

El Nido del Águila

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

November 2022

Vol. 8, Issue 2

Getting ready for *Día de los Muertos!*



LEAF volunteers are busily making calaveras de azúcar (sugar skulls) for the children to decorate at our annual school-wide celebration on November 4th! This year we'll be using food-coloring markers instead of icing—no mess, no stress! :)

Read more about the event on page 3.

IN THIS ISSUE: *Día de los Muertos potluck & party * Hispanic Heritage Month * Magnet applications for graduating 5th graders * Making ofrendas * Family Fridays * Castles Program * Lección de Español * Teacher resources * Thanksgiving books * Crafts * Recipes * LEAF's website*

CALENDAR

Monthly Liberty Community Meetings—We've gone HYBRID!

Date: Wednesday, November 9, 2022

In-person location: School library

Zoom link: [see email from Ms. Z!]

Dinner and childcare are provided at these monthly meetings, which are held back-to-back:

- 1) **6:00 PM: 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) **7:00 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. Meeting agenda: bit.ly/leafagendas22-23
For info or to RSVP: president@pghleaf.org

Election Day Bake Sale Tues. November 8, 9am – 2pm

Liberty and the neighboring EMS building are both polling sites for Election Day on November 8th. We will hold a bake sale as a fundraiser for LEAF. We are looking for volunteers to provide baked goods or to help with the sale during the day on November 8th. Baked goods must be packaged individually and include an ingredient list. They can be dropped off at Liberty either the day before or the day of the sale.

Volunteers can sign up using the QR code.

Contact Anne Kovalan-Santoni with questions: anne.kovalan@gmail.com



PPS Public Hearing

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

WHEN: Monday, November 21st at 6:00pm

WATCH: <https://vimeo.com/event/2209623>

TESTIFY: Write your comments in advance, and they will read them aloud for you. First, 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>

Liberty Skate Night Wed. February 8, 6 – 8pm

Mark your calendars for a night of family fun this February! Our annual Liberty Skate Night, sponsored by LEAF, will be Wed February 8th 6pm-8pm at Schenley Park Ice skating rink. Admission is free for Liberty students and families! Skate rentals are included!

Hispanic Heritage Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated from September 15 to October 15. The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage week under President Lyndon Johnson. It was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30 day period. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988. National Hispanic Heritage Month celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. The day of September 15th is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16th and September 18th. People of Hispanic descent make up 18% of the U.S. population. The colors that represent this month are intensely bright colors like orange, red, yellow, and green.

Book List

The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet, Mice and Beans, The Moon Within, Coming Up Cuban, The Do-Over, Witchlings, Manu, Lety Out Loud: A Wish Novel, Invisible, Land of Cranes, Miss Quinces, Nino Wrestles The World, Pablo's Tree, The Sky Painter, Chato's Kitchen, Abuela, A Box Full of Kittens, Lola Levine Is Not Mean!, Golden Tales, Level Up/Paso de nivel.

Famous Quotes

One of the hardest parts of life is deciding whether to walk away or try harder. Hispanic saying.

The Latina in me is an ember that blazes forever. Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

There is nothing harder than the softness of indifference. Juan Montalvo
Virtue is the truest nobility. Miguel de Cervantes.

Preservation of one's own culture does not require contempt or disrespect for other cultures. Cesar Chavez.

Attention 5th grade families: are you ready to apply for the magnet lottery?

The application for the 2023-24 school year opens on November 1; the deadline is December 9, 2022 at 5 pm. To apply, you *must* have a HAC (Home Access

Center) login and password! If you forgot/don't have yours, either call or email them.

- TO CALL: The Parent Hotline is 412-529-4357 to answer a few security questions and receive your account information (hours: Monday - Friday, 6:30AM - 4:00PM)
- TO EMAIL: Write them at parenthotline@pghschools.org with your name, child(ren)'s name, and a number to best reach you during business hours.

Once you have your HAC login info, to apply, visit:

<https://bit.ly/applyppsmagnet22>

To learn about magnet school options:

<https://www.pghschools.org/magnet>

If you do not apply for a magnet, when your fifth grader graduates this year, they will be automatically enrolled in your neighborhood school next year.

Family Fridays

A beloved pre-COVID tradition has returned to Liberty! On some of the half-days throughout the school year, Liberty invites students to bring a family member or other beloved adult to school. It's a chance to see the great work our kids are doing, meet the faculty and fellow Liberty families, and join our children for activities in the classroom. We had our first one in September, and a hundred family members participated!

Dia De Los Muertos Potluck & Party Nov. 4, 6-8 PM, rain or shine!

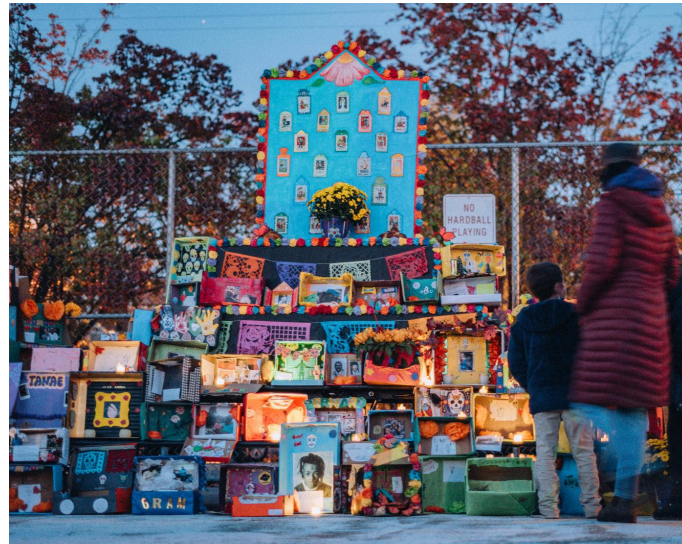
As a Spanish language magnet, Pittsburgh Liberty K-5 celebrates this delightful Mexican holiday, a lively and joyous celebration of beloved friends and family who are deceased. Our students create *ofrendas* (altars) with the departed loved ones' photos, momentos, and favorite foods, and gather together for food and fun.

This year's event—a potluck dinner and party—will be in-person on Liberty's campus and will feature our giant schoolwide *ofrenda* (pictured here—photo courtesy Shannon Konek)! We're planning several free activities (crafts, dancing, students' raffle) both indoors and outdoors, so we can be flexible, no matter the weather!

Volunteers are needed to cook (or just bring food/drinks); set up and run the event on the day-of; and clean up after. To volunteer, either email Elaine at elaine@elainevitone.com or fill out our volunteer signup form: <https://pghleaf.org/volunteer>

To see more of the beautiful photos from last year's event, visit: bit.ly/FBmuertos21

(Did you catch our event's writeup in Kisburgh last year? Check it out at: bit.ly/kidsburgh-muertos)



About the holiday

Día de los Muertos, or Day Of The Dead, is celebrated throughout Mexico between October 31 and November 2. On this holiday, Mexicans remember and honor their deceased loved ones. It is a festive and colorful holiday celebrating the lives of those who have passed on. Many visit the gravesite and have a celebration there. They also make elaborately decorated *ofrendas* in their homes to welcome the spirits. In Pre-Hispanic times, the dead were buried close to the family homes (often in a tomb underneath the central patio of the house), and there was a great emphasis on maintaining ties with deceased ancestors, who were believed to continue to exist on a different plane.

With the arrival of the Spaniards and Catholicism, All Souls' and All Saints' Day practices were incorporated into Pre-Hispanic beliefs and customs that the holiday came to be celebrated today. The belief behind Day Of The Dead practices is that spirits return to the world of the living for one day of the year to be with their families. The spirits are greeted with offerings of special foods and things that they enjoyed while alive. Some of these things are: *Pan de Muertos* (Day of the Dead bread), *Calaveras de Azucar* (Sugar skulls that are not eaten), *tamales*, hot chocolate, *mole*, and many other fruits and foods. Marigolds are placed at the gravesite and usually lead to the house for the spirits to find their way home.

It is customary to spend the night in the cemetery with a picnic dinner, music, and parties. Altars are made at the house to greet the dead. They are decorated

with flowers, foods, and bright colors to celebrate and welcome the deceased loved ones.

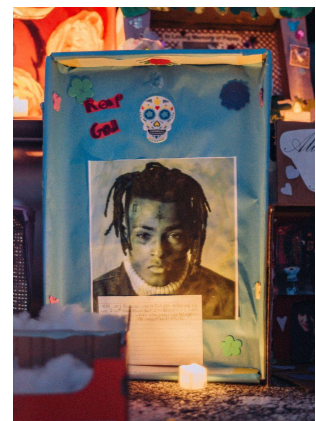
Making ofrendas

Photos by Shannon Konek

As a home project, Liberty students are encouraged to create an *ofrenda*. They include information about the deceased loved one they are honoring (favorite foods, colors, hobbies, etc).

If you would like your child to work on their ofrenda at school, please send a shoe box and photos (can be copies or drawings of loved one), and they will help them create their ofrenda in class.

If completing the project at home, please send it to school by **Tuesday, November 1st**. The ofrenda will then be displayed at our school's Dia de los Muertos evening celebration Nov 4th (see story above).



Castles Program at Liberty

Also known as the “house” program at other schools, Liberty’s castle program assigns our large student community into smaller groups. Members of a group

work together as a team and encourage one another in celebrating collective successes. Periodically the kids wear their castle shirt for group activities.

During the school day, the kids are learning about how to model and recognize the traits. The program promotes character, academic success, school spirit, a family atmosphere, and culture of excellence. It is designed to uplift *all* students.

At Liberty, each castle is named after a character trait, and given an associated color, mascot, and T-shirt. Castles earn points as members display the month's trait. These points earn Soaring Eagle tickets. Castle flags and points are posted by the school library.

Liberty's castles are:

- Grit // Huskies // Green
- Confidence // Lions // Blue
- Determination // Bulldogs // Red
- Curiosity // Bears // Yellow
- Creativity // Panthers // Grey
- Integrity // Mustangs // Purple
- Honesty // Honesty // Gold

Liberty students are each assigned to a castle for a big kick-off. The goal is to hold a meeting at the beginning of each month to introduce a different monthly trait and celebrate the winning castle for the previous trait/month. A second monthly meeting then gathers the kids to participate in fun activities.

Points are awarded to any student demonstrating the monthly character trait each school day. Points are only given—never taken away. The leading castle is announced during the school-wide announcements. The castle with the most points is celebrated at the end of the month at the castle meeting.

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 and get reimbursed by LEAF, our parent organization. The check will then be delivered to you shortly after the monthly LEAF meeting.

Lección de español (Spanish lesson)

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

La Noche de Duelo

Ofrenda

Papel Picado

Calacas

El arco

DAY OF THE DEAD

The Night of Sorrow is usually started with a candlelight procession to the cemetery.

offering: goods that are set out on the altars to memorialize the dead.

A type of Mexican Folk Art using tissue paper with intricate festive designs cut out that are used as decorations.

Prominent figures in all celebrations. The skeleton figures that represent death.

The arch on the grave or on the altar.

El Dia de Accion de Gracias (Thanksgiving)

Feast: un banquete

Turkey: el pavo

Stuffing: el relleno

Bread: el pan

November: Noviembre

mashed potatoes: el pure de patatas

Gravy: la salsa de carne

The Numbers: Los numeros

0: *cero*

1: *uno*

2: *dos*

3: *tres*

4: *cuatro*

5: *cinco*

6: *seis*

7: *siete*

8: *ocho*

9: *nueve*

10: *diez*

11: *once*

12: *doce*

13: *trece*

14: *catorce*

15: *quince*

16: *dieciseis*

17: *diecisiete*

18: *dieciocho*

19: *diecinueve*

20: *veinte*

Colors: Los Colores

black: *negro*

green: *verde*

white: *blanco*

blue: *azul*

yellow: *amarillo*

orange: *naranja or anaranjado*

red: *rojo*

gray: *gris*

brown: *cafe or marron*

purple: *morado*

pink: *rosado or rosa*

Thanksgiving Books

Thanksgiving, a favorite holiday for many, is more than just a time to eat great food. It's also a time to think about what you're grateful for. Today, there is a lot to be grateful for, including good health and being able to spend the holidays with our families and friends in a safe way. Thanksgiving is a great time to show kids books about being thankful.

- *Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade* by Melissa Sweet
- *The First Thanksgiving (Pete the Cat Series)* by James and Kimberly Dean
- *Llama Llama Gives Thanks* by Anna Dewdney
- *Our Table* by Peter H. Reynolds
- *Bear Says Thanks* by Karma Wilson and Jane Chapman
- *The Thank You Book (Elephant and Piggie Series)* by Mo Willems
- *Ankle Soup: A Thanksgiving Story* by Maureen Sullivan
- *Turkey Trouble* by Wendi Silvano
- *Gracias the Thanksgiving Turkey* by Joy Cowley
- *Turk and Runt* by Lisa Wheeler
- *Pilgrim's First Thanksgiving* by Ann McGovern
- *An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving* by Louisa May Alcott
- *Thanksgiving in the Woods* by Phyllis Alsdurf
- *Thanks-For-Giving Day* by Peter Dubay

Welcome, new Liberty families!

Liberty community members are working together to ease the transition for kindergarten and transfer students and their families. We call it Linking Liberty!

Are you new to Liberty? Go to the following link to be connected to a current student family: bit.ly/LinkLibertyNew22

Are you a Liberty Veteran that wants to help someone new? Sign up at the following link to be connected to a new family. bit.ly/LinkLibertyVet22

Reach out to Vicki Potter (vicki.potter78@gmail.com) for more info.

Visit our website!

Check out www.pghleaf.org for info on:

- Gifted Services at Liberty
- Extracurriculars at Liberty
- Communications (making sure you're receiving all announcements from the district, the school, your teachers, and LEAF)
- PDFs of LEAF's newsletter, *The Eagle's Nest* (current and archive issues)
- Childcare (extended day, summer camps, etc)
- Kindergarten families' section (orientation video)
- 5th grade families' section (middle school magnet application processes)
- Fundraising opportunities for our teachers and students

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

Recipe: Empanadas

Empanadas or empanadillas are baked or fried turnovers (made from wheat or corn flour), which are usually filled with meat, cheese, vegetables, and even sweet ingredients such as apple or guava paste. They are popular throughout Latin and South America. They are thought to have originated in Spain, where the Empanada Festival is part of Galician culture. The name comes from empanar or to coat with bread. One of the Catalan Chefs, Roberto De Nola added the empanada recipe to the very first published cookbook in Spain in 1520. When the Spanish hit the New World in the 16th century, they shared their empanada recipe with the Aztecs and Maya. Every single language, every single country has a word for empanada and a recipe to follow. For this recipe, the trick to the perfect dough is to add hot water. This makes the process easier and the dough will be more elastic at the end.

3 Ingredients Homemade Empanada Dough

3 cups all purpose flour sifted

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp salt

1 cup hot water

Instructions:

In a large bowl, mix the flour, salt, and oil. Stir with a spatula. Carefully, add the hot water and stir again until the consistency is crumbly. Knead the dough with your hands for a few minutes and form a ball. Let the dough rest for 30 minutes before making the discs. After 30 minutes, use a rolling pin to roll out the dough into a thin sheet, and cut it into pie circles (You can use a small plate for this). Use immediately, or store in the fridge for up to 3 days or in the freezer for a few months. If the dough is too wet or dry, you can add more flour or water.

Craft: Homemade pumpkin playdough

Ingredients:

1 cup of flour
1/4 cup salt
2 tsp cream of tartar
2-3 tbsp pumpkin pie spice (You can make your own pumpkin pie spice blend with nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves.)
2 tbsp vegetable oil
1 cup of water

Directions:

Mix in a saucepan over medium heat while stirring. The mixture will get lumpy and form into a dough. Allow to cool. Once it is cool to the touch, you can knead it until it is soft. Enjoy.

Craft: Coffee filter leaves

You will need:

- newspaper or something to cover the work surface
- white coffee filters (any size will do)
- Markers
- Scissors
- Spray bottle with water, vinegar, or a combination of both.

Spread out the newspaper on your work surface. Place the coffee filter on the surface, laying it flat. Draw a leaf in the middle of the filter. Use various Fall colors. Spray the leaf with the spray bottle. Do not saturate, but spray enough to allow the colors to mix and spread. Allow to dry. Watch as the colors blend

together as the leaf dries. Cut out the leaf, once it is completely dry. Make a few, and hang them together.

Recipe: Mini cornucopias

You will need

- waffle cones
- fresh fruit of your choosing. (Apples, grapes, and berries are great choices. You can even add cheese.)

Let your children pick their favorite fruits. Wash and cut the fruit. Add it all into the waffle cones. Enjoy.

Submit to this newsletter!

Article deadlines for this year are Nov. 12 (December issue), Dec. 13 (January issue), Jan 17 (February issue), Feb. 18 (March issue), March 21 (April issue), April 18 (May issue), and May 21 (June issue). Send stories 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
