



VOICE OF THE VALLEY

THE RIVER VALLEY LOCAL SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER - 2025 END OF YEAR / SUMMER ISSUE

River Valley Community,

As we enter the summer season, we celebrate the end of another successful school year. The month of May had our Seniors experiencing one of many "lasts" for the Class of 2025, but we also saw excitement with the beginning of many "firsts" during our Kindergarten screening for the Class of 2038 (let that sink in for a minute). In this issue of the Voice of the Valley, you'll see pictures of our Seniors and other students from several end-of-year events. It is a reminder that time goes by in the blink of an eye, and to enjoy every moment.

Also in this edition of the Voice of the Valley, we have articles highlighting student performances in Choir, Orchestra, Band, as well as Track, Baseball, and Softball. After State Testing, our students also experienced memorable Field Trips and other activities to celebrate the end of the year. These include our 8th grade students going to Washington D.C. for their annual trip. 5th grade students at Liberty Elementary attended an overnight camp at Hopewood Pines in Marengo, while 5th graders at Heritage Elementary experienced an overnight lock-in.

We also had many Vikings experience success in extracurricular activities this Spring, including:

- River Valley High School had three vocal groups from the Choir Programs qualify for the OMEA State Contest at Van Buren High School in April.
- MOAC Champions and State Qualifiers (Spring Season):
 - Girls Softball
 - Division II State Track Meet: Two Pole Vaulters made the podium:
 - Eva Moran - 2nd Place
 - Finley Blevins - 7th Place

River Valley had three teams earn MOAC League Championships this year:

- Boys Soccer (Fall Season)
- Boys Basketball (Winter Season)
- Girls Bowling (Winter Season)

Go Vikes!

- Adam Wickham - Superintendent

River Valley Local Schools

River Valley High School

Travis Stout, Principal
Kyle Strzelecki, Assistant Principal

River Valley Middle School

Tom Bower, Principal
Marty Schuster, Assistant Principal

Heritage Elementary School

Melanie Comstock, Principal

Liberty Elementary School

Barry Dutt, Principal

See our calendar of events at:
www.rvk12.org



Liberty Elementary News

The 2024-2025 school year at Liberty Elementary was outstanding, packed with learning, fun, and memorable activities. As the interim Principal, it was a privilege to work alongside the staff, students, and parents throughout the year. Witnessing the growth, smiles, and enthusiasm of everyone was both encouraging and uplifting.

In addition to regular studies in math, reading, social studies, and science, students participated in various special events and field trips. Some highlights included the 4th grade recorder symphony, Right to Read Week, a high school science lesson for 4th graders, Career Day for the 5th graders, and a camp week for the 1st graders featuring guest speakers. Field trips took students to the Columbus Zoo, the Ohio State House, the ECO Center, the Harding Museum, and a 3-day overnight camp at Hopewood Pines for the 5th graders.



Liberty also hosted several events that brought together students, parents, and the community, such as our Veterans Day celebration and Specials/Literacy Night. Our amazing PTO volunteers contributed significantly to events like movie nights, the Fall Festival, Breakfast with Santa, the Santa Dance, the Valentine's Dance, Fun Night, Donuts with Grownups, a book fair, and the end-of-year Field Day.

As you can see, it was a busy and fulfilling year. I want to thank our parents, staff, students, and community for their support in providing these valuable opportunities to our young people. These lessons, engagement activities, and events all contribute to a well-rounded education and create lasting memories.

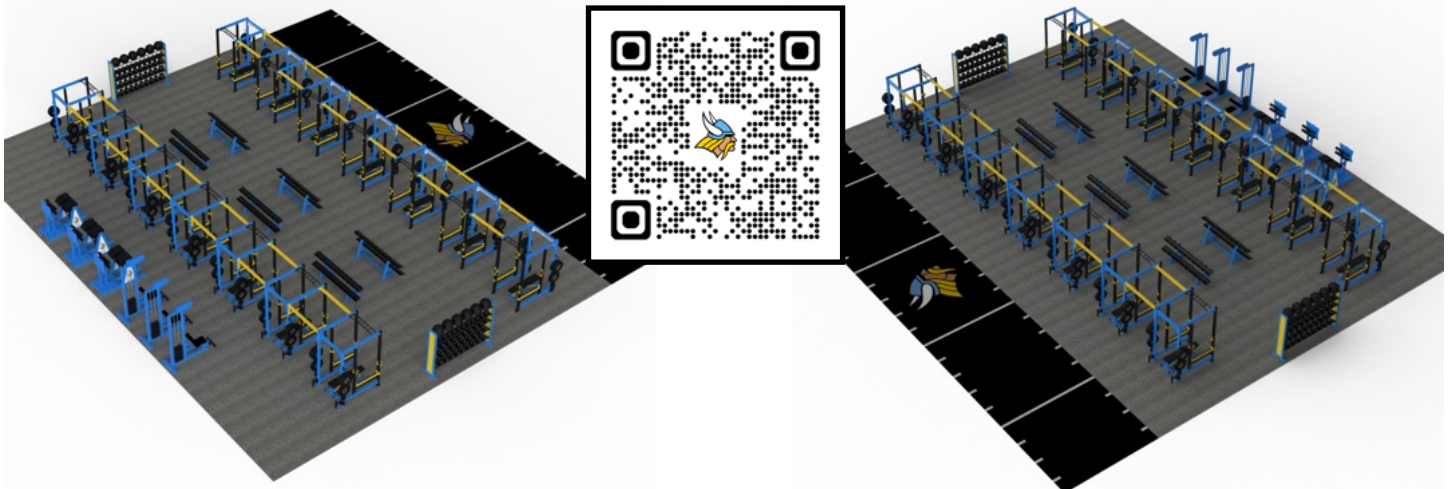
Thank you again to the River Valley School District and community for allowing me to serve as the Liberty Elementary Principal this year.

Go Vikes!

Barry Dutt, Liberty Elementary Principal

River Valley Weight Room Addition

Since our schools were constructed, our athletic programs have struggled to have adequate space for weight training. Twice a year, the weight equipment is disassembled, moved, and reassembled between two locations as space is needed for various sports seasons. Recently, River Valley Local Schools has decided to add on to the CTE expansion project to provide space that will be dedicated as a permanent weight room where all RV teams can come to train and recover throughout the year. Now, the RV Athletic Boosters need your help to raise the funds needed to finish and outfit this space. Scan the QR code below to help make this dream a reality!



Heritage Elementary News



Left to Right: Oliver Hostetler, Rayne Summers, Lilly Bender, Owen Beckley, Reese Miller, Maggie Branham, and Bella Reese.

March Madness: Book Edition

Heritage 2nd Graders participated in March Madness this year with a "Sweet Sixteen" book bracket to coincide with the NCAA Basketball tournaments. Students listened to two books each day in their classes, then cast votes for their favorite. The book with the most votes each day advanced in our bracket! The field of books was narrowed down until our championship matchup the day before Spring Break between Magic Ramen: The Story of Momofuku Ando written by Andrea Wang and I Do Not Eat Children by Marcus Cutler. The final votes from the students crowned I Do Not Eat Children as our champion! This humorous book features a big, orange monster visiting a school playground. With each page turn, a child disappears until you reach the surprise at the very end of the book! All of Heritage 2nd Grade would highly recommend this book for lots of laughs! The students enjoyed listening to these new sixteen books and rooting for their favorites!



Michael Mage the Magician

The Heritage students had some fun and wonder right before Spring Break by watching Michael Mage the Magician. The students had a wonderful and engaging time and were amazed by his skills.

Meet Myrtle the Turtle

Throughout the school year, students have had the opportunity to meet, care for, and form connections with our new staff addition, Myrtle the Turtle. Myrtle lives in her aquarium in Mrs. Herdman's Office, where, when students need a break or time away, they can stop in to feed her, talk to her, or just sit with her. Myrtle is also "on the go" with Mrs. Herdman when she does some classroom guidance lessons. Next school year, Myrtle is going to be the center of focus for Mindful Myrtle Mondays, which our Peer Mentor students will lead.



Rock the Test

On Friday, April 4th, Heritage Elementary showed support and encouragement for our 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students who were preparing to take the Ohio State Tests the following week in April by "Rocking the Test" and dressing like rock stars. The students worked hard throughout the year to prepare for these tests, and we wanted to have a little fun before starting the testing season. Students and staff dressed like Rock Stars and had a fun day. It was great to see staff dressed like those 80s and 90s rock stars, with many of our students dressing like Taylor Swift!

Spring & End of Year Field Trips

The Heritage students were out and about during the month of May, having lots of experiences on their grade-level field trips. We would like to thank the Heritage PTO for helping to cover all admissions to field trips for the 2024-2025 school year through their year-long fundraising efforts. These are wonderful opportunities for our students to enjoy a range of learning experiences. The following are the trips that students experienced:

- Kindergarten & 5th Grade - Columbus Zoo & Aquarium
- Grade 1 - ECO Center
- Grades 2 & 4 - COSI
- Grade 3 - Tour of Marion- Harding Home & Museum



Another year went by in a flash! Our buses have been thoroughly cleaned, top to bottom, both inside and out, and have also been inspected by the Highway Patrol for any safety issues.

The new bus routes for the 2025-26 school year will be available in August. Please be sure to complete the FinalForms transportation section to request busing for the upcoming school year. If you have any questions, please call the transportation office at 740-725-5410.

Congratulations to Deb Croft (Bus 22) on her retirement. The drivers wish you well, and you will be missed!

Second Vehicle added for Driver's Education Program

Due to the growing demand for our in-school driver's education program, we have trained two additional instructors and purchased a second vehicle. The first vehicle was made possible through a state grant, and our second vehicle was purchased utilizing the new Permanent Improvement Fund. We want to thank Tom Weston from Mathews Honda for his help with securing this vehicle. We also want to thank Brandon Lawson for his help with our service needs at Mathews Honda.



A new Honda Civic has been added to our growing driver's education program.

New Soccer Goals Coming to HES

We would like to give a huge shout-out to the Kingdom Alive Soccer Association (KASA). They have donated two soccer goals to Heritage Elementary, which will be used by our students during recess. These goals will be available in late spring, and we are excited to offer our kids more physical fitness activity options during recess.

Let's Go
Vikings

Middle School News

Year in Review

Overall, the year has been a success for both students and staff, and we look forward to next year, when RVMS will continue to challenge and support its students in growth. River Valley Middle School has had a successful year, marked by significant student growth in academics, athletics, and citizenship. The school hosted numerous engaging events, including Career Day, Grandparents' Day, Junior Achievement, the Washington, D.C. trip, Egypt Night, and the Health and Wellness Fair.

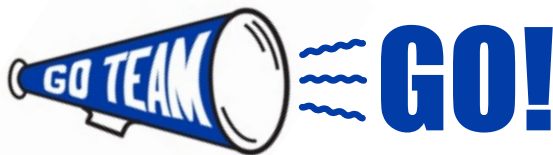
Students excelled in extracurricular activities. The band, orchestra, choir, and show choir all demonstrated remarkable progress with excellent performances. In athletics, while all teams performed admirably, the undefeated 7th and 8th grade Girls Basketball teams secured both the regular season and tournament MOAC titles. The wrestling team had an exceptional season, winning their home tournament and maintaining a multi-week tournament winning streak. The middle school track teams also achieved considerable success, winning multiple relay titles. Notably, Colton Craig set a new school pole vault record and won the middle school state championship in the event.

Academically, students made substantial progress, with many achieving high scores on diagnostic and state tests. Select students represented RVMS at the OSUM-MTC Mathematics Challenge and Quiz Bowl. This academic growth reflects the dedication of both the students and the teachers.

It has been a rewarding year for the entire River Valley Middle School community, and the staff looks forward to continuing to challenge and support student development in the years to come.



Colton Craig set a new school pole vault record and won both the Middle School State Championship and the Adidas National Championship.



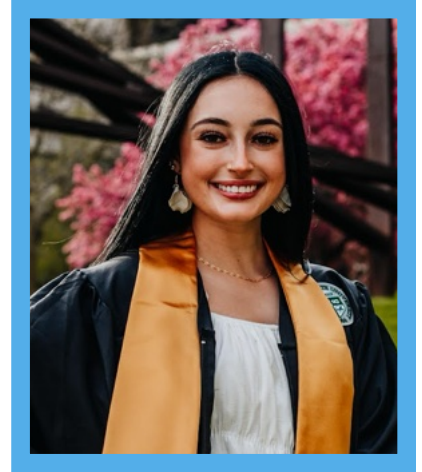
RVMS Band Concert



Culture Club with Donations

RVMS Welcomes a New School Counselor

Hello! I'm Alyssa Newman, and I am the new school counselor at River Valley Middle School this year. I completed my master's degree in Counselor Education at The Ohio State University and my bachelor's in psychology at Cleveland State University. I also grew up in Upper Sandusky and graduated from USHS. I will be providing social emotional services, career exploration, and academic support for all students. I look forward to working with the students at River Valley Middle School through small group counseling, individual counseling, and collaboration with teachers on classroom lessons for students. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me anytime at anewman@rvk12.org.



RVMS Counselor Alyssa Newman

LOVE YOUR SCHOOL!
RIVER VALLEY SCHOOLS



RVMS Retirees (left to right) Marlene Cramer, Teresa Mitchell, Jayne Klingel, and Carol Eckard.

RVMS Honors Retirees

River Valley Middle School bids farewell to four dedicated staff members who retired at the close of the 2024-2025 academic year. Jayne Klingel, a long-serving School Counselor who dedicated her entire career to River Valley in various capacities, is retiring. Joining her are School Aides Marlene Cramer and Carol Eckard, as well as Teresa Mitchell, a valued cook from the RVMS cafeteria. These four women have profoundly influenced the lives of countless students and colleagues through their compassion, meticulousness, and selflessness. Their absence will be deeply felt throughout the school community.

Hello Summer!

It's time to say goodbye to long pants and hello to shorts! As you clean out your children's closet of those long pants that will be too small by Fall, please consider donating your gently used pants to our elementary clinics. Accidents happen; milk is spilled, and recess puddles win out on the daily in our elementary buildings. Dry clothes are often loaned out, but not always returned. We are always on the lookout for elastic-waist pants or leggings. So, if you have a pair or two headed to the donation pile, please keep Heritage and Liberty in mind. Our students would appreciate it.



RV FARM Camp!

The RV FARM team has been busy as bees recently. On Tuesday, May 20th (World Bee Day), thanks to a \$1500 grant from the Whole Kids Foundation, the RV FARM welcomed two Honeybee Hives. The bees are still settling in, but they are doing well. The farm team had an eventful day as they moved the bees to their new homes. The team continues to educate themselves on beekeeping and caring for the hives. With this exciting addition, the RV FARM educators will be able to engage our students in learning and eventually be able to collect and use fresh honey in our cafeterias. When visiting the RV FARM, please remember to respect the bee area. Thank you again to The Bee Cause project for our grant, as we are looking forward to "BEEing" friends with these amazing pollinators.

The RV FARM team is actively in its "Farm Camp Era" as year two of Wellness Camp has come to the farm. We welcomed roughly 50 campers to the farm to learn about a variety of topics. The students actively engaged with local author and RV Alumni Jade Rutter as she discussed her books, Rabbit Stew and Rabbit Stew Finds His Crew. The students even got a surprise visit from the one and only Stew the Rabbit. Then they planted carrots with Miss Pam in the high tunnels. It was a "hopping" good time. There is nothing "cheesy" about hanging out with Mrs. Isler and Mrs. Miley. The students loved learning all about pizza, tomatoes, and many herbs. They even got to take home their own tomato plant. Pollinator Palooza was underway as well. Miss Maddie showed the students our educational bee area. She discussed the importance of pollination, from wind to bats, bees, and butterflies. The students learned how to make a bee bath to help out our pollinating friends.

Mrs. Herdman slowed things down a bit by doing some yoga at the farm with the students. The students then "rocked it out" as they helped design the RV FARM Kindness Rock Garden. We can't wait to see it grow.

Every good camp should end with a bang, or in this case, a bounce. The bounce house and Lunch Bunch Food Truck were out on the last day to celebrate a week of wellness at the RV FARM.

Our state-recognized Summer Food Service Program is in full swing. This program is open to students aged 1-18. Each meal kit includes 14 meals, 7 days of breakfasts and lunches. Pickup is every Tuesday at Liberty Elementary from 4:00-6:00 p.m. through the end of July.



An RV elementary student preparing to enjoy the yummy pizza made at RV FARM Wellness Camp.



Students learning about agriculture and food production at the RV FARM Wellness Camp.



Class of **2025**





High School News

As we bring another year to a close at River Valley High School, all of us at RVHS feel a tremendous amount of gratitude for so many people within our community. First, our students had a great year, and we would like to thank them for their efforts over the past nine months. Next, to our parents who ensure that our students get to school each day ready to learn, thank you. Your support is invaluable to the students who walk our halls, and our staff greatly appreciates all that our parents do within the district. Finally, we would like to thank our community members and organizations that support our school in numerous ways that cannot be listed. Thank you to everyone involved for yet another outstanding school year.

Recently, RVHS was fortunate enough to act as host for the Central District Division 2 Track Meet during the week of May 19th. This brought over 25 teams and more than 2,000 spectators onto our campus over the course of three days. The meet was an excellent opportunity to showcase our campus and our capacity for hosting large events. On another note, this also acted as a strong fundraiser for the athletic boosters through parking and concessions revenues as they continue to work towards funding the new weight room project.

Our Career Technical Education Wing is under construction and will be ready during the 2025-26 school year. As a reminder, this wing will expand our Ag lab and classroom space, as well as create a new construction classroom. Additionally, it will add room for a healthcare career pathway classroom. Finally, there will be space at the end of the wing for our new exercise science lab and weight room that will be used by classes during the school day, and our sports teams after hours.

Our 2025 commencement ceremony took place at the Marion County Fairgrounds on May 23rd. This was a great ceremony with a strong turnout, and it turned into a wonderful evening to recognize the accomplishments of the class of 2025.

Our staff is already hard at work on next year. Custodians have begun cleaning and preparing for the fall, and our teachers have opportunities over the summer to work within the building in preparation for the 25-26 school year. Athletic teams will be holding camps, workouts, and offseason activities throughout the summer in preparation for fall sports and beyond.

As we go through the summer, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Thank you again to the RV community for another great year, and we look forward to working with you again soon.

High School Phone - 740-725-5800
Travis Stout, Principal - tstout@rvk12.org



2025 State Runner-Up, RV Senior Eva Moran, Competes in the District Track Meet at RVHS



CTE Expansion Construction Continues



2025 Graduates Complete the "Turning of the Tassels"

Year-End Photo Gallery



Liberty students enjoying the indoor inflatables during Field Day.



Middle school students: Gracie Beechum, Kya Moran, Avril Mason, and Cassidy Elliott set a new school record of 4:19.66 in the girls 4 X 400M relay.



Game time during the Heritage Elementary 5th grade lock-in.



Heritage students enjoying craft time during the 5th grade overnight lock-in.



Stream study at Hopewood Pines during the 5th grade camp.



Preschool students at Liberty Elementary enjoying Preschool Prom.



RVMS students make a homemade splint.



RVMS 7th grade teachers show off their school spirit.



Middle school students learning about history at the annual trip to Gettysburg and Washington D.C.



RVMS QuizBowl Team.



River Valley's Choir competes at the State OMEA Competition. Pictured above is the High School Chorus group, which received a superior rating from the judges at this year's competition.



River Valley's Choir competes at the state OMEA Competition. Pictured above is the high school Tenor and Bass Chorus group, which received a good rating from the judges at this year's competition.



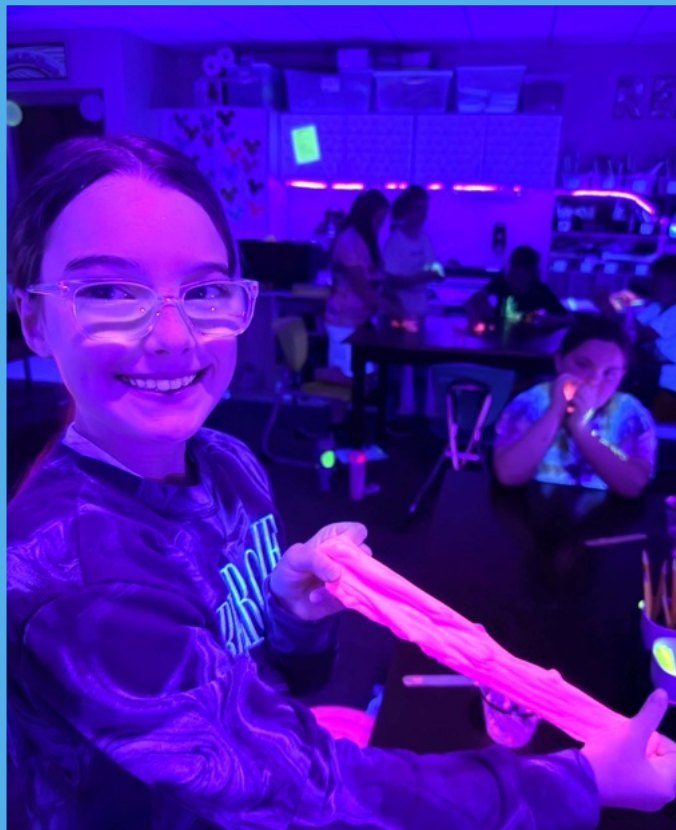
Heritage Elementary celebrated a successful school year with our end-of-year Super Games. Students enjoy water stations, bouncy houses, and relay races as a class.



Heritage Elementary students prepare for tug-of-war at their end-of-year Super Games.



Students working on some creative projects at the Heritage Elementary 5th Grade Lock-In.



Students in Mrs. Burke's class at Heritage have their annual "Glow Day" and create glow-in-the-dark slime.

Splash-tacular Fun at River Valley Preschool's Prom!

River Valley Preschool recently hosted an unforgettable "Under the Sea" Preschool Prom, transforming the gym into an ocean wonderland! Little ones dove into the fun, starting by decorating their own royal crowns. Ocean-themed temporary tattoos and cool sea-themed glasses added to the festive look.

A popular photo booth allowed parents to capture precious moments with their little kings and queens of the sea.



FAITH & TRUTH | BRAVE & BOLD
RIVER VALLEY
VIKINGS



CAR SHOW



ALL CARS, TRUCKS & MOTORCYCLES WELCOME!

SUNDAY, JULY 20TH

***ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE
RIVER VALLEY ATHLETIC BOOSTERS***

RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

REGISTRATION 10 AM TO 1 PM

\$10.00 DONATION

**75+ SPONSOR CHOICE AWARDS · DOOR PRIZES · 50/50
CONCESSION STAND**

GOODIE BAGS FOR THE FIRST 100 REGISTERED

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL JESSIE AT 740-225-4349
ON FACEBOOK @ RIVER VALLEY ATHLETIC BOOSTERS CAR SHOW**

NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS, LOST OR STOLEN ITEMS



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“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”

– Albert Einstein