2 FEBRUARY 2026

LIBERTY PINES ACADEMY

Hello LPA Families!

February filled our campus with hearts, pink, and red as we celebrated a month focused on kindness and connection. It was wonderful to see our students and staff sharing encouragement and showing appreciation for one another throughout the month.

Now we are quickly leaping into March, with *Green Eggs and Ham*, St. Patrick's Day fun, and plenty of excitement ahead! There is so much energy on campus this time of year, and it is always special to see our classrooms engaged in creative learning experiences tied to reading and seasonal traditions.

I am especially excited for my first Field Days with our elementary students. Watching our youngest Wolves compete, collaborate, and cheer each other on is sure to be a highlight of the month!

In just a few short days, we will also begin Spring Break from March 13–20. We hope this time provides your family with opportunities to rest, recharge, and enjoy time together before we head into the final stretch of the school year.

This month, we are also proud to celebrate our Outstanding Volunteer of the Year, **Kaitlyn Wildnor**. Her dedication, generosity, and countless hours of service make a meaningful difference for our students and staff. We are incredibly grateful for the way she supports our school community.

Thank you for continuing to make **Liberty Pines Academy** such a vibrant and supportive place for students to learn and grow.

Go Wolves!  
JP Swope



These cold days have brought many coats and sweatshirts our way!!

Please have your kids stop by lost and found to pick-up any clothes they have left behind. Anything left in lost and found after Friday, March 13th will be donated.



Congratulations Coach Forrester and the BHS Boys Soccer Team – State Champions!



# WOLF NEWS

## Study Tips for Testing!

By Navya Sadanaveni and Anupama Deshmukh

Worried about testing season? Here are some useful tips to help you feel confident and ready for testing!

- Preparing yourself

Avoid distractions - Make sure that you're in a comfortable and quiet place to study. This way, your brain is focused and can study the best.

Break down topics - Break down your subjects and divide each subject into a couple important topics. Then, you can focus on one topic at a time and not overwhelm yourself with too much information.

- During testing

Scan test first - Scan the test to get a sense of what's on the test, as well as reading the questions and directions completely before answering.

Check your work - If you have the extra time, go back to check your answers. Make sure you change answers only if you are sure that your new answer is correct.

Overall, don't stress over testing or studying. Do your best and give it your all, and you're sure to do amazing!



LIBERTY PINES		LPA PM3 Testing Calendar					
April 2026		March 30 <sup>th</sup> - April 10 <sup>th</sup> B.E.S.T. Writing (grades 4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> )					
		April 13 <sup>th</sup> - May 29 <sup>th</sup> FAST STAR (grades K-2 <sup>nd</sup> )					
		<a href="#">How to Access Family Portal</a>					
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
March 30	March 31	April 1	2	3	4	5	
Middle Grades Group A B.E.S.T. Writing (m/s adjusted bell schedule)	Middle Grades Group B B.E.S.T. Writing (m/s adjusted bell schedule)		5 <sup>th</sup> grade B.E.S.T. Writing (adjusted resource)	No School			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	4 <sup>th</sup> grade B.E.S.T. Writing (adjusted resource)	B.E.S.T. Writing makeups can take place anytime 3/31 - 4/10					
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade FAST STAR Reading		Kindergarten FAST STAR Early Literacy	1 <sup>st</sup> grade FAST STAR Reading	Makeups: K-2 <sup>nd</sup> STAR			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade FAST STAR Math		Kindergarten FAST STAR Math	1 <sup>st</sup> grade FAST STAR Math	Makeups: K-2 <sup>nd</sup> STAR			
27	28	29	30	See page 3 for Middle School Group A and Group B teacher names. Students will test with their 1 <sup>st</sup> period/homeroom teacher.			
Makeups: K-2 <sup>nd</sup> STAR	Makeups: K-2 <sup>nd</sup> STAR						



## Super Speller!!!

Congratulations to Jahnavi Doneparthi who placed 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Regional Spelling Bee, February 27, at LaVilla Middle School in Jacksonville. Competition was fierce as it took 27 rounds to declare a winner. This is the farthest and LPA student has ever gone in the Scripps Spelling Bee Contests!

## Super Scientist

Congratulations to Lily Klipa who recently won the \$50 junior award from the St. Johns Medical Alliance for an outstanding biomedical science project.



## Second Grade Field Trip!

By: Anupama Deshmukh

The second graders went on a field trip to St. Augustine Wild Reserve last week. They toured with the animals at the reserve. "We saw a peacock in the front!" says Alana Fowler from Ms. Higgs' class. The kids saw many animals such as tigers, bears, jaguars, bobcats, lions, and cougars. They learned facts about the animals from their tour guide, and they saw some animals up close! The kids had a lot of fun at the Wild Reserve.





## Kindergarten Dental Visit!

By Sylvia Thomas and Spoorthi Sindhaval

Recently Kindergarten had their annual Dental Visit! Kids had so much fun learning more about hygiene and how dentists help with maintaining cleanliness. They learned about the “2” rule, which is to brush your teeth two times per day for two minutes and visit the dentist two times a year! The visit was followed by fun and creative activities as students discovered the amazing world of hygiene! The main thing the kids took away from the visit was the only dentist approved candy is chocolate because it doesn't stick to their teeth. Overall, students had a blast learning more about dentists and being clean.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	K-2 Field day	4	5	6 11am Family Fun Day
8	9	10	3-5 Field Day	11	12 Third quarter ends	13 Teacher planning day- Student holiday
15	16 Spring break- Student/ Teacher Holiday	17 Spring break- Student/ Teacher Holiday	18 Spring break- Student/ Teacher Holiday	19 Spring break- Student/ Teacher Holiday	20 Spring break- Student/ Teacher Holiday	21
22	23 Classes resume for students	24	25	26 Report cards issued gam PTO General Meeting	27	28
29	30	31				

## Crushing Cans with Physical Science!



By: Brielle Coppola and Julia Radecki

This month Mrs. Cassidy’s Physical Science classes did an experiment using ideal gas laws to deepen their understanding. The experiment was conducted on Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Cassidy filled the empty cans with room temperature water and placed it on the hot plates. Once the cans started steaming, she dumped the water out in the sink. She quickly flipped the can upside down into ice water. The quick temperature change caused the cans to crush and make a loud “pop” sound. Two weeks before the experiment, she had asked her students to bring in as many empty cans as possible! Approximately, all 4 of her Physical Science classes combined collected 200 cans. The class period with the most cans was 5<sup>th</sup> period!

Every class has got to watch Mrs. Cassidy take the heated cans and submerge them into ice water one by one. The students say, “It was a very cool experiment, that they enjoyed very much.” Mrs. Cassidy does this experiment every year and it is by far one of her favorites, even though she gets soaked by the end of the day!

## Math Counts

By Ella Madelly and Ava Harper

Math Counts is a club where students come together in the morning before school and practice math in preparation for the annual MathCounts Competitions. Their meetings are every Tuesday and Friday. They participate in a district competition every year! It is an opportunity for students to increase their math knowledge while still having fun.



Congratulations to all mathletes for their outstanding performance on Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at the University of North Florida! Out of 325 participants, Kian Zhang earned 10<sup>th</sup> place and Arjun Tirumalasetti earned 13<sup>th</sup>. Cade Commaford placed in the top 25%. LPA overall achieved 5<sup>th</sup> place out of 32 schools!

## Fun Stuff by Ariana Ali

Joke: \*Long joke for the shortest month\*

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were going camping. They pitched their tent under the stars and went to sleep. Sometime in the middle of the night Holmes woke Watson up and said: "Watson, look up at the stars, and tell me what you see." Watson replied: "I see millions and millions of stars."

Holmes said: "and what do you deduce from that?"

Watson replied: "Well, if there are millions of stars, and if even a few of those have planets, it's quite likely there are some planets like Earth out there. And if there are a few planets like Earth out there, there might also be life."

And Holmes said: "Watson, you idiot, it means that somebody stole our tent."

Riddle:

Last month's riddle was: What is  $\frac{3}{7}$  chicken,  $\frac{2}{3}$  cat, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  goat?

The answer is: Chicago

Weird Fact:

Percy Spencer, a researcher for the Raytheon Manufacturing Company, got the idea to invent the microwave when he noticed that electromagnetic waves had melted the candy bar in his pocket. However, since he was working at Raytheon at the time, the company owned the patent rights for it. In fact, Spencer only received two dollars for it!

## Spectacular Student Council

By: Anupama Deshmukh and Navya Sadanaveni

Student council is holding a Bag It Up Drive for Goodwill on Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026. Donations of clothing and household goods will be accepted that morning in the bus and carpool line. There will be a friendly competition between classes while collecting donations.

All rising 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be able to run for student council this spring. Some advice given by Ashley Windness, president of student council: "Make a lot of posters and put them in good places." Ella Madelly explains what it takes to be in student council. "It takes commitment and you should be coming to the meetings and being responsible when it comes to doing work. Also, be creative. Your ideas should be original."



### Wolf Warehouse

Dear Families,  
We are in need of items for our new school store!  
Please scan this code to donate to our store.  
Thank you!



## Liberty Pines FCA Club!

By: Ellie Thorpe and Bree Coppola

In 1954 the Fellowship of Christian Athletes was founded in hopes to change the world of coaches and athletes to live for Christ. Soon the organization was not just for athletes, but for people of all backgrounds. This semester Elizabeth Klipa decided to share the gospel to our school through starting our own FCA. Sponsoring our newly founded bible studies are Deputy Barnhart, Mr. Buckley, Ms. Campbell and Ms. Corp.

Deputy Barnhart explained, "Some of my favorite parts of FCA club is walking into each meeting and seeing new faces coming to Christ. Helping the students grow their relationship with Christ or even introduce them to him really brings me joy,". The Deputy loves breaking out into groups and elaborating on the study and hearing what the kids have to say. Hearing prayer requests and helping students overcome problems through prayer really brings the officer joy as well.

Mr. Buckley said, "I really love seeing my students, old ones too, and creating a fellowship with them through Jesus. Teaching the kids as much as I can about the Word makes me so excited and grateful that I get this opportunity,". Alongside all the other teachers helping with FCA Mr. Buckley is always eager too to share the gospel with his fellow adults to the younger generation.

If you are interested in joining our Fellowship of Christian Athletes, please see one of our sponsors and they will give you a form to sign. After signing up you can expect amazing things through the power of the Christian community. We would love to see you there!



# LPA SPOTLIGHTS!

## Staff Spotlight

By Nora Maas and Hannah MacFadzean

This month's first staff spotlight is Ms. Mo, our Executive Secretary to the Principal; she has been with us at LPA for three years. Ms. Mo is always looking for challenges and is sadly moving on to Silverleaf. Although we all will miss her, she will be making important differences at the new school. Over Ms. Mo's three years her favorite memories were "watching the Liberty Parade, the elementary art wall and Halloween parade". Her favorite part of working at LPA was helping everyone and making their day little better.

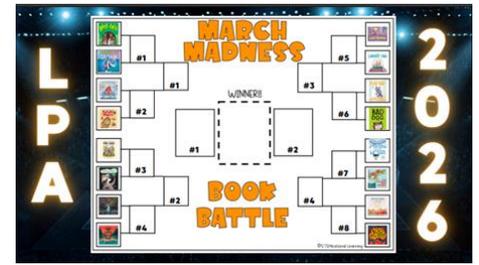
Our second staff spotlight, Ms. Lyon, has been working at LPA for two years. Her favorite part of LPA has been inspiring all her eighth-grade interns. Ms. Lyon loves seeing them grow throughout the year. Her favorite memory though was the Liberty Parade. Ms. Lyon said, "I love seeing all the veterans come to our school and get celebrated." Out of school, Ms. Lyon loves to spend time with her kids.

## Student Spotlights

By: Mallori York and Brielle Coppola

Emerson Parrish is a kindergartener in Mrs. Galats' class. She loves school because she gets to see her friends. Her favorite resource is art because she loves painting. Emerson's favorite thing she's learned this year is 2D and 3D shapes. Her favorite field trip was the Three Bears play because she loved Goldilocks's hair.

Landon Mitchell is an eighth grader and it's his second year here at LPA. He came from Pacetti Bay Middle School. His favorite part of this year was D.C. because he got to spend time with his friends and seeing the monuments. Landon is going to Beachside High School. He is excited about not having to wake up early and having more freedom. His favorite class is science with Ms. Cassidy. He loves that he has so many friends in that class and he loves the way she teaches.



## Media Matters

By: Ariana Ali and Sarah Cheng

Currently in the Media Center, there are many exciting things going on! March Madness is officially underway! Sixteen books are put in a bracket where students can vote for their favorites. Every day, two books are put head-to-head against each other until there is only one left. Mrs. Rice reads the options to elementary students while middle school students can vote online for whichever book they like better. This will last through spring break!

Recently, the Reading Olympics concluded. Mrs. Rice got the idea from the Winter Olympics that were happening at the same time. To participate, students could get a punch card from the library. Then, they had to read for twenty minutes each day for over ten days. If they turned in their punch cards, the kids would each get a prize, and a single winner would get a grand prize. She said that the Reading Olympics would give students a chance to feel like Olympians while improving their reading skills, and it did! Overall, 380 students got punch cards, and 81 were turned in, complete. The winner was Charlotte Young, a 4<sup>th</sup> grader in Mrs. Lowry's class.



# MORE LPA SPOTLIGHTS!



## Teacher Spotlight

By Alice Poynton, Elena Heavener, and Lucy Collins

Ms. Balcita is one of our lovely middle school ELA teachers. She has been working here for 6 years. She loves teaching her students and helping them grow. A fun fact about her is she worked for a publishing company in New York before becoming a teacher! That must have been a really cool experience! She looks forward to meeting and greeting her new students every year. Her favorite part about teaching ELA is reading novels with her students. We are so lucky to have Ms. Balcita teaching at our school!



Moving on to our elementary spotlight, we have Mrs. Osborne. She is a fourth-grade teacher and has been teaching here for a couple of years! She enjoys teaching her students and watching them advance. An interesting trait she has is being a good hockey goalie! She gets very excited to introduce herself to new students. Her favorite part of teaching is “Obviously teaching these wonderful students!” We are very privileged to see her every day!



Another special shout of appreciation to amazing Ms. Swartz who keeps our cafeteria running smoothly and keeps all so well-fed!

## Congratulations to our February Character Counts Winners!

By: Collins Haney

This month's Character Counts pillar is caring! The students who won this pillar demonstrate great

- Empathy
- Kindness
- Compassion



# NEWS FROM THE ARTS DEPARTMENT

## Buoyant Band!

By Navya Sadanaveni and Ashweja Mechineni

Jazz Lab recently performed for our fifth graders to give them a look at what band would be like in middle school. Bhargav Ragavendra in Mrs. Hay's class says that he wants to join band in sixth grade after watching the performance. He says that he would want to play the guitar. Jeremy Kandikatla in Mrs. Wiggins' class says that he too would want to be in band, and he would play the piano. On the other hand, Brayden Sciarratta in seventh grade says he joined band because he had always wanted to play in band. He also says that he thinks that fifth graders should definitely join band in middle school because of the fun experiences and the amazing friends you'll make.



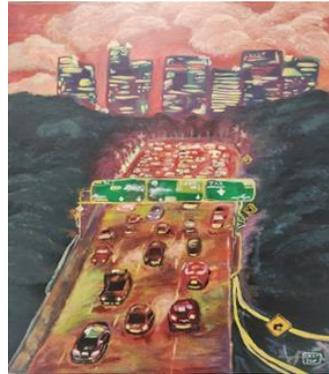
## Awesome Artists

By: Ashweja Mechineni & Sarah Cheng

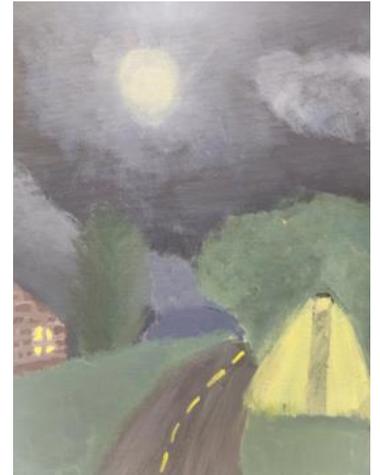
Five awesome artists from LPA have submitted their artwork for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual All County Middle School Art Show. All the girls got to pick their own ideas to paint, and they did a wonderful job. The award ceremony is on March 6<sup>th</sup> from 5-8 PM at the St. Augustine Art Association. These are their beautiful artworks.



Sofia Iordanov



Gianna Guzman



Lydia Oum



Zoey Bowers



Lily Helgath

## ELEMENTARY MUSIC

### MONTHLY SNAPSHOT

It's a fun and engaging month in the music room! Kindergarten and 1st grade students are exploring high and low sounds, discovering how instrument size affects pitch—larger instruments make lower sounds, while smaller instruments create higher sounds.

Our 2nd and 3rd graders are learning about Chinese culture through music and movement as they learn about Lunar New Year.

In 4th grade, students are building their recorder skills by learning new notes: high C, high D, and low E.

Meanwhile, 5th graders are continuing their bucket drumming unit, practicing rhythm patterns including 16th notes and exploring how different striking techniques create a variety of sounds.

Musically Yours,  
Mrs. Snyder

### SPOTLIGHT

Second and third graders brought Lunar New Year to life through a beautiful fan dance, exploring Chinese culture, movement, and music in a joyful, hands-on way.

### UPCOMING MUSIC EVENTS

5/7 Moonlight Howlers Spring Musical  
5/21 Third Grade Spring Musical

These artworks will be on display at the STAAA (22 Marine Street, Saint Augustine, FL, 32084) from March 6<sup>th</sup> through March 30<sup>th</sup>.

**LIBERTY PINES ACADEMY  
DRAMA DEPARTMENT**

  
**SHREK**  
**THE MUSICAL**

Based on the DreamWorks Animation Motion Picture and the book by William Steig  
Book and Lyrics by: David Lindsay Averb  
Music by: Jeanine Tesori  
Originally Produced on Broadway by DreamWorks Theatricals and Neal Street Productions  
Original Production Directed by Jason Moore and Rob Ashford  
"I'm a Believer" by Neil Diamond

**DIRECTED BY:  
JILL B. HERKEL**

**April 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**6:00 PM**

**Tickets \$10**

Presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI), [www.MTIShows.com](http://www.MTIShows.com)

Moonlight Howlers' present  
**LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!**

Bring your popcorn and come join us for a movie style musical performance!

**MAY 7<sup>TH</sup> @ 5:00PM**

*Ticket recommendation of \$5 per person*

directed by Elizabeth Snyder

A look ahead at what spring performances are coming up to finish the year in our amazing arts programs!!!

**3RD GRADE PRESENTS**  
**THE WORLD OF DR SEUSS**

**THURSDAY, MAY 21<sup>ST</sup>**

**5PM** Group A  
Lewis, Schaefer, Midani, Hickey, Kramer

**6PM** Group B  
Hoekstra, Mengel, Moree, Yerves, Ford

**\$1 TICKET PER PERSON DONATION**

ALL PROCEEDS GO TOWARDS SUPPLIES FOR OUR ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM.

**DIRECTED BY: MRS. ELIZABETH SNYDER**

# SPORTS NEWS!!!



## Boys Basketball

By Gianna Zardetto and Spoorthi Sindhaval

After a long season together, our Boys' Basketball team season closes to an end, growing as a team and gaining new bonds. The team now looks ahead to the playoffs, taking place March 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup>.

Jack McInerny, a player on the Boys' Basketball team, has been playing basketball for around 2.5 years. Jack was inspired to pursue the sport when he was playing casually with his friends and ended up finding it really fun. His favorite memory during the season was when the team won against Hallowes Cove. Jack's favorite part about playing basketball is when he gets to go to an offensive position. Jack's most challenging game was when they played against Patriot Oaks because "they are a skilled team."



## Girls Basketball

By: Sylvia Thomas and Gianna Zardetto

The 2025-26 Girls Basketball season is slowly coming to an end as we are approaching the playoffs. The team currently holds a hard-fought record of 4 wins and 5 losses. Ms. Lutts, the team's head coach, said how, when coaching, she really enjoys seeing how the girls improve throughout the season and watching them gain more confidence on the court. We're excited to see how they carry that confidence into their playoff games.

We interviewed one of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade players, Molly Bragg. She only started playing team basketball this year but has lots of experience playing with her siblings. She said her favorite part about being on the team is getting to be with her friends and learning to be better at basketball.



Congratulations to Coach Mark Forrester and the Beachside Boys Soccer Team – State Champs! So proud of our Coach and all the LPA alumnae on the team!!!

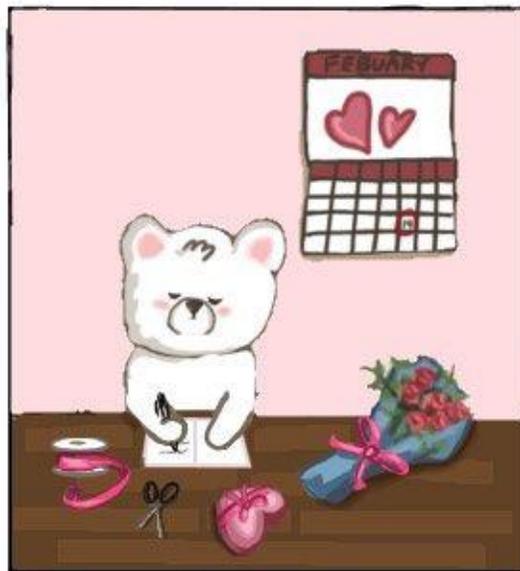
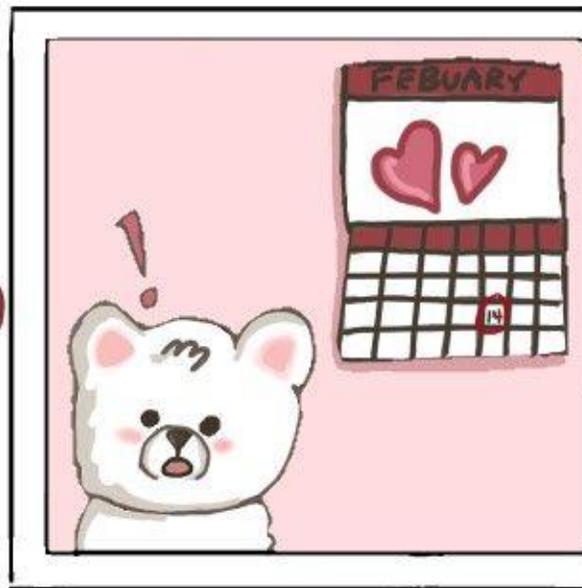


Fortify FL FortifyFL is a suspicious activity reporting tool that allows students or parents to instantly relay information to appropriate law enforcement agencies and school officials. By accessing FortifyFL at <https://getfortifyfl.com> or <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/blog/fortifyfl-app/>, individuals can provide a description of the threat, share pics and videos and optionally submit their contact information. FortifyFL was created and funded by the 2018 Florida Legislature as part of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act. The Office of Attorney General, Department of Education and Florida Department of Law Enforcement coordinated its development and rollout.



# A VALENTINE'S GIFT

By: Sarah Cheng



HAPPY ♥  
VALENTINE'S DAY

*the End*



# 2026 BAG IT UP DONATION DRIVE

## LIBERTY PINES ACADEMY: APRIL 2ND

### Support Our School's Donation Drive with North Florida Goodwill!

We're partnering with Goodwill Industries of North Florida to make a positive impact in our community. The more donations we collect, the more we contribute to Goodwill's mission of removing barriers to employment through training, education, and career opportunities, while also earning funds for our school!

#### How You Can Help:

Donate items: Encourage your child to gather donations from family, friends, & neighbors.

#### Incentives & Rewards:

Fill 4-9 Duros: \$500  
Fill 10-14 Duros: \$1,500  
Fill 15+ Duros: \$2,500

#### **The More You Donate, The More We Earn!**

Every donation not only supports Goodwill's mission to remove barriers to employment through training, education, and career opportunities, but it also helps our school earn funds for important programs and resources.

#### **Help Us Spread the Word:**

Share the drive with family and friends through social media, email, and text.

Together, we can make a big impact.

**Thank you for your generous support!**



**GOODWILL**  
INDUSTRIES OF NORTH FLORIDA

[goodwillnorthfl.org](http://goodwillnorthfl.org)



Don't forget to purchase your amazing 2025 – 2026 yearbook today!! Yearbooks would make a great gift to give yourself in the spring, but you should order them now while supplies last, so you don't forget. The LPA Code is #381802

😊 at [www.buytheyearbook.com](http://www.buytheyearbook.com)

Just \$40 – we are one of the few schools that has never raised our prices!

# LPA PTO PRESENTS FAMILY FUN DAY

FREE ADMISSION,  
FREE GAMES!

FOOD TRUCKS  
AVAILABLE FOR  
PURCHASE!

INFLATABLES | GAMES | MUSIC | FACE PAINTING | BALLOON ANIMALS

SATURDAY  
MARCH 7

11AM TO 3PM  
LPA BASEBALL FIELD

ALL MINORS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT -  
NO DROP OFFS PLEASE!

# PTO NEWSLETTER

## PTO INFORMATION



Interested in learning how you can get more involved with our PTO and our school? Please come to the next PTO meeting March 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in the cafeteria. We will have open positions available and would LOVE to see some new faces on our board or in volunteer roles.

## PTO HIGHLIGHTS

### Sunshine of the month

Thank you to Lauren Geary and Rachael Bunnell for planning and executing the Souperbowl! The teachers and staff loved it!!



### Upcoming PTO events

Penny Wars Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> - 27th

PTO Meeting Feb. 19th

Family Fun Day- March 7th

### OCEAN ADVENTURE PENNY WARS Coming Soon!

Make a SPLASH with your change  
February 23 - 27!

All proceeds support the PTA/PTO

### REMINDERS



Birthday marquee announcements are now available for purchase at [www.lpapto.com](http://www.lpapto.com).

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

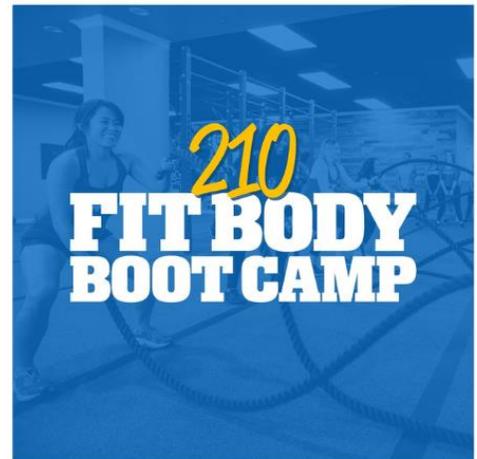
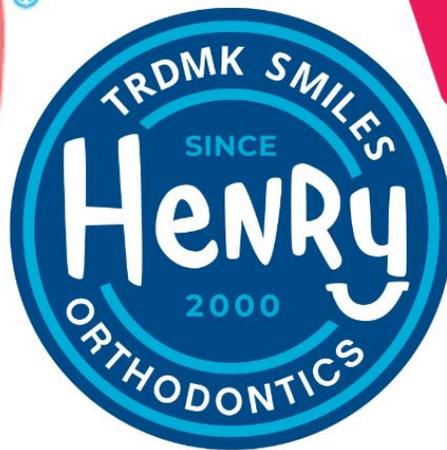
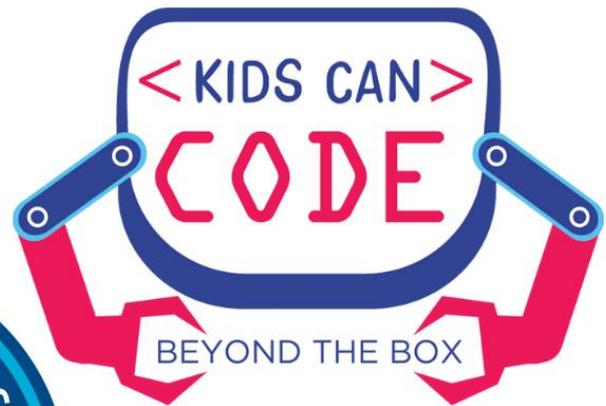
"In a world where you can be anything, be kind."





# LIBERTY PINES ACADEMY PTO Business Partner Spotlight

## PLATINUM WOLVES





# LIBERTY PINES ACADEMY PTO

## Business Partner Spotlight

December

### SILVER WOLVES



The youngest members of the pack begin their journey at Primrose School, where learning, play, and character development come together. Their **Balanced Learning®** approach helps little wolves grow curious, confident, and kind.

When the pack comes together to celebrate, **Bounce for Love** brings the excitement with bounce houses and event rentals for all occasions. Their family-run business keeps community gatherings fun, safe, and full of laughter.



SANDERS TEAM



Loyalty and service run deep in this pack, and The Sanders Team proudly supports military families with trusted home financing guidance. Their expertise helps veterans and active-duty members build strong futures in our community.