



## Sprouts Meetings

Our DGC Sprouts youth club's March meeting was titled "Forcing Spring."

We were very busy in April with several activities for the families. We started out in the learning garden where we planted snow peas 🌱 in our grow bags even though it was very chilly. We discussed that we were actually late as peas should go into the ground on 🍀 St. Patrick's Day!

We walked the church grounds and pointed out the branches of trees and shrubs that were still in bud. Once inside we showed the kids how to force branches 🌱 to bloom by splitting the ends and using a hammer 🔨 to help them take in water.

They also decorated CD cases and added seeds and soil to take home. There they will watch the see-through experiment, sprouting seeds 🌱! Each child also went home with a pre-chilled hyacinth bulb to plant in or outdoors for their spring garden. It was an action-packed fun evening helping force spring one way or another.



## April 24, Compost Happens!

We started by welcoming Eagle Scout candidate Alex to our meeting. His organizational skills brought together many hands to help put the donated compost system back together for our Sprouts Garden. He explained his project and the crowd thanked him for his efforts.

Families brought along food scraps to add to the system. We had apple cores, banana peels, eggshells, chicken poop, and other organic waste to add. We encouraged them to collect proper items and return to the garden with their donations for the compost pile often.

Next, we started our potato pots! Each child added potatoes with eyes to a few grow bags for this season's newest crop. We also took note of the snow pea plants that had sprouted from the seeds we planted at our March

meeting!

The crowd headed indoors for more compost education provided by our DGC Sprouts Volunteers and Master Composters Laura and Pat. They helped by answering the compost questions of who, what,





where, when why and how! They touched on the organisms at work in compost and the importance of not adding any chemicals and treated lawn clippings. The Carbon, Nitrogen ratio and Green Waste, Brown Waste examples were discussed. They talked about the importance of keeping food waste out of the landfill and returning it to the soil instead of making methane gas. The children had lots of questions, and many answers! They took turns

helping to read a short poem called "Compost Happens". The crowd headed indoors for more compost education provided by our DGC Sprouts Volunteers and Master Composters Laura and Pat. The children helped kick things off by reading a short poem called "Compost Happens".

The presentation answered the compost questions of who, what, where, when why and how! The children had lots of questions, and many answers! Volunteer Laura touched on the organisms at work in compost and the importance of not adding any chemicals and treated lawn clippings. The Carbon, Nitrogen ratio and Green Waste, Brown Waste examples were also discussed.

They talked about the importance of keeping food waste out of the landfill and returning it to the soil instead of making methane gas. We passed around finished compost to smell to prove that point. The children also were able to see active compost examples complete with centipedes and other small organisms at work.

There were special guests as well, Wadsworth the worm, and a rainbow-colored handmade pill bug. Two composting STARS!

We finished the evening with a door prize raffle and a special family raffle for a large compost system for one family to take home.

We hope that we inspired the Sprouts families to start a pile at home and in the very least help our pile heat up and cook in the Learning Garden. Check out this fun video on compost:

<https://grateful.org/resource/compost-happens/>

The children took turns reading this poem at the compost meeting...

<https://grateful.org/resource/compost-happens/>



## DGC Sprouts Learning Garden Planting Day & Pizza Party May 18th 11am-1pm



Join in the fun as DGC Sprouts youth club children and their families plant the vegetable and flower gardens at St. John Learning Garden. We will be adding seeds and small plants at the St. John Learning Garden, and watering if needed. You will also go home with plants and seeds to start your very own home gardens: A Pizza Garden and a Pollinator (Friendship

and Love) Garden.

**Registration is required to attend the planting day. Please reserve one ticket for each family** that will be attending & eating so that we can plan for the pizza and the seedling, plant, and seed giveaways. Link to register your family:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dgc-sprouts-learning-garden-planting-daypizza-party-tickets-878782420877?aff=oddtcreator>

## Celebrating the Cyclical Cicada! Wednesday, May 22, 2024, 6:00 PM 7:00 PM



Join us at the DGC Sprouts meeting as we celebrate the fascinating life cycle of the periodical cicada. We will welcome Pam Otto, outreach ambassador from St. Charles Park District to our meeting. She will lead us on an Everything Cicada Journey!



We'll learn about the benefits and drawbacks of this unique life cycle during an indoor presentation; then, weather permitting, we'll head out to see what sorts of cicada discoveries we can make.

**Registration not required** for members - more

information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dgc-sprouts-celebrate-the-cyclical-cicada-tickets-879029690467?aff=oddtcreator>

### SPROUT HIGHLIGHTS!

One member of Sprouts, Iris, is quite the bird lover. Here is a poem on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1piSuRd4xkc>



Congratulations to Sprout Irisa who submitted this poem for the Nature Poetry Contest at

Jurica-Suchy Nature Museum:

“We are pleased to announce the winners of our 11th annual Nature Poetry Contest!

Stop in the museum and read them next to the animal(s) they highlight.”