

Valley Oaks Charter School

October/November - 2019



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Mrs. Bartz's Broadcast

Message from Mrs. Bartz

Happy December!

This year seems to be flying by. A lot has happened in the past couple of months. From enrichment classes, clubs, competitions, and everything in between, our students have been busy, and so have our parents!

The first Town Hall Meeting of the year took place in November. For those of you who were not able to attend, please take a minute to review our school's dashboard:

<https://www.caschooldashboard.org/reports/15101571530492/2018>.

The information on this dashboard is what the state looks at to see how we are doing. As you can see, we are doing great in some areas and need to improve in others. We genuinely believe that our students are better than what is reported. Due to this, the school is looking at a variety of ways to help our students shine during testing.

One way to help our students is to start talking to them now about what to expect during testing. Beginning the next enrichment session, our teachers will start to discuss and show snippets of the test to help our students become more familiar with the process of testing. At home, we ask that you explain to your students the importance of testing and how it benefits them and our school.

Another way to help your students is to schedule time in your weekly schedule to sit down with your student and go through a practice test together.

https://login1.cloud1.tds.airast.org/student/V375/Pages/LoginShell.aspx?c=California_PT

By doing the practice test together, it allows you to teach your student testing strategies, i.e., read the questions first before you read the long passages, the process of elimination, how to work the embedded tools, etc. Also, if you haven't already begun a typing program with your student, do it now! Having to type is half the battle.

The Valley Oaks staff knows that standardized testing is only one portion of your student's education, but the earlier you expose your students to the test, the better they will do. Doing these steps will help to eliminate any anxiety you or your student might have when it comes to the real test in May. Together we can make this a successful experience for our students.

As this decade quickly comes to an end, we must pause and remember to be thankful for all that we have. To live in a country that allows us to homeschool our children is a blessing. Be sure to take this time to reflect on why you chose to homeschool your children, and allow yourself to take a break and relax.

Have a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season. We can't wait to see you all in 2020!

Upcoming Events

December 11th

Jr. High Enrichment
Registration (On-line)

December 11-12th

STEAM Camp (7-8th)

December 12th

Fine/Industrial Arts
Registration (On-line)

December 12th

Nutcracker Ballet

December 12th

STEAM Club

December 12th

Sports & Fitness Club

December 18th

Holiday Music
Performance

December 18th

VOPTAC Holiday Party

December 19th

End of RP 5

Dec 20th - Jan 3rd

Winter Break (SCHOOL
CLOSED)

January 6th

Mandatory Jr. High
Academy Parent
Meeting

January 9th

VOCS Science Fair

January 9th

VOCS Children's Choir
Practice

January 9th

Farm Workshop

January 9th

VOPTAC Meeting

January 15th

Enrichment (First Day of
Session 3)

January 15th

Parent Workshop
"Getting Techie With It"

January 16th

Story Writers' Club

January 20th

Marin Luther King
Holiday (SCHOOL
CLOSED)

January 22nd

Enrichment

January 22nd

100 Days of School Party

January 23rd

STEAM Club

January 23rd

Sports & Fitness Club

January 23rd

Bolles Nursery Field Trip

January 27th

Science Camp Online

Sign-Ups (2nd & 3rd
Grades)

January 29th

Enrichment

January 29th

Homeschool Chat

January 29th

Battle of the Books
Meeting

January 31st

End of RP 6

*Don't forget to look for the Letters to Santa Mailbox in the Warehouse. From now until the Holiday Party on December 18th, you can drop in your letter to Santa! At the Holiday Party, Santa will draw two letters. The authors of those letters will win a \$10 shopping spree in Santa's Secret Shop!



VOCS News: Fall VOPTAC Wrap-up

Contributed by Tiffany Edgerle

Valley Oaks Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (VOPTAC) has been busy and hard at work this fall! We have had so much fun meeting up with familiar and new parents at our monthly meetings. We have been especially grateful to our teachers for providing activities for the kiddos while our meetings have been taking place! That has been super helpful and the kids seem to think they are at a party.

Our first ever Fall Talent Show was a hit and it was so much fun to witness the enormous talent that we have at our school! Even our teachers were putting on their own performances in the back of the warehouse. Perhaps next year we can coax them to the front.

Trunk or Treat was a resounding success, even with the last minute date change due to our freakish wind storm on the day before Halloween. But, in true Valley Oaks coolness, everyone rallied and we had 28 different cars that helped make it a blast for our trick-or-treaters. Our Harvest Bazaar still proves to be a family favorite and we so appreciate all our amazing vendors for taking time to come and make available one of a kind offerings. Look for the Holiday Bazaar Vendor raffle basket this coming year for Extravaganza! There is a little bit of everything in there. We are looking forward to our annual Holiday Party on Wednesday, December 18th, from 1-3pm. Donations are still being taken for Santa's Secret Shoppe and letters to Santa can still be dropped into the beautiful Santa mailbox located in our warehouse, courtesy of the Punt family. Both Santa and Mrs. Claus will be in attendance this year, as well as food, games and face painting. It promises to be our most spectacular Holiday party ever! Admission is simply bringing a food item to share! See you there...

VOCS News: Downtown Christmas Tree

Contributed by Lydia and Lukas Cotton

Valley Oaks has a beautiful tree in the downtown office this holiday season. We asked Mrs. Downs about the Valley Oaks Tree. She said, "Every year the Educational Services Department of Kern County Superintendent of Schools brings joy to the City Centre downtown by decorating a variety of holiday trees. Valley Oaks Charter School (VOCS) has been contributing to this special event for the past five years. This year VOCS students and staff went above and beyond, using a Hokit Farm theme. Beautiful ornaments were created, along with an amazing barn tree topper. Our tree is a wonderful representation of VOCS as it shows off our very talented students and staff!"

Mrs. Williams helped to coordinate the tree this year. We asked her about the theme. She said, "This year VOCS students from the various sites contributed ornaments for a Hokit Farm themed tree. Hokit Farm is a cornerstone of Valley Oaks and a significant part of our school history. You can see some of the ornaments that were used in the lobby of the VOCS Bakersfield Elementary School Office."

We were really excited to see some of the ornaments we made on both trees and can't wait to see what the theme will be next year!



VOCS News: Trunk or Treat

Contributed by Lydia and Lukas Cotton

On October 31st we had the first Trunk or Treat at Valley Oaks. Parents signed up to have a trunk. They decorated their trunks with fun and crazy decorations. Some trunks were super cool and creative. Valley Oaks staff also signed up to have trunks. Each block and the office staff had their own and competed against each other. The 7-8 Block won with the pirate ship theme. The candy they gave out was barrels of pirate root beer. They had a game where you had to walk the plank and toss ropes onto hooks. It was really cool.

We had never been to a trunk or treat before. It was a lot of fun. We got to go around in our costumes to all the trunks and get candy and toys. Then there was a costume contest where students won for things like most creative costume and best costume.

We can't wait till next Halloween so we can Trunk or Treat again!!!



VOCS News: Jr. High ASB Elections

Contributed by Dylan Punt

On October 9th, four junior high students from Valley Oaks gave speeches to the rest of the Jr. High student body. They explained why they would be a good choice for the positions they were running for. Hope Bewick, who ran for Treasurer, said: "I was a little nervous, but it was more fun than anything". Payton Butcher, who ran for Vice President, was also nervous to give her speech, but said that her friends were very supportive. Hope and Payton won the offices of Treasurer and Vice President. Julissa Villareal and Lucy Vasquez both ran for President. Julissa won, and Lucy is taking on the Secretary position. I asked Payton why she chose to run for VP, and she said that she hoped to have her opinions heard and be more involved in how things are done at school. I'm interested to see what changes may be made this year by the Jr. ASB officers. Hope told me that her goal was to raise more funds to help our school and for community service. I think that's a great start!



Mrs. Duncan, the Jr. ASB advisor, is happy with the elections. She said "I am extremely proud of all those that campaigned and had the courage to stand in front of the entire 7-8 grade class to give a speech. They are well on their way to establishing great leadership skills."



VOCS News: Fall Talent Show

Contributed by Bethany Edgerle

The Fall Talent Show was held on October 24th. There were many acts, including the K-6 Drama production, Glee Choir, and individual acts! Some kids performed piano pieces while others sang. There was even a magic act and dancing! It was a great night with wonderful music and great laughs! Many of the teachers were dancing their own dances in the back. VOPTAC was even selling snacks and t-shirts! All and all, it was a fun evening and many hope that it will happen again next year!



VOCS News: History Camp

Contributed by Bethany Edgerle

History camp was awesome this year! We did so many things all 3 days! It was held in Pioneer Village at the Kern County Museum, October 16th to 18th. There were many classes taught but some of my favorites were as follows:

The History of Punishments was where we learned about how people got into jail or had to hang of embarrassment! The British Tea Party class was where we made headbands and got to play a game of racing tea boxes to the middle of the deck. We also got to go inside the Museum's School and learn how to sit properly, learn how to stand and speak in front of the class, and we also learned that it wasn't a law to come to school but most kids did come because if they didn't, they would have to do chores. Another fun class was painting! We learned that back in the old days people used to paint a lot! They painted on quilts and scraps of material they found around the house. We got to paint too and I painted a pretty flower. It was also very popular to paint 3D houses. This was my last year participating in History Camp but I am excited to see what falls next year as we head into 7th grade!



VOCS News: Children's Choir

Contributed by Faith and Katie Harman

We would love to tell you about the VOCS Children's Choir. It's for TK all the way through 5th grade. We meet once a month. Mrs. Tiffany is our choir leader. She is awesome. We will be singing at the Christmas party on December 18th. It is so much fun. We would love to see you there. For information, you can visit our Facebook page, VOCS Choir.



VOCS News: Sharktooth Hill Field Trip

Contributed by Rhett Basta

Valley Oaks took a field trip to Sharktooth Hill, in the foothills just above Bakersfield, on November 15. They have fossils and shark teeth from 12-15 million years ago. I liked the digging the most. I found a whole bunch of shark teeth. There was a whole bunch of rocks, but they weren't actually rocks, they were fossils! Every "rock" that you could see was a fossil. All the dirt was actually silt that was once from the ocean floor. There were small cave like places to dig, but I found the most shark teeth in the silt just lying on the ground. This was the best field trip ever.

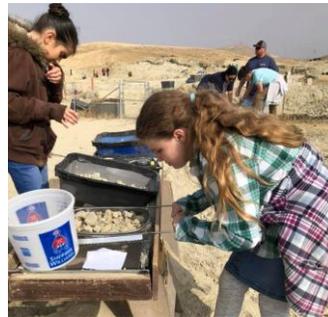
History of Sharktooth Hill

(www.sharktoothhillproperty.com)

Twelve to fifteen million years ago during the time period geologists call the Miocene Epoch, most of Kern County was an ocean bay. The waters lapped against rolling hills that were soon to be pushed up to form the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Northeast of Bakersfield, where the modern Kern River leaves the Sierra Nevadas, a river flowed into the bay.

The river carried sediments and the remains of plants and animals into the bay. These materials, along with the plentiful remains of marine organisms, sank to the bottom and much of the organic material remains fossilized. Subsequent geologic events pushed up the sediments, and they then eroded to form the rolling hills that include Sharktooth Hill. Exposed in these hills is the bone bed that formed from those fossil-rich sediments. The Sharktooth Hill bonebed encompasses more than 110 square miles, but most of it is deep underground.

This bed is the most fossil-rich Miocene marine bone bed in the world. And, like the great La Brea discoveries in Los Angeles, the Sharktooth Hill bonebed offers a surprisingly complete view of the marine Miocene world. This bed contains the fossilized remains of all major marine animal groups.



VOCS News: October STEAM Club Meeting

Contributed by Zane Punt

The October STEAM Club meeting was on October 24th inside of the Oak Tree Cafe. We had the choice to make a pattern pumpkin, a penny spinner, or both! I chose to make a penny spinner. I colored a pattern paper circle, then glued it onto a cardboard circle. Then, Mrs. Cotton cut a little slot into the cardboard to put the penny in. I tried it out, and it spun surprisingly well. After we were finished, we got to play with Snap Circuits. Snap Circuits are basically little boards with wires and battery packs that help you learn about electricity. You can wire them to make a light turn on, make sounds like the Happy Birthday song, and make a propeller spin and fly in the air. I thought the meeting was really fun because I got to play with Snap Circuits and make the penny spinner, which is a lot like a top. I love tops!



VOCS News: Camp Keep

Contributed by Rori Basta

Camp Keep is a small camp located near Morro Bay where 6th graders can go hiking, exploring, and much more.

On my first day we arrived late because of a bus break down and we missed a tour of the campus. When we first arrived, we unloaded our bags out of our bus and went to a large campfire circle. We only waited a few moments before a school called Centennial arrived back from the tour. When everyone was present, they greeted us, and explained the Camp Keep schedule of eating, hikes, showers, and free time. After that, everyone was separated into sleeping groups. Centennial and VOCS were in separate cabins, and so were boys and girls. Then we were all dismissed cabin by cabin to pick up our things from the grass, and haul it to our cabins. Our cabin had 7 bunk beds to each side and a walkway in the middle. I chose the bottom bunk of one of the bunk beds and started setting up my sleeping bag, pillow, and pj's. After this, my cabin went outside for free time. I went to a building called the Discovery Zone and looked around for fifteen to thirty minutes or so. Then a bell rang that signaled to come to the campfire circle and everyone went to the campfire circle. Everyone sat down and waited to be dismissed for dinner. When you were dismissed, you were to go around the side of a giant dome to get a carton of milk and a plate of food. Then you went inside and ate at one to two tables depending on how big your group was. Mine had fourteen people in it so we had two tables. After dinner, everyone had another 15 to 30 minutes of free time to use the restrooms, then it was time for campfire. At campfire we sang funny songs and some were hilarious but I'll let it be a surprise. Then everyone was slowly dismissed to go to their cabins to get their toothbrushes and brush their teeth at a surprisingly clean restroom. After everyone had brushed their teeth it was time for bed so my cabin got their pj's on in their sleeping bags and put their clothes away. As everyone got into their sleeping bags you could hear noises of the teachers called naturalists making sure no one was being noisy.

On the second day everyone was dismissed into small groups called hiking groups and on the third day we went on 2 hikes.

One was called The Mountain Hike and it was the hardest hike because you climbed a mountain all the way up and all the way down. My hiking group took a bus to a cove near Morro Bay, then we started walking up a mountain called Valencia Peak. I can't remember much about the Mountain Hike except that it was tiring and a couple of other things. When we were a quarter way up the mountain we licked a rock to see if it was silt. And when my group was halfway up we each got an oreo to show how the mountain was formed. It seemed to take forever to reach the top of the mountain but when everyone finally did it was worth it. It was wonderful to be at the top of the mountain and I wish I could have stayed longer.

Another one of the hikes was The Creek Hike and it was very nice. First we had to walk to a small trail, and it went up and down and up and down some more. Then we turned and there was a little grotto that was surrounded by a small creek. There were rocks everywhere and they were all shades of red, white, gray, orange, brown, and yellow. The naturalist that was with us told us to get a colored rock wet and rub it against a bigger rock and that this would make paint. Then almost everyone put the paint on their faces. It was really fun and some day would like to go back and do it again.

These were two of the hikes and some of the things we experienced at Camp Keep. I encourage you to go and experience it yourself when you're in 6th grade. If you have gone you'll know that it was truly amazing.



VOCS News: Oral Language Festival

Contributed by Dean Babb

The Oral Language Festival is a competition where students memorize and present their interpretation of a published literary work, written by a known author. Presentations have to be 3-5 minutes long with grades 4-6 and grades 7-8 competing separately. There are 5 categories that you can participate in: Humorous Solo, Serious Solo, Humorous Duo, Serious Duo and Verse Choir. I participated in a Humorous Duo with my friend, Ely Nishida-Castro. The piece Ely and I chose was, "Is There Really A Human Race?" by Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell.

Mrs. Wright is quoted saying, "This year, 22 students participated in the Valley Oaks Oral Language Festival on October 23rd. 12 VOCS students moved on to the Regional OLF, held at St. John's Lutheran on November 21st. At this highly competitive competition, 2 Valley Oaks students were recognized for their hard work. Allie Dean earned 2nd place in the Humorous Solo category and Annabell Werner earned 1st place with her literature piece, The Trumpet of the Swan, in the Serious Solo category. Annabell will be representing Valley Oaks at the Kern County OLF, held at Stonecreek Jr. High on February 22nd."

Here are some guidelines that have to be followed during a performance.

1. Timing of the speech begins with the students' first utterance.
2. The students must include the title and author (not anonymous) in the presentation.
3. The interpretation must be the students', not an imitation of an actor's performance.
4. Students are not to announce their names, school, or district.
5. No props or costumes or obvious uniformity in attire. School uniforms may be worn.
6. No prompting or directing from the audience.
7. The selection must be memorized.
8. No moving feet.

Let me tell you...#8 was HARD for me. I had to remind myself constantly to keep my feet planted. Also, at the Regionals, Ely and I almost violated #4 by wearing

shirts with the Valley Oaks name on them and had to hustle and get them covered before our turn. We just love our school so much and wanted to represent! Ooops.

I also want to give a shout out to Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Clough for all of the time and encouragement they gave to all of the participants. It was really nice seeing Mrs. Wright out in the audience at Regionals, smiling and cheering us on.

Overall it was a fun experience that allowed me to spend a lot of extra time with one of my best friends. I'm already thinking about what my selection will be for next year!



Valley Oaks Theatrical Society Fall Performance:



Thursday Meets



The Wolfman



VOCS News: Around the Farm

Contributed by Ella Rebiejo

Well you may have noticed the animals aren't around eating and playing on the farm. Sadly there have been a couple safety issues at no fault of the animals or the school so they have been temporarily relocated. Once the school has made some new safety features the friendly animals will be back! Before they left you may have had the chance to see some new baby bunnies born. Do you remember in the first Around the Farm story I mentioned that some of our own Valley Oaks bred goats were going to be shown at the fair? Well if you were wondering how they did, they did amazing! All the goats placed in the top 10 of their market classes. Hopefully in January there may be some new babies being born. In the meantime all the animals are being cared for by volunteers and families. We would like to thank all the staff and family volunteers that have taken in the farm animals to ensure their safety and we hope to see them all again very soon.



VOCS News: Picture Day

Contributed by Rachel Basta

The Journalism Club helped bring a new "event" to our school this year, Picture Day! Everyone was able to get their individual pictures taken by professional photographers. I know parents are anxious to get their students' pictures back, and they are coming soon. If you did not order pictures yet, you will have a chance to order from the proofs that you receive. Each student's picture will be printed in our yearbook this year, instead of just a group picture. We hope you enjoy this new service just as much as we do!



Club Corner: VOCS Sports and Fitness Club

Contributed by Luke and Lydia Cotton

Have you ever wanted to learn about different sports? Are you interested in meeting new friends and having a lot of fun? The VOCS Sports and Fitness Club might just be for you!

Desirae Owen and Jennifer Cotton are the parents coordinating this new club. Mrs. Owen is a super fun teacher. She has taught us about a new sport each month. So far we have learned about soccer, football and volleyball. We really liked volleyball and soccer. This next month she will be teaching us about basketball. We are really excited about playing basketball with all our friends!

“Being a part of the sports club has been a wonderful experience. Kids have the ability to be exposed to many types of sports in a fun and low pressure setting. They get to get some exercise, play with friends, and learn something new,” said Desirae Owen.

If you are interested in joining the club you can join the VOCS Sports and Fitness Club Facebook page for more information or message Jennifer Cotton with any questions.



Creative Corner



Oil Pastel

Contributed by Zane Punt



“Autumn”

Contributed by Abigail Eklund



Contributed by Ella Rebiejo



Contributed by Ella Rebiejo



Creative Corner

Calling all artists! Do you have an original story, poem or piece of artwork you would like to share? Contact the VOCS Elementary front desk for more information at (661) 852-6700.



VOCS News: October and November Highlights

