

A Wonderful World of Walnuts

By Jackson Edson, 3rd Grade

Plaza School–Jennifer Limberg, Teacher

“These trees are humongous! They were once the size of me,” said Farmer Jack. “I remember when I was little, we planted these trees with my dad, my papa, and his two friends, Jose and Manuel. My dad and I put the baby trees in the ground. We all worked all day and all night to get the new trees planted.”

“Finally, the new orchard was planted. They looked like fat sticks coming out of the ground. Next, we had to install the sprinkler irrigation system. We stuck the sprinklers in the ground between the trees, spreading out the irrigation hose along the trees. Months later, the trees had leaves.”

“After one year, branches were developing on the trees. They grew like monsters. When two years had passed, we got a few walnuts. When the walnut trees were in the fourth leaf, which meant four years had passed, the madness started. We had two shakers. A shaker is a machine that has a big claw-like hand with two fingers. It went around the orchard shaking trees. The claw grabbed the tree trunk and shook it, and all the walnuts fell off that tree.”

“Then, the tractor with a blower attachment blew the walnuts into the rows between the trees. The sweeper, a machine that has two brushes on the bottom, swept the walnuts into windrows. Then, the pick-up machine and cart went as fast as they could because people like to steal walnuts. As the walnuts are being picked up, they get a ride to the back of the harvester, to the cart, which is like a big container for walnuts.”

“After all the walnuts are picked up, they are taken to a huller. They are dumped into a big square hole with pipes. All the walnuts fall through the gaps in the pipes. An elevator scoops them up, and they are hulled, dried, and sorted. People pick out the bad ones, and the rest are processed.”

“Some are shelled and others may be sold in the shell. They are put in boxes for shipment. Forklifts pick them up and put them on trucks. Then, they are sent to stores all over the world.”

“Those sure were good old days! Come on, Jack, we need to shake some trees,” said Dad.

“Coming,” said Jack.

“It sure was nice remembering how these humongous trees became what they are today.”