

Dear Parents,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving with plenty of good food and good times with family. If you haven't seen our artwork outside of our classroom, check out our turkey handprints and our recipes for how to cook a turkey. Some of the students were very specific in their instructions, such as "First, buy the turkey. Next, put it in the oven. Then, take it out." The suggestions for oven temperature ranged from 6 - 1000 degrees and cooking time ranged from 3 - 3000 minutes. We have many budding chefs in our class!

This week we started off learning some new things when Hawk's parents came to school to teach the children how to make their own hand stamped leather name bracelets. The students picked out the stamp letters of their names and hammered them into the leather along with some additional design stamps. They also were able to see how a LED destination sign works. Each child got to see their name displayed on the sign and then got to see how the electronic circuits work inside the sign. It was fascinating and we may have some future programmers and engineers in our class!

Tuesday we had our field trip to the National Hellenic Museum in Chicago. We learned about how history and myths combine to create legends. Students from Plato were selected to participate in acting out the legend of Hercules as well as Helen of Troy. Many of our students were able to participate and were given props to use and lines to recite. To say that we have a few "hams" in our class is an understatement! At the museum we were also able to see and touch ancient rocks and petrified wood from the Aegean islands. Since we are currently beginning our exploration of rocks at school, I think the children were excited to make the connection that rocks have been around forever and link us to our history.

Continuing our exploration of rocks, we took advantage of the beautiful weather today and went on a rock hunt. I gave each student a gallon size ziploc bag and told them to choose wisely and remember that they had to carry their own rocks all the way to the park and back to school. It was a fun adventure and there were some children who put every rock in their bag that would fit and some who were more particular and came back to school with only a partially filled bag. The walk back to school was a struggle for the few whose bags were so full and heavy that they were ripping the bags and slowing the rock enthusiasts down considerably. I asked the students to leave a few rocks at school to explore and investigate. Many wanted to bring most of their rocks home. Enjoy the beautiful collections and maybe start your own family rock garden!

We had a visit this week from Ms. Steph from the Des Plaines Library. She is always so much fun and the kids absolutely love her! She is so enthusiastic and silly and she gets everyone to participate and act silly too. She read us *One Day in the Eucalyptus, Eucalyptus Tree*, as well as had us dance with scarves and acted out the fingerplay “Five Little Monkeys Swinging in a Tree” with a crocodile puppet that eventually ate all of the students as well as the five little monkeys.

Some other books we’ve been reading this week: *Beautiful Oops*, *Diary of a Worm*, *If Rocks Could Sing*, and *Take Away the A*. We are planning on starting another novel study but may wait until after the winter break. Speaking of books, our Scholastic book order has been delayed and is currently being held in Franklin Park at the UPS distribution center. They tried to deliver it over the Thanksgiving break and because we were closed they decided to put a hold on it. I have spent all of this week emailing and calling Scholastic and UPS trying to get this resolved. Hopefully our box of books will arrive early next week. I am going to pass out a December book order tomorrow in case any of you want to order gift books, etc. I know that if I put the order in by next Friday, the shipment will arrive before school gets out Dec. 21. Thank you all so much for your orders. The points we earned enabled us to order a 100 piece Magna-Tile set for our classroom. The students were so excited when they arrived and each day they eagerly work together and take turns building with them.

Some notes: Tomorrow (Dec. 1) we will be going to the bank to make deposits. Please send your student with money if you would like them to participate. We will be going to the bank each Friday.

Monday, December 4, we will be going to the library to do Tumblebooks. Please make sure your student has a pair of earbuds/ earphones at school. We go every other Monday to use their computers for this program so our only other date in December will be on the 18th.

Finally, our Winter Program is in two short weeks! We are practicing our song and lines daily at school but need and appreciate your participation in helping your child practice and learn his/her lines. Thank you so much for your help!

Thank you for sharing your amazing children with me. Have a great weekend!

Ms. Leslie