



207 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086  
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# OMES at-a-Glance

## News for Otis A. Mason Families

February 2023



Mrs. Monique Keaton, Principal  
Mrs. Anne Marie Raynor, Assistant Principal  
Ms. Marie Antoine, Assistant Principal

### Manatee Highlight: Introducing our Instructional Math Coach, Ms. Ford!

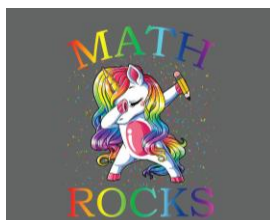


I am the Instructional Math Coach, Interventionist and ESE Achievement Coach for Otis A. Mason Elementary School. This is my 22<sup>nd</sup> year of teaching and I have taught 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> grades. Along with the help of our Computer Lab teachers, I run the Learning Lab every morning from 8:00-9:00 a.m. I enjoy this time helping our students practice their reading and math skills. My advice to students is:

"Be kind, be honest, and give everything your best shot!"

I love to read, and I was able to meet my favorite author, Nicholas Sparks, in person and he signed several of my books that he wrote! In addition to reading, I love to travel and have been to many places—one of my most special trips was when my mother and I did a 10-day stay in Paris, France, and I got to see the actual Mona Lisa painting in the Louvre Museum! I've traveled throughout the Caribbean, including many places around the Bahamas, where I had actual encounters with rather calm sharks and a scary big-mouthed barracuda! One of my more recent travels took me to the beautiful islands of Curacao and Bonaire, where I was surrounded by the most gorgeous clear blue-green waters of the Caribbean! Of course, I visit our local beaches regularly and have a rather large shark tooth collection! Teaching is my passion and I love working with students of all ages. Be sure to check out my website for resources that may be helpful to parents and students:

<https://teachers.stjohns.k12.fl.us/ford-t/>



### Character Highlight: This Month is all about the Pillar of CARING!

Every month our school highlights and teaches a different pillar of character. The focus for the month of February is CARING. Why is it so important to be caring in our community? Caring is the very foundation of a civil society, and it is what we would like to define us as a community. We here at Otis A. Mason Elementary believe that every parent, student, teacher, and member of our community should **strive to be a CARING member of the community.**

- **BE KIND!** Show your child what kindness looks like in all situations (*especially* when you are in situations where you are angry, frustrated, disappointed, and tired).
- **EXPRESS GRATITUDE.** Does your child show gratitude to you? What about siblings? Are they able to say "thank you" regularly to those who provide services: waiters, bus drivers, teachers, cashiers, and clerks?
- **HELP THOSE IN NEED.** It is never too early to get your child involved in charitable giving. Teach them to recognize when someone is struggling and what age-appropriate help looks like. Include your child in making donations to charitable organizations when clothing or toys are outgrown.
- **ACTS OF KINDNESS:** Consider incorporating random acts of kindness into your household and neighborhood. Check out the amazing and positive acts of kindness that have gone viral online!
- **ONLINE CARING-What does it look like?** If social media is a large part of your family life, be sure to demonstrate kind online etiquette to set a good example for your child. Talk through specific examples and coach compassion in your child. Online content and access should always be age appropriate

Have questions about Character Counts! or character education? Contact our School Counselor, Mrs. Holtz at [Katherine.holtz@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Katherine.holtz@stjohns.k12.fl.us). We are always available to support you with character education.



## Technology Corner:

Need help accessing one of our services online?

### SCHOOLGY ACCESS:

[Stjohnsschools.schoolgy.com](http://Stjohnsschools.schoolgy.com)

You will then be prompted to sign into Microsoft:

[S#####@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:S#####@stjohns.k12.fl.us) and the student's password

### HOME ACCESS CENTER (HAC):

HAC access is through the parent-provided email address and password. Please call the Front Office if you are having access issues (547-8440).

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/hac/>

### SCHOOL ACCESS FORM:

[Stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply](http://Stjohns.keepntrack.com/apply)

### ACCELERATED READER HOME CONNECT:

<https://www-mes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/media/>

### SCHOOL MESSENGER:

Opt-in to school messages here:

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/schoolmessenger/>

## LOST ITEMS NEED TO BE FOUND: HELP!

We continue to search for the owners of items in our vast Lost and Found located in the cafeteria. PLEASE have your student check this area regularly. They may stop by before or after school; or during lunch; or with teacher permission during the rest of the school day. Any approved volunteers are also welcome to sign-in at the Front Office and check the Lost and Found for items belonging to their family. Please label anything that comes to school with your child.



**Thank you, Mrs. Holtz, for your love and support! NSC Week is 2/6-2/10**



## OMES Community Service Project: Join us for the Kids Heart Challenge!



Dear Manatee Families,

It's that time of year again for Manatee Students to participate in the Kids Heart Challenge - Jump Rope for Heart (JR4H), our annual community service project to raise funds for the American Heart Association! This year marks the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that Mason Elementary has participated. Last year, Otis A. Mason Elementary School was the Top Fundraiser in St. Johns County, raising \$31,838, and one of the top schools in the state. Amazing! During the past 18 years, Manatees have raised nearly \$200,000 to fund research, necessary equipment for patients, and educational materials to help students learn about how the body works and how to care for personal wellness.

Over the next few weeks, your children will learn about their Heart-Health, practice their Jump-Rope Skills, as well as various "Jump Stations" to practice balance and timing, and will have the opportunity to give back to the Northeast Florida Community while helping earn PE equipment for our school. "A Win Win!!!"

The 2023 Kids Heart Challenge - Jump Rope for Heart Fundraising Campaign will run from Wednesday, February 8 – Tuesday, February 21, 2023. During the dates of February 9 – February 17, we will conduct our Kids Heart Challenge - Jump Rope for Heart Class Events during regularly scheduled P.E. 1 classes. All students will get to participate in fun activities and the Jump Rope for Heart Celebration. Students may wear an Honor Heart to jump "In Honor" of someone they know who has been affected by heart disease. Please send in Gummy Fruit Snacks for a station rotation for your child's class event.

Our goal this year is to raise \$32,000. Wow, a huge goal, but I know that when Manatees get behind a challenge, anything is possible. Download the Kids Heart Challenge app or visit [heart.org/KHC](http://heart.org/KHC) to register. The donation envelope your child is bringing home on February 8<sup>th</sup> is an invitation for your family to discuss the impact of heart disease. Please ask family and friends to support your child's participation by making contributions. We encourage supporters to donate online at

<http://www2.heart.org/goto/OtisAMasonElementarySchool>

Please help your child join the Otis Mason Elementary Online Team and create his/her own web page with the tools provided online. Your child can include a message about why he or she is participating. You can also send an e-card through this system. It's fun, safe, and the easiest way to raise funds – get online and check it out!

With Heartfelt Thanks,  
Coach Hollister and Coach Davis



## How can I get involved in my child's school? JOIN OUR PTO!

**Volunteers** are always needed. Please save the date:



**Donations** are always needed: Our Learning Lab is looking for individually wrapped snacks and candies as rewards for students reaching their computer milestones: M&Ms, Skittles, Gummy Bears, Goldfish, Cheese-its, etc.

**Meetings** are 3:30pm in the Media Center: SAC Meeting on 2/21 and PTO Meeting on 2/27

**Teacher Appreciation:** Cook up a crock pot of soup for our hard-working faculty & staff on 2/10 for the SOUPER BOWL!

### Manatee Bowling Competition 2022-2023

Every year in our PE classes, Manatees compete by grade level in a Bowling Extravaganza! Winning classes received a certificate and bragging rights! Here are this year's class winners:

Kindergarten: Mrs. Lepera's class  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Mrs. DiGregorio's class  
2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Mrs. Jones' class  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Ms. Fletcher's class  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Mrs. Rusch's class  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Mrs. Thomas' class

Students in the winning classes won FREE bowling passes to Anastasia Bowling Lanes and a chance to win a Family Bowling Pass for up to 6 people! The winners of the Family Bowling Passes are:

Zoey Wallace from Mrs. Lepera's Kindergarten class  
Paisley Paddock from Mrs. DiGregorio's 1<sup>st</sup> Grade class  
Liam Burham from Mrs. Jones' 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade class  
Natalie Roberts from Ms. Fletcher's 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade class  
Marley Conticello from Ms. Rusch's class  
Milla McLaughlin from Mrs. Thomas' class

## Leonard's Photography Announcements: Yearbooks:

**BuyTheYearbook.com**

Find your school or enter ID# 707513  
Yearbooks are \$25.00 and are available for pre-order.

### Spring Individual Photos:

Yet ANOTHER opportunity to have your child's photo taken this school year! Order at **Leonards.com/Photoprepay** and enter code **C579131**

### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Yearbook Ads for Sale:

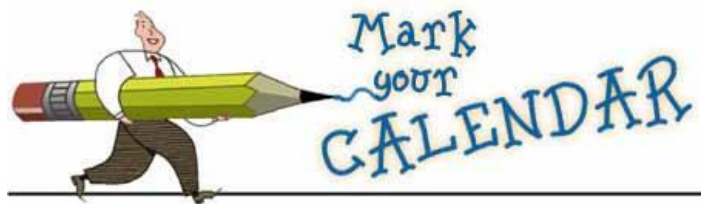
5<sup>th</sup> Grade families, order your yearbook advertisement online today:

**BuyTheYearbook.com**

Find your school or enter ID# 707513

Full-Page Ad: \$60  
Half-Page Ad: \$30  
Quarter-Page Ad: \$15

Advertisement orders for 5<sup>th</sup> grade are due by 2/14.



**February 8-21:** Kids Heart Challenge and the Jump Rope for Heart community service project

**February 10:** The Souper Bowl, a PTO-sponsored Teacher Appreciation Event

**February 16:** Spring Individual Photos with Leonard's Order at **Leonards.com/Photoprepay** and enter code **C579131**

**February 21:** SAC Meeting at 3:30pm in the Media Center; Tijuana Flats Spirit Night 5pm-8pm

**February 25:** Teacher Recruitment Fair at Nease High School; Chocolate and Beyond Event at the Classic Car Museum








**February 27:** PTO Meeting at 3:30pm in the Media Center

**March 10-19:** Spring Break, No school






## February Kindness Challenge:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Do an extra chore at home without being asked.	2 Write your school counselors a thank you note.	3 Pick up litter.	4 Chalk your sidewalk with positive messages.
5 Compliment a friend.	6 Fight hunger with games at <a href="http://www.FreeRice.com">www.FreeRice.com</a>	7 Write a thank you note to your mail carrier and other delivery drivers.	8 Bake a treat and deliver it to your neighbors.	9 Talk to someone new.	10 Smile at everyone you see.	11 Do not complain all day.
12 Cook or help cook dinner tonight.	13 Read a book to someone.	14 Write your teacher a thank you note.	15 Tell a joke.	16 Teach someone something new.	17 Write your parents or family members a thank you letter.	18 Decorate kindness rocks. Leave them at a nearby park.
19 Play a game with someone. Let them choose the game.	20 Do something kind for a neighbor or family member and do not tell them that you did it.	21 Call your grandparents or other relatives just to say "I love you."	22 Hold the door for someone.	23 Write kind messages or quotes and leave them for people to find at home or school.	24 Say "thank you" often	25 Tell three people something you like about them.
26 Let someone else choose what to watch on TV or what game to play after school.	27 Be nice to animals today. Play fetch with your dog or feed the birds.	28 Be kind to yourself! Tell yourself three things that you like about YOU!				

## "A Day Without Violence" District-Wide Art Contest



### Art Room News

## CONTEST ALERT!

*Do you have a student/child excelling in art?*

If so, St. John County is holding an "A DAY WITHOUT VIOLENCE" Calendar Art & Poetry Contest. Poems and artwork should reflect life in a world without violence. Judges will look for art and poems that make a positive statement about a world without violence.


Images of diverse kinds of people, places and things that portray a harmonious way of life, a respectful living and working environment as well as children interacting with not only each other, but also animals. Even their favorite cartoon character or images of peaceful and fun activities that can be done alone or in groups are also encouraged. Any drawings or poems depicting firearms, knives or any other violent images will NOT be eligible; violent images with a ban sign through them will not be eligible.

The purpose of these activities is to interrupt what otherwise may become a generational cycle of domestic violence. The entry may only be 8 1/2 by 11-size paper with NO computer graphic images, horizontal, and all art must be hand drawn. Drawings on poetry entries will not be eligible, only the poems. Only one entry per student- either poetry or art will be accepted.

Each student MUST have an entry form attached to the back of his or her work with clear tape. Please help ensure that the names and information are written clearly.

If your student is interested, please have them see me (Mrs. C) for an entry form.

Deadline Due to me (Mrs. C) no later than April 25th. **NO EXCEPTIONS after the 25th.**



**CREATE SOMETHING NEW!**

## Winter Passport to Learning Party

We are so proud of our students for continuing their learning over Winter Break! Completing the passport is a great way to maintain their learning progress and THAT is something to celebrate. Students made snowmen out of marshmallows and each other. They also had snow cones and a snowball fight! Here are some pictures:



## A Call to Service: Come and Join our Family!

St. Johns County School District

Proudly hosts

### Teacher Recruitment & Job Fairs

Teacher Recruitment and Job Fair  
Saturday, February 25, 2023  
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Nease High School Media Center

Teacher Recruitment and Job Fair  
Saturday, March 25, 2023  
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Nease High School Media Center



Live



WORK



Play

Register at: <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/recruitment/jobfairs/>

Must have a complete application at  
<https://www.applitrack.com/stjohns/onlineapp/>

See you there!

## Welcome, Pedro Athletes!

Thank you to our student athlete reader leaders for sharing story time with our first graders!



## Congrats, Mr. Bennett, for winning FMEA's Exemplary Model Program for Steel Band!

Join us in congratulating and thanking Mr. Bennett for growing this incredible program at our school!



## Chocolate and Beyond Supports the SJCS

*Please join us for our premier event*  
**Chocolate & Beyond**  
*celebrating our 30th year!*

Presented by TASK, Teacher's Aid for Student Knowledge, a charitable organization that financially supports the St. Johns County Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and provides financial support for other education related initiatives and teacher grants within the St. Johns County School District

**WHEN: Saturday February 25, 2023**

**TIME: 2pm - 4pm**

**WHERE: Classic Car Museum of Saint Augustine**  
4730 Dixie Highway St. Augustine, FL 32086

We welcome you to our exciting friends and family event where you can taste an abundance of sweet and savory food samples from our areas greatest culinary artisans.

**Scan the QR CODE to get your tickets today!**



OR VISIT:

<https://bit.ly/delicious2023>

**Fun, Food, Silent Auction, 50-50 Raffle, Surprises,  
your ticket entitles you to museum entry!**

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Tax ID: #59-3062853

## Thank you for YOUR support!

On behalf of all Manatees: THANK YOU! We have had so many successful events because of your love, care, and support. It truly take a village.

The Literati book fair brought an excitement and a love for reading to our classes and families. **The PTO gifted EVERY TEACHER \$20 for book fair purchases for their classrooms!** How incredibly generous 😊

The family nights have helped us build community. The bingo nights and hoedown were so much fun! It is wonderful to have you on our team. *Thank you.*

Thank you Parents!

Love, teachers.

