

Unfortunately a combination of weather conditions and a school break has caused a major disruption of our garden activities. Last week inclement weather conditions resulted in no outdoor gardening for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes and the planned completion of our white potato planting in the orchard. The following week was a scheduled school break which resulted in two weeks between plantings of potatoes. So this Thursday, the volunteers had to finish planting the white potatoes in the orchard to keep the harvesting of the potatoes during this school year . Overall 270 potato cuttings with eyes were planted by the 5<sup>th</sup> graders two weeks ago and this Thursdays. On Thursday we also purchased the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Arbor Day oak tree commonly referred to as a Texas Red Oak (*Quercus nuttall*). The intention is for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class to plant this tree the week of February 24<sup>th</sup> providing that there is no rainout.

Arbor Day tree planting is a team activity. It is important to understand that this is NOT just one team but a coordination of teams all working toward one goal – the successful presentation and planting of an oak tree from the class of 2021-2022 to Oak Forest Elementary School. This team of teams will make a number of presentations and will transport the tree from its holding area to its new home. To successfully accomplish this goal, the students will remove the surface grass where the tree is to be planted. They will dig a hole that is 2-5 times wider and as deep as the container the tree is currently in. When planting the tree the soil in the hole needs to be amended with compost and fertilizer similar to the way we have been planting transplants in the garden. Once the tree (ball) is placed in the hole the soil is returned to the hole. During this operations, teams will water the tree ball and surrounding soil until the hole is filled back in with soil. And then the area will be mulched. A small celebration will conclude the festivities.

Hopefully we will have good weather, this can be a lot of fun!

See you next week!