

# *El Nido del Águila*

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

April 2024

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## April Calendar

**Monthly School Community-Wide Meetings: Tues.,  
April 9th from 6:00 - 8:00pm**

*These two back-to-back meetings will be held **virtually for  
the rest of the school year.***

Zoom link: <https://tinyurl.com/5yhj9rj6> (Scan QR code)

- 1) **6:00 PM: PSCC (aka Parent School Community Council):** Led by our principal and our Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinator, this meeting serves as our school district's primary way to engage families at the school level. **See agendas & minutes at [bit.ly/LibertyPSCC23](http://bit.ly/LibertyPSCC23)**
- 2) **7:00 PM: LEAF (our parent-teacher organization):** Led by parents and guardians, LEAF supports our students, teachers, and families through fundraising, volunteering, and community events. **See agendas & minutes at [pghleaf.org/meetings](http://pghleaf.org/meetings).** And if you can't make a meeting, your voice is still welcome and needed! Write us at [president@pghleaf.org](mailto:president@pghleaf.org).



Our ears are open for ways we can best help our school thrive—all of our students, teachers, staff, and families at Liberty K-5!

### ***PPS Public Hearings (Virtual): Pittsburgh Board of Public Education***

Monthly opportunity for citizens' comments on district matters.

**DATE:** Mon., April 22nd at 6:00pm

**TO TESTIFY:** Write and submit your comments in advance, and then read them aloud at the Zoom meeting. Comments can be no longer than three minutes/about 400 words. First, you **MUST** 1) register (deadline is noon, the day of the hearing) by calling 412-529-3868; then 2) email your testimony to Laura Getty at [lgetty1@pghschools.org](mailto:lgetty1@pghschools.org). OR, If you are unable to read your own testimony, you may submit it to Laura Getty, and it will be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

**MORE ON REGISTRATION:** <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/4043>

**SPEAKERS' TECH INSTRUCTIONS:** [bit.ly/hearingzoom](http://bit.ly/hearingzoom)

**WATCH:** <https://vimeo.com/event/2843465>

### ***Take your VIP to School Day***

May 17th

## **Update on district facilities utilization plan**

Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Wayne N. Walters, EdD delivered a preliminary draft of the Facilities Utilization Plan on March 15. The Board is reviewing it. The Superintendent will present it to the public at the Board's Education Committee Meeting scheduled for April 3. For the latest updates visit:

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

## **Volunteers Needed!**

Parents and guardians, your school community needs some helping hands with these three upcoming spring events! **To sign up visit <https://pghleaf.org/volunteer-for-leaf> or scan the QR code**



 **Book Fair:** May 6-10

This event gives students and families access to thousands of affordable, popular books from the world's top publishers, inspiring a lifelong love of reading and generating much-needed funds for school and classroom libraries. Liberty students can visit the Book Fair in the library May 6-10 to

buy the books they want, know and love! Parents can also make purchases online. LEAF is looking for 10-12 volunteers to fill various slots throughout the week of the book fair: a couple hours in the morning and a couple hours in the afternoon. Assistance is needed for help with setup and breakdown as well as student shopping concierge. Students, teachers, and staff would greatly appreciate your help! To sign up, use the QR code & link above!


### 🎪 **Fun Fair: Fri., May 31**

At the end of each school year, LEAF invites Liberty family, friends, and neighbors for an evening of food, games, and fun! [Can you help us plan this evening?](#) It will be Friday, May 31st. To sign up, use the **QR code**, & link above!

## LEDP board members needed

The Liberty Extended Day Program (a.k.a LEDP) is looking for new members of its Board of Directors! For almost 40 years, LEDP has provided quality before- and after-school programming for students attending Pittsburgh Liberty. The Board of Directors works with the program's executive director to provide direction and community input into the program, and the whole Liberty community (not just parents/guardians of those enrolled in the program) is welcome to take part! We meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month during the school year (usually via Zoom but sometimes in person) and less frequently during the summer.


Please contact the Board President, Liz Dell, by emailing [elizabeth.h.dell@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.h.dell@gmail.com) to learn more.



## DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE A WEBSITE?

LOG ON TO [PGHLEAF.ORG](http://PGHLEAF.ORG) FOR:

- Extracurriculars
- "Gifted" Services (a.k.a. "Greenway")
- Back issues of this newsletter
- Childcare (extended day, summer camps, etc.)
- Kindergarten families' section (orientation video)
- 5th grade families' section (middle-school magnet application processes)
- Making sure you're receiving all announcements from the district, the school, your teachers, & LEAF—your friendly parent-teacher organization!



## Liberty spirit wear

Support Liberty's parent organization, LEAF, and show you Liberty spirit by purchasing some Liberty gear--which is considered part of our school uniform! (And BTW, we carry hats, too!) Sizes are available for both kids and adults! Orders may be placed online and paid via paypal or credit card.

[bit.ly/LibertySpiritWear](http://bit.ly/LibertySpiritWear)



## Autism Acceptance Month

Autism Acceptance Month celebrates and promotes acceptance for individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In 2020, 1 in every 36 American children was diagnosed with an ASD. ASD is a developmental condition, meaning that it occurs from birth and is not the result of something someone did. When someone has ASD, their brain develops differently. This impacts people in different ways, such as how they speak, play, move, and learn. ASDs include autism, Asperger syndrome, ADHD, learning and intellectual disabilities, and others. Visit <https://www.autismspeaks.org/> for resources or if you have more questions.



First held in 1972 by the Autism Society, Autism Awareness Month emphasized 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 established a Foundation focused on applied research. In 1999, the puzzle ribbon was adapted as the universal sign for Autism awareness. On March 4, 2021, the Autism Society of America officially announced the shift in terminology from Autism Awareness Month to Autism Acceptance Month.

## Kids' books about Autism Spectrum Disorder

“The Girl Who Thought in Pictures: The Story of Dr. Temple Grandin” by Julia Finley Mosca

“How to Build a Hug: Temple Grandin and Her Amazing Squeeze Machine” by Amy Guglielmo

“A Day with No Words” by Tiffany Hammond

“Wiggles, Stomps and Squeezes Calm My Jitters Down” by Lindsey Rowe Parker  
→ Also available in Spanish! “Meneos, Pistones, Y Apretones Para Calmar Mi Cosquilleo”

“The Boy with Big, Big Feelings” by Britney Winn Lee

“Slug Days” by Sara Leach

“A Boy Called Bat” by Elana K. Arnold

“Lupe Wong Won’t Dance” by Donna Barba Higuera

“Frankie and Amelia” by Cammie McGovern

“A Whole New Ballgame” by Phil Bildner

## **“Gifted” services (a.k.a. Greenway) at Liberty**

Did you know we have a detailed writeup about how families access the district’s “gifted” services on our website? Visit <https://pghleaf.org/gifted-services-1> for information on how to request testing for your child and what to expect from that process.

## **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](http://bit.ly/pghleaf-teachers), send it (along with your receipt) to [president@pghleaf.org](mailto: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.

## **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).

## **Crafts & Recipes**

### ***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.

## 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!

## 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](mailto:lzwieryznski1@pghschools.org)

## Teacher appreciation

Teacher appreciation week is May 6-10. LEAF has sponsored events throughout the year to show our teachers how thankful they are for their hard work. Please consider sending a token of your thanks to the school's staff during teacher appreciation week in May!

## Give to LEAF

At [pghleaf.org/give](https://pghleaf.org/give), you can make a tax-deductible donation via Square or Facebook. ... And by the way, on Facebook, you can opt for either a one-time donation *or* a recurring donation—or encourage your friends to post their own fundraisers by sharing this link: <https://www.facebook.com/fund/PghLibertyPTO/>

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*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](http://www.pghleaf.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PghLibertyPTO/](https://www.facebook.com/PghLibertyPTO/)

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