

# Grass Valley Elementary

*School Newsletter • June 5, 2020*

## From the Principal

Dear Grass Valley community,

March Madness is a term we use to refer to the fun and excitement of the NCAA college basketball tournament. This year it posed new meaning, one that created an immediate impact on our daily lives and routines with changes here at home and around the globe such as self-isolation, quarantine, social distancing and remote education. During challenging times, negativity can surface and take over our emotional well-being. I choose to lean into the positive. It's comforting to know that amid the uncertainty, there are still moments of strength and hope that showcase the resilience, or grit, that people share in times like these and help us get through this together. The Grass Valley school community is that example. Our pivot to remote learning was not the most graceful, but demonstrated continuous improvement. The determination, patience and flexibility of GVE students, parents, school staff and PTA helped us overcome obstacles together in order to enable learning to continue in the best ways possible. We thank you for your partnership and support during this time.



This trimester has been like no other in our students' history. Please know that **spring grades** will reflect the period during school closure due to COVID-19, and will follow the grading guidance given by the state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. During this period of remote learning, each grade-level team at every elementary school identified essential standards for instruction beginning May 4. Grading and feedback for our K-5 students will be for only those essential standards that each grade-level team identified. This means that there will be many areas left blank on report cards. There is no doubt that this is a new and challenging situation for an assessment process. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

We would like to give a special thank you to the **Grass Valley fifth-grade class of 2020**. While the ending may look different than we expected, it has not changed the positive and lasting impact that you have made on us. We thank you for your leadership, curiosity, motivation and challenges each day. Remember to always try your personal best, take responsibility for your learning, be accountable for your decisions and take the lead in spreading joy, even (and especially) during difficult times, and you will be successful.

As we work on planning for the fall, **we have a few changes to announce.** Jennie Sanchez will be moving from second grade to kindergarten, while Alia Woolfe will slide into an interventionist position that will support grades K-3. Alysha Mueller will be moving from first grade to third grade. We are excited to announce that we have been able to hire Ahna Jura and Shannon Stewart, who will be teaching third grade and fifth grade, respectively. Additionally, next year all third-grade classrooms will be stand-alone classrooms. Mrs. Stewart's fifth-grade class will be a stand-alone model that supports the normal fifth-grade rotation.

We would also like to thank Christina Pachinger for supporting our community this year. We wish her the best as she transitions back to Skyridge Middle School. We also wish the best to Jennifer Pugmire as she moves in her role as Braillist to Skyridge.

As you already know if you watch our video messages, Mrs. Hutton is transitioning to a new role as principal at Helen Baller Elementary. We want to thank her for her outstanding leadership and contributions to the Grass Valley school community. We are all very proud of her and wish her the very best! We will announce the next associate principal when the position is filled.

In closure I would like to take a moment to reflect on **the challenges that we are facing as a nation.** Race and equity continue to be obstacles that we hear about and see examples of on television and even in our own community. Everyone has the responsibility to treat others with respect and dignity. We have to put learning to manage the dynamics of difference at the forefront of our thinking and actions. Racial discrimination has no place at Grass Valley, in our community and the world at large. It is extremely important for everyone to know that Grass Valley and the Camas School District value each and every member of our community. We strive to continue to improve our equity-based practices. We acknowledge that we make missteps along the way. Owning and correcting our actions that contribute to any type of racism is an essential practice that we must be consistent with. We also can never lose hope.

*"Hope is the act of conviction that despair will never have the last word."*

— U.S. Sen. Cory Booker

As we close the 2019-20 school year, I hope you all find ways to continue to maintain your safety, to make meaningful connections with your community, family and friends, and to enjoy your summer. We will reach out when we know what school will look like in the fall.

Take care,

Sean McMillan  
Principal

## PTA News

As we close out this school year with a list of canceled PTA events behind us, we just want to thank everyone who supported our organization this year, through donations and fundraising, volunteering or simply attending one of our events. We appreciate you all and look forward to reconnecting in the fall. Please read on for updates:



### NEW LEADERS FOR 2020-21:

We are pleased to announce our new executive board for the coming school year, following the election last month:

- Co-presidents: Amanda Rinesmith and Lynette Shaw

- Co-vice presidents: Krista Jaramillo and Marian Wong
- Treasurer: Kristen Pauk
- Secretary: Shawn Tay

Their new terms begin July 1, after which the new board will appoint the remaining board members (volunteer coordinator, fundraising coordinator, membership coordinator and newsletter).

We will also be working over the summer to fill other volunteer roles for various PTA events and committees. If you are interested in helping in any particular area, please email our incoming [president](#). You can find a complete list of opportunities on [our website](#) under the "Get Involved" tab.

**Committee chairs and volunteers needed for next year include:**

- Art Discovery Chairperson
- Spring Carnival
- Spring Auction
- Family Movie Night
- Book Fair
- Staff Birthday Cards

**HELP US WHEN YOU SHOP ON AMAZON:**

With more people shopping online these days, we want to remind you that you can support our PTA by shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the Grass Valley PTA. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you shop, including the same products, prices and service. Under "select charity or organization," type Grass Valley PTA 3 6 65. Select our school and shop as you normally would.

## End-of-year events, updates and reminders

Here are a few things to know as we wrap up the school year:

- **June 17:** We will have a video "Move-up Day" (details to come).
- **June 18:** Fifth-grade drive-through celebration (details will be sent to fifth-grade families)
- **June 19:** We will have a video celebration for the last day of school (details to come).
- **June 25:** Report cards will be mailed home.



**Prepaid yearbook orders** will be available for drive-through curbside pickup at Grass Valley from 1 to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, June 16, for families in grades K-4. Please enter through the main driveway, look for signs for each grade level, and exit out the opposite side of the parking lot, near the maintenance lot. Items from the Lost & Found will also be out for pickup during this time. We ask that you please observe social distancing at this event.

Fifth-grade families will be able to pick up their yearbooks and check the Lost & Found during their drive-through celebration on Thursday, June 18.

If you ordered a yearbook and are unable to pick it up during the appointed times, please email [volunteers@gvezebraspta.org](mailto:volunteers@gvezebraspta.org).

**School supply lists** will be available online over the summer on the [Camas School District website](#).

**Kindergarten Orientation** is tentatively scheduled for Monday, Aug. 17, time to be determined.

**Back to School Night**, if we have one, will be Thursday, Aug. 27.

## A special farewell from our fifth-graders

The school and PTA worked together to give our fifth-graders an opportunity to create short videos to say goodbye or share whatever they would like with their teachers, staff and fellow students. It's so charming, we wanted to share it with the whole Grass Valley community [online](#). It's about 20 minutes, but worth a look if you have time. Thank you to all who participated.

## Art Discovery note and project

While we haven't been able to lead any Art Discovery projects at school this spring, we thought it would be nice to share a simple project that you can do at home, either now or over the summer. If you complete it before June 18, email a photo to [Amanda Rinesmith](#) and she will include it in a slideshow on the PTA website! Some of you might recognize this project, "Everyday Objects as Art," from a few years ago – it requires minimal supplies from around your home. You can find the instructions and examples on our [PTA website](#).



Our program is also undergoing some leadership changes, as our chairperson's son moves on to middle school next year. Please see below for special messages from our Art Discovery leaders.

\* \* \*

Dear Grass Valley Zebras,

It has been a unique end to a very unconventional year here at Grass Valley Art Discovery. It is unfortunate that we did not get to do all our art projects together in the classrooms and we missed seeing all the bright faces! We also did not get to hold the Art Showcase as planned, but please know your art projects are safe and we are waiting to find the correct way to get them back to you. As soon as we have a plan, we will send out information.

I had to leave abruptly in February for some unexpected surgery and was amazed and appreciative of all the people who stepped in to make Art Discovery even better in my absence. Thank you to Amanda Rinesmith, who became so instrumental in getting things done. Thank you to the special cadre of volunteers who are always there helping in many ways, and thank you to the teachers who taught alongside us in their classrooms and made schedules work. A huge thank you also to Amy Linder for all your help, support and amazing ideas this past year. You will be missed. We are wishing you much luck in your next endeavor. And a special thank you also to Melanie Johnson, who passed this program on a few years ago with an open-door policy and countless times has supported me with knowledge, organization and friendship.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who help make this such a fun and rewarding experience. This program would not be what it is without our volunteers and all your hard work. From the bottom of my heart I appreciate all of you and your time spent helping with this program. I would like to especially thank all the kiddos who warmed our hearts and taught us so much about art, laughter and life over the years.

Next year, Mr. Skip and I will help in the transition of Art Discovery into this new paradigm of learning, as well as help a new Art Discovery chairperson develop the program for the future. This program has meant so much to us as a family and we couldn't be more proud of being part of this community. With our son transitioning to middle school next year, it is time pass on the paintbrush.

We are currently looking for a new Art Discovery chairperson, and if you are at all interested please contact me. I am here to answer any questions you may have and Skip, Amy and myself will make sure

you are trained and well prepared going forward.

Skip and I can't tell you how much reward this has brought to our lives – we love you all and thank you for the opportunity to give back a small portion of what we received from Grass Valley Elementary.

Best,  
Stephani Pizzi-Miller  
Art Discovery Chair  
[artdiscovery@gvezebraspta.org](mailto:artdiscovery@gvezebraspta.org)

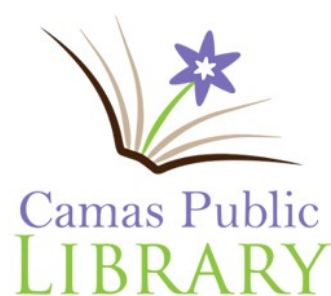
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Dear Grass Valley Art Discovery community,

I just wanted to take a few minutes to thank each and every one of our volunteers for all your time and dedication to the Art Discovery program. Through all of your hard work and commitment, we have brought art into the hearts and minds of our students. Our projects this year were ambitious, however it was your immense skill and creativity that brought those plans to fruition and created beautiful works in which everyone could feel a sense of pride.

I am sure some of you have noticed that the position of Art Discovery chair is once again open. I know that at the outset of the year I said I would be in this for the long haul. Sadly, as we all have learned this year, life can change suddenly and make the path you wanted to travel different from the one you are on. I hope that someone from our community will step up to fill this very vital PTA role. Stephani, Skip and I will all be along on the beginning of your journey to help you to lead this wonderful and fulfilling program. You will not be alone, and we will help you learn the ropes until you are steady to lead on your own. I look forward to meeting you, whomever you are. Until I see you all again, keep doing art no matter how small.

With warmest wishes and filled paint dishes,  
Amy Linder, former Art Discovery chair-in-training



## Camas library's Summer Reading Program begins June 27

Camas Public Library's 2020 Summer Reading Program is now open for preregistration. The program will be all-virtual this year because of the coronavirus outbreak. That means there will be no table set up in the library, no volunteers and no prize-pickups until the end of summer. This year's program will also focus only on earning credits for reading, with the community activity portions that have been part of the program for the past couple of years removed.

The program runs June 27-Aug. 22. Kids, teens and adults can register online [here](#). To download a PDF flyer about the program, click [here](#). Please note that if you [register for a Camas Library card online](#), students cannot use their school email address, as those accounts do not receive email from addresses outside of school.

**Contact Us**

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<http://schools.camas.wednet.edu/grassvalley/>

**Grass Valley PTA:** Visit us at <http://grassvalleypta3665.weebly.com>, "like" us on Facebook and follow gvezebraspta on Instagram.

*This newsletter is published monthly during the school year by Grass Valley Elementary and the PTA. You can email the newsletter coordinator, Nancy Nilles, at [newsletter@gvezebraspta.org](mailto:newsletter@gvezebraspta.org). To add email addresses to the mailing list, contact GVE Head Secretary Aileen Hay at 360-833-5710.*