

El Nido del Águila

"THE EAGLE'S NEST," THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF PITTSBURGH LIBERTY K-5

April 2022

Vol. 7, Issue 7

Black History play debuted online! *"Because They Did, We Can"*



Ms. Dennison and Ms. Daniels created a Black history play with our students, with help from parent and faculty volunteers. Dozens of families gathered online for the virtual premier on March 22nd. Didn't catch it? No worries! The video is now online at <https://bit.ly/liberty-bhm22> Many thanks to all who chipped in to make the play possible!

Calendar

Monthly Liberty Community Meetings: April 13, 6 PM (VIRTUAL)

<https://tinyurl.com/LibertyPSCC>

Liberty holds these two meetings back-to-back one evening each month of the school year:

- 1) **Parent School Community Council (PSCC)**: Led by our principal, this meeting serves as our school district's primary way to engage families at the school level.
- 2) **Liberty Elementary Academic Fund (LEAF)**: Led by parents and guardians, LEAF (Liberty's parent-teacher organization) is a nonprofit organization founded to support our students, teachers, and families through fundraising, volunteering, and community events. LEAF funds classroom supplies, supplemental educational tools, cultural celebrations, extracurriculars, and scholarships for advanced learning opportunities. For info: write president@pghleaf.org or visit <https://pghleaf.org/>

PPS Public Hearing, Mon. April 25, 6:00 pm

Monthly opportunity for citizens' comments on our school board agenda items and other district matters.

WATCH: <https://www.pghschools.org/calendar#calendar1/20220427/event/20543>

TESTIFY: To speak at the virtual hearing, you must 1) register (deadline is noon, on the day of the hearing) by calling 412-529-3868; then 2) email your testimony to Laura Getty at lgetty1@pghschools.org. More info:

<https://www.pghschools.org/Page/4043>

Fun Fair, May 6, 2022

Games! Food! Prizes! Come one and all, and help raise money for our students! To volunteer, contact Jennifer Edwards at president@pghleaf.org

School Dance, "Amorcito & Yo," May 20, 2022

Save the date! Our school dance will be LIVE and in-person again this year!

WHO: Liberty Students and their Special Adult

WHAT: After-School Dance

FOR INFO OR TO VOLUNTEER: Ms. Cox, kcox1@pghschools.org

Equity at Liberty update: Books, books, books!

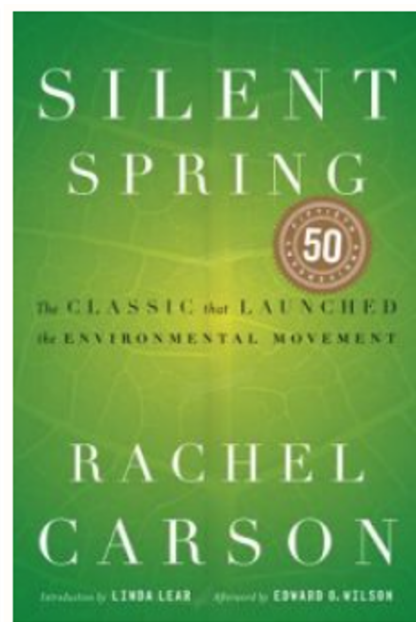
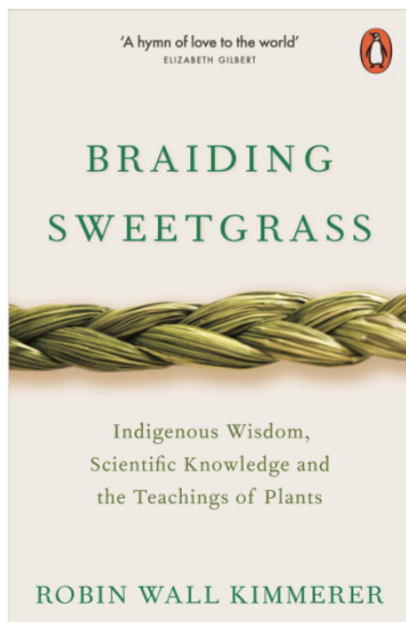
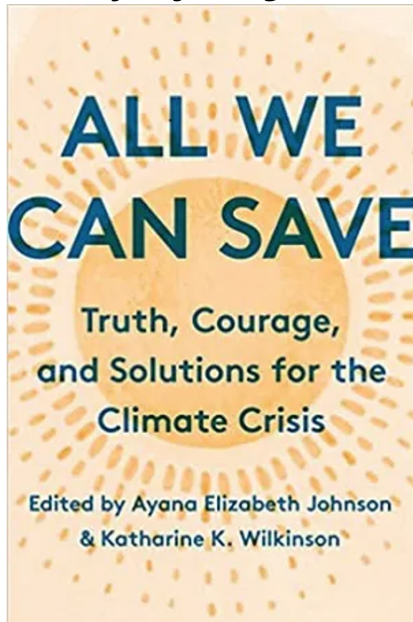
Springtime, Earth Day and Arbor Day are great topics for books in April! As we finish up Women's History Month—and before that, Black History Month—we can continue reading about Women's History and Black History, as we learn about the Earth we live on.

Liberty is gearing up for even MORE books with characters of color, as LEAF donated classroom books for all of our classrooms this month. The books came from Lee and Low booksellers, committed to diversity and inclusion in children's books.

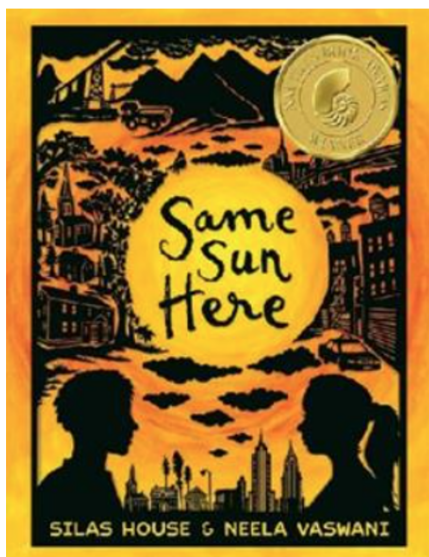
Need to find the closest library to your house? <https://www.carnegielibrary.org/>

A few book ideas for this upcoming month:

Books for younger children



Books for older children



Books for parents



Teacher cuts: an update

At the February PSCC meeting, we learned some upsetting news for our school community. Due to projected decrease in enrollment, Liberty's budget was slated for deep cuts, with 6 teaching positions to be eliminated next school year.

Ms. Z, our principal, submitted an appeal, and LEAF (our parent-teacher organization) put out an urgent call for parents to write to the school board and testify at the public hearing that was held virtually on March 21st.

To all who took these steps in support of our teachers: *Thank you!*

The result of these efforts? *We have gained back one half of a teacher position.*

This is, sadly, not the outcome we were hoping for. But there's one important silver lining: This letter-writing campaign also inspired many parents to reach out to these beloved teachers. These notes, emails, and phone calls expressing support and gratitude have given them a much-needed morale boost that has meant the world during this difficult time.

The plan for next year is still developing. For details on exactly how our faculty will be affected, stay tuned for updates from Ms. Z via email. (Not sure you're on the email list? See the last page of this newsletter.)

Event volunteers needed

Plans for several in-person community-wide events are in the works, and volunteers are needed! To pitch in, please contact the event organizers!

Fun Fair, May 6, 2022.

Contact Jennifer Edwards at president@pghleaf.org

School dance for students & parents/guardians (“Amorcito y Yo”), May 20, 2022

Contact Ms. Cox: kcox1@pghschools.org

Painting donated

A beautiful oil painting by Pittsburgh artist Larry Neal Jr. was anonymously donated to Pittsburgh Liberty K-5! The painting, titled “My Son,” now hangs in the hallway across from the main office.

For more info about artist Larry Neal Jr.:

<https://larrynealjrart.com/>

The painting is large (48” x 48”) and impressive to behold! Ms. Z looks forward to a future when families can come into the building to enjoy it!



Easter in Spanish-speaking countries

In Spain, Easter is called Pascua and honors Jesus' death and resurrection. Easter is preceded by 40 days of fasting called La Cuaresma, or Lent. At the end of Lent, La Semana Santa, or the Holy Week begins. Holy Week (Semana Santa) is the biggest religious celebration of the year in Spain, and includes a good deal of eating, drinking, and lots of processions. Easter is a time for Spaniards to take to the streets and watch elaborate reenactments of the Passion, as well as enjoy some time off work in the company of their families and friends. Elaborate processions take place throughout Holy Week. Semana Santa processions, are also known as penance processions, and involve members of the brotherhood (nazarenos) parading from their church to the city's

cathedral. To spot the start of the procession, look out for the giant cross that is always carried at the front. Live marching bands play religious music.

While the traditions and celebrations may differ from one region to the next, the Holy Week is generally a time of festivals, gripping processions, and poignant rituals. The first day of Holy Week is called Domingo de palma or el domingo de ramos, Palm Sunday. A common tradition is to carry a palm or olive branch in a procession that leads to the church where it will be blessed by a priest. A boy's branch will be plain, while a girl's branch will be decorated with ribbons and little treats. On Holy Thursday, or Jueves Santo, all church bells are silenced and they cannot ring again until Easter Day.

While chocolate Easter eggs are becoming more and more popular, they are not traditionally a big part of Easter celebrations in Spain. Torrijas are a traditional Semana Santa sweet snack of bread soaked in milk and egg before being fried and served with sugar or honey. They are available all over the country during Holy Week. Many countries have adopted commercial traditions such as holding Easter egg hunts and giving gifts from the Easter bunny (el conejo de Pascua).

Autism Awareness Month

Autism Awareness Month aims to celebrate and promote acceptance for the condition that occurs in one in every 54 children as of 2020 in the United States. Autism is a complex developmental condition affecting the person's ability to interact, communicate, and progress. There are many subtypes of this disorder. First held in 1972 by the Autism Society, Autism Awareness Month emphasizes the need for public awareness to promote acceptance, celebrate the differences, and be more inclusive towards autistic individuals around us. Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in the world. In 1976, a project launched to study and understand autism at the root level. In 1996, the Autism Society establishes a Foundation focused on applied research. In 1999, the puzzle ribbon is adapted as the universal sign for Autism awareness. On March 4, 2021, the Autism Society of America officially announces the shift in terminology from Autism Awareness Month to Autism Acceptance Month.

Kids' books about Autism Spectrum Disorder

A Manual for Marco by Shaila Abdullah

How I Learn: A Kid's Guide to Learning Disability by Brenda Miles

Mockingbird Mok'ing-bvurd by Kathryn Erskine

My Brother Charlie by Holly Robinson Peete

Medikidz Explain Autism by Kim Chillman-Blair
How to Talk to An Autistic Kid by Daniel Stefanski
Looking After Louis by Lesley Ely
How to Be Human: Diary of An Autistic Girl by Florida Frenz
Rain Reign by Ann M. Martin
A Boy Called Bat by Elana K. Arnold
The Chalk Rainbow by Deborah Kelly
Isaac and His Amazing Asperger Superpowers! by Melanie Walsh
Blue Bottle Mystery by Kathy Hoopmann
The London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd
Andy and His Yellow Frisbee by Mary Thompson
Autism, the Invisible Cord: A Sibling's Diary by Barbara Cain
Different Like Me: My Book of Autism Heros by Jennifer Elder
A friend Like Simon by Kate Gaynor
Hello Roar, Little Dinosaur by Hazel Reeves
Leah's Voice by Lori DeMonia
My Friend with Autism by Beverly Bishop
Noah Chases the Wind by Michelle Worthington
Rules by Cynthia Lord

Liberty spirit wear & Black history tees



Wear your pride on your sleeve—or, rather, on the front of your shirt! Liberty school-spirit hoodies and sweats may be worn as part of the school uniform. (And BTW, we carry hats, too!)

And—new this year—Black history shirts designed by Liberty’s own Ms. Daniels! The front reads, *Because They Did, We Can*; the back: *Black History Matters at Liberty*.

Sizes are available for both kids and adults!

Orders may be placed online and paid via paypal or credit card. bit.ly/LibertySpiritWear



Attention, Liberty Teachers!

Does your classroom need a facelift that doesn't fit in the budget? Is there a special training you need? Or special equipment, supplies, or costumes for Liberty events? Please fill out the form at bit.ly/pghleaf-teachers, send it (along with your receipt) to president@pghleaf.org, and get reimbursed by LEAF, our parent organization. The check will then be delivered to you shortly after the monthly LEAF meeting.

Leccion de Español

la cesta- basket

el conejito- bunny

la cruz- cross

la Cuaresma- Lent

el Domingo de Ramos- Palm Sunday

el dulce and el caramelo- candy

la primavera- spring

el viernes Santo- Good Friday

el pollito- chick

la iglesia- church

el huevo de Pascua- Easter egg

el cordero- lamb

el cerdo- pork

busqueda de huevos de Pascua- Easter egg hunt

Feliz Pascua or Felices Pascuas- Happy Easter

el Domingo de Resurreccion- Easter Sunday

Craft corner

Paper Plate Easter Chick

You will need a paper plate, crayons or markers, orange construction paper, glue, and stick on eyes (optional).

Color the paper plate yellow. Using the orange paper, cut out two long strips of paper (for the legs), and a small triangle (for the beak). Fold the long strips of paper accordian style and glue them to the back of the paper plate. Add the eyes using stick on eyes, or draw them on with a marker or crayon. Glue the triangle shape under the eyes like a beak.

Plastic Spoon Bunny

You will need a white plastic spoon, white construction paper, a black permanent marker, a pink crayon or marker, and glue.

Take your spoon, and draw the eyes, nose and mouth on with the permanent black marker. Draw on the back side of the spoon. Cut ears out of the white paper. You can make them rounded or pointy at the top. Using a crayon or marker, color the middle of

the ears pink. Glue them on to the inside of the spoon. Have fun by making clothes for your bunny using construction paper and tissue paper.

Rice Krispie Nests

You will need: 5 cups of Rice Krispie cereal, 4 cups of marshmallows, 1/4 cup butter or coconut oil, 2 teaspoons of vanilla extract, small treats to fill the nests (egg shaped works the best), large microwavable safe bowl, spatula, measuring cups and spoons, and a 12 cup muffin pan.

Grease the muffin pan and set aside. Place marshmallows in a microwave safe bowl and heat for 25 to 30 seconds. Stir well and repeat heating as needed. Add the melted butter or coconut oil and vanilla extract to the marshmallows and stir well to incorporate. Add the rice cereal one cup at a time, gently folding into the marshmallow mixture until all is well incorporated. Scoop heaping 1/4 cup portions of the mixture into the prepared muffin pan. Wet your hands and press into a cup shape. Place in the fridge for 2 hours or overnight to set. When the nests have hardened, pop them out using a butter knife. Fill with treats. You can use mini eggs, jellybeans, or some fresh berries.

Ten Delicious Dishes for Easter

Torrijas- This treat is very traditional for Easter, with recipes dating back to the 1600's. Thick pieces of bread are soaked in a mixture of milk and egg, then fried in olive oil and served with honey and sugar.

Pestinos-Also popular for Christmas time, pestinos are commonly made in Southern Spain. A piece of dough is deep fried, often flavored with sesame, in olive oil and then glazed with honey or sugar.

Hornazo- This meat pie that hails from Salamanca and Arila is often filled with pork loin, chorizo, and hard boiled eggs. There is also a sweet version that has almonds, sugar, and eggs.

Mona de Pascua- Especially popular in Catalonia and Valencia, this cake is traditionally given to children as a gift. Cakes are topped with either boiled eggs, or chocolate ones, as well as colorful decorations.

Flores de Semana Santa- Also known as flores manchegas. Sweet and fried pastries that come in delightful shapes.

Potaje de Vigilia-Traditionally served on Good Friday, this vigil stew is made of cod, chickpeas, spinach, and garlic.

Bunuelos- A fried doughnut made with water, milk, egg or yeast, and can be sweet or savory.

Leche Frita- Literally fried milk, typical in Northern Spain. It is made by cooking flour with milk and sugar until it becomes firm. It is then topped with cinnamon and a sugar glaze.

Bartolillos-Traditionally served in Madrid. These are dumplings of thin dough that are fried with a custard filling.

Sopa de Ajo- This soup, often made of garlic, chicken broth, egg and sherry, is a traditional dish to serve during Semana Santa.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

PAC is our school district's mechanism for ensuring that parents are informed and can help develop programming and policy. If you're interested in representing Liberty at this monthly district-wide meeting, contact Ms. Z:

lzwieryznski1@pghschools.org

Are you receiving school communications?

Are you wondering if you're missing important announcements? Visit <https://pghleaf.org/school-communications> for a go-to list of the communication channels used by 1) the PPS school district, 2) our school, 3) the parent-teacher organization (that's us—LEAF), and 4) your child's teachers!

Submit to This Newsletter!

Submissions are due on the 20th of each month of the school year. Send them to president@pghleaf.org

This newsletter is produced by the parent-teacher organization known as LEAF (Liberty Elementary Academic Fund), a nonprofit organization. LEAF's mission is to support the students, teachers and families at Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 through fundraising, volunteering, and community events.

Website: www.pghleaf.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PghLibertyPTO/

Email: president@pghleaf.org
