



The Window

NWCA Monthly Newsletter

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Harvest Party Fun!

by Stacy Payne

The 21 members of our Phoenix Council worked feverishly preparing games and contests for NWCA's annual Harvest Party for several weeks. They brainstormed ideas, voted for their favorites, formed teams, and went to work. Each team was assigned a game and had to decide how to play it. They compiled supply lists and created signs. They gathered everything they needed and placed it in a cubby... then waited.

The big day arrived—October 30th! Students arrived at school decked out in their costumes. It was hard to tell who was who! There were superheroes, dragons, animals, and several Darth Vaders. The teachers dressed up, as well!



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NWCA Mission & Goals

The Northwest Chinese Academy provides an outstanding educational foundation in the true immersion of Mandarin language, fostering the total development and highest potential in the individual child.

- To immerse children in Chinese language and culture as well as providing bilingual and bi-literate education so they are comfortable as responsible global citizens.
- To provide a school environment that supports co-operation, creativity, resourcefulness and the love of learning.
- To develop children who are creative, critical thinkers and self-confident in who they are.
- To encourage mutual respect, honesty and multi-cultural understanding.



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Students gathered in the morning for a short assembly which started by recognizing several children for being “Star Students.” Awards were given to the most unique costumes, and the 4th grade won our classroom decorating contest. Mrs. Stacy, dressed as a tap dancing troll, read one of her favorite Halloween stories, “The Biggest Pumpkin Ever.” Classes even went “Trick or Treating” around the school!

The Phoenix Council got busy after lunch setting up their games. The rest of the students arrived, and the fun began! At 2:30 everyone gathered in the Community Room to hear how the afternoon was going to go. Students were then free to choose between a cake walk, scavenger hunt, mystery boxes, pumpkin bowling, a guessing jar, a fish pond, and a caramel apple snack.

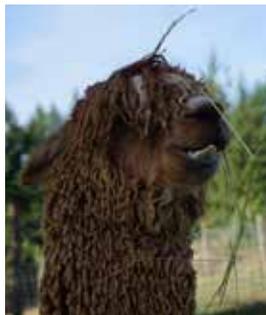
Everyone had a great time! Many thanks to the Phoenix Council for their hard work and dedication!



Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Classes Have Fun At The Pumpkin Patch

by NWCA Parent Rick Ader

Unseasonably mild and sunny skies met us at the Plumper Pumpkin Patch in (far west) Northwest Portland. This was the fall outing for our Preschool and Pre-K kids at NWCA.



For those who haven't been, the Plumper Pumpkin Patch is more like a Disneyland of fall frolic than just a field of pumpkins. The kids had a tough time choosing how to occupy their time since there were just too many fun options. Corrugated tube slides of lengths between 10 and 40 feet, hay bale mazes with bridges to cross and tractor tires to traverse, and baby pumpkin bowling were among the many options for entertainment. There were also various farm animals surrounding the beautiful grounds, including goats, pigs, chickens, alpacas, and wild boars!!

The group activity for our energetic participants was a tractor ride with hay bale seating to tour the grounds of the farm. The farm's roots trace back to the turn of the 20th century. Several fun-filled facts were mentioned, as follows. Underneath the property there is a train stop running to Portland from which workers used to commute to the farm. The farmhouse was one of the first in the area to have electricity back in the early 1900s with a grand total of 5 light bulbs being powered when fully operational!

The few hours we had to tour the grounds went by before we knew it, but we did not leave empty-handed. All our school children were able to choose their own pumpkin prize to take home with them. Hopefully the kids came back to school without too much mud on their boots, as the fall Pacific Northwest rains had not yet fallen on the farm - an extra bonus to an already fun-filled outing. Special thanks to Huang Laoshi, Donna Laoshi and Gao Laoshi for arranging the trip!



Field Trip to the Forestry Center

by Heidi Hein-Archer

On a beautiful October day, all classes, grades K-5, took a trip to the World Forestry Center to explore and learn more about the indigenous people of Oregon. Our tour guide took us through parts of the arboretum, to different trees and bushes and explained how Native Americans used these natural resources. The students not only gained new knowledge about a different culture, but were able to be hands-on and find twigs, plants and other wildlife.



It was a really interesting field trip, though I think my group's favorite thing was the colony of stink bugs all over the pillars and front door. It just goes to show that every moment, no matter how small, can be an opportunity to learn.

Why We Like Google Classroom

by Mrs. Kari Blasing

E-Learning has become an important part of education and technology and can vastly improve the way we learn. Google Classroom is a learning management tool created by Google to be used by students for this very purpose. After setting up a virtual classroom, teachers can use the site as a centralized space to easily share documents, assignments and announcements.



Supplementary E-Learning materials such as videos, games and links to articles or webpages can also be easily shared, accessed and stored on the site. Teachers can also Google documents and spreadsheets, as well. This not only creates less need for paper; it also allows students to collaborate together on shared documents. Students can easily "turn in" assignments, and parents can easily see what their children are doing in class. Students are privy to these tools by logging into their email and checking to see if anything has been posted. Parents can download the Google classroom phone application and open the tool anytime to see not only what is going on in class, but also to interact with their child, play online games, or visit pages and assignments posted.

Thankfully, all students at NWCA have a Google education email. If your teacher has set up a classroom and is using the classroom as a resource for students, please take time to see what is going on in their class. After some practice, this application is easy to use and accessible from all devices.

CONNECT: Parents Share Resources

by NWCA Parent Melissa Tom

“How do I support my child in learning Mandarin when I don’t speak it?” was the topic of discussion at a well-attended CONNECT, NWCA Parent Coffee Talk on October 14th. With the gracious support of Mrs. Stacy, students watched a DVD or played on the playground after school while parents had a chance to meet and share ideas on what makes Mandarin immersion important to them and how we can help our children.

**At NWCA
students move from
learning to read
in Chinese to
reading to learn
in Chinese.**

“I want to give my child the skills he will need in the work-place,” and “We love the community at NWCA,” said a couple of the parents. Others highlighted that the level of fluency children attain at NWCA is unlike any other Mandarin immersion program in the United States. At NWCA students move from learning to read in Chinese to reading to learn in Chinese. Teachers generally advise at least 20 minutes of Chinese reading a day.

Highlights from the resources discussed include:

- **pleco:** The world’s best digital Chinese dictionary for iPad/iPhone and Android, including handwriting, optical character reader, audio text-to-speech, flashcards and a document reader. *NWCA has a special 20% discount, code “NWCHINESE” . Go to: pleco.com/store/coupon.*
- **Quizlet:** <https://quizlet.com/> Tap into already-created or build your own online flashcards for HSK preparation for any level
- **The Chairman’s Bao:** <http://www.thechairmansbao.com/> Online Chinese newspaper with articles on sports, current events, comedy, technology, nature and society written for learners of Chinese. Choose your HSK level to adjust vocabulary and grammar to match your ability; look up characters by highlighting them and saving them to your flashcard deck, or listen to the audio version of any article

Beth Weise, a veteran parent and expert in Mandarin immersion education, has recently published a new book, [A Parent’s Guide to Mandarin Immersion](#), including the why’s and how’s of supporting our children, and tips from other parents who have been on the journey. We can put together a bulk order at \$12/copy. Please email me if you are interested: melissatom45@gmail.com.

Mrs. Blasing generously shared tips on getting onto Google Classroom. Staying connected allows parents to stay involved in the classroom, help if there is homework, or help if the teacher needs supplies or support. Get connected!

Finally, join us for our next CONNECT meeting on Thursday, November 19 at 7:45am in the Community Room at school. Mrs. Stacy will be our special guest to lead the discussion on student assessments. Come share your ideas on how we can improve on communicating and monitoring student progress.

Visitors in the Elementary Classrooms

by Stacy Payne

Many Northwest Chinese Academy parents do not speak Mandarin. Their child’s education is a journey of faith for many of them. Since they cannot read or understand Mandarin, they are trusting that their child is really learning. In an effort to help parents know what is happening in their child’s classroom, and to show them that their child is progressing in their learning, parents of students in Kindergarten through 5th grade were invited to visit their child’s classroom for an hour on Friday, October 16.

Students acted as tour guides, showing their parents what they’ve been learning. Parents were able to view posters created and assignments completed. They were able to see their child interact in Mandarin with their teacher and classmates. Teachers were available to answer questions and explain more about what is happening at school. Ms. H and Mrs. Blasing were also available to talk with parents and show what has been taught in English.

The students seemed to enjoy showing their parents their classrooms and what they’ve learned. You could see how proud they are of their accomplishments. The students are eager to have their parents visit again soon!

Upcoming Events

November

13	Annual Science Fair	2:30-4:00pm
13	Freaky Friday Movie Night	6:00-8:00pm
19	CONNECT Parent Meeting	7:45am
25-27	No School -- Happy Thanksgiving!	
30	Parent/Teacher Conferences	8:00am-4:00pm

December

4	K-5th Grade Parents Visit Classrooms	3:30-4:00pm
12	Annual NWCA Pancake Breakfast	9:30-11:00am
18	K-5th Grade Parents Visit Classrooms	3:30-4:00pm

Xie Xie!

- Chao Liu for being our Scrip Representative this year!
- The following parents for helping with the Preschool/Pre-K field trips: Susan C., Jacinta K., Aurora O., Bill S., Arthur W., Eric Z., Rick A., Elisabeth C., Kimmy H., Jay I. and Joyce L.
- Caroline W. for working with the NWCA Board of Directors!
- Melissa T. and Mrs. Blasing for leading the first Coffee Talk for parents!
- Stephanie L. for editing and formatting the Window!
- Maryanne S., LaTosha W. and Alithea C. for leading the Hong Bao team!
- Everyone who donated candy, baked goods and prizes for the Harvest Party!
- Everyone who has donated wine and other items for the Hong Bao Gala!
- NWCA families and alumni who have purchased tables for the Hong Bao Gala!