

OFE Newsletter for February 17, 2022

Next week on Tuesday, we will begin the planting of the 5th grade Arbor Day oak tree commonly referred to as a Texas Red Oak (*Quercus nuttall*). To do this, several teams over the course of the week will work together to prepare the site for the tree. On Tuesday, weather permitting, we will clear the sod/grass from the area that will be where your new tree will be officially planted on the 24th. After the sod is skimmed off of the soil, a hole will be dug by another team. That hole should be in the shape of a bowl 2 ½ - 5 times the diameter of the 30gal pot holding the ball of the tree and 18-20 inches deep in the center. We may have to cover the soil and the hole to prevent any rain from undoing our work.

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. As was said earlier, 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 very similar to the way we have been planting transplants in our gardens. Once the tree (ball) is placed in the hole by one team, a second team needs to return the soil to the hole around the tree root ball. During this operations, a third team will water the tree ball and surrounding soil until the hole is filled back in with soil. And then the area will be mulched by yet another team (so many teams that I've lost count.)

As well as planting the tree you will also bury a time capsule which will be filled with mementos of this time in your lives. When you graduate high school you can come back and dig up that capsule cut it open and look back at this time in your lives as you wrote about it and experienced it.

Now can you imagine doing this all by yourself? Think for a moment how much easier and more fun it is to accomplish this task as a team of teams! Great things large and small are possible through working together! In celebration of you all working together in pursuit of this common goal of gifting a Texas Red Oak to Oak Forest Elementary School, a small celebration of a snack and drinks will conclude the festivities.

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

See you next week!