

# McGinnis Woods Buzz



December 2013 Volume 7, Issue 4



**McGINNIS WOODS**  
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with  
the Passion to Excel*

## ***The latest buzz . . .***

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## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

1/3	Teacher Workday
1/6	Classes Resume and Report Cards Due
1/10	Re-enrollment Applications Sent Home
1/13	Discovery Club Registration Due
1/14-1/17	PreK—8th Spelling Bees
1/20	No School After school Only MLK Holiday
1/25	New Student Open House

## **McGinnis Woods Mission Statement**

*Our mission is to provide superior academics through hands-on approaches, which foster self confidence and self esteem that inspire a life-long love of learning.*

## ***A Message From Ms. Mary***

As the first semester winds down, we have so many exciting things to celebrate. All of the students have learned new things, gained confidence, and gone on exciting field trips, a few of which are highlighted in this newsletter. The Fun Run in September, Fall Festival in October, Thanksgiving Feasts in November, and Holiday Shoppe in December were just some of the wonderful activities that enhanced the semester.



Another important milestone in McGinnis Woods' history was reached just recently: Pro Builders placed their signs near the area where they will break ground on the new gym! Expected to be completed in late summer, this new building will enrich student's learning experience and provide for some exciting moments in sports, fine arts, and a designated lab. We look forward to watching the building's progress in the new year!



As this year comes to a close, I would like to wish everyone a happy and safe winter break spent with family and friends. I will see everyone back at school on January 6, 2014 as we resume our second semester.

***Happy Holidays to all of our McGinnis Woods family!***

## Wildcat Chat

### Basketball

The Basketball season is in full gear! We are halfway through the season and looking forward to the rest of the season when we return from our holiday. Both our boys and girls teams have really improved this year. We have young teams and we are developing our basketball skills and learning how to play as a team. Our record may show more losses than wins, but some of games could have gone either way! When you only lose by 2 points, no doubt, it is a great game. Our players are playing hard, have great attitudes, and display excellent sportsmanship. We will continue to practice and improve as our season progresses. Come out and watch a game and support our players!

Go Wildcats!!

## *2nd Graders Go to the Center for Puppetry Arts*

This past Tuesday, the 2nd graders went on a field trip to the Center for Puppetry Arts. We first attended a puppet workshop where students created their own puppets based on the Abominable Snow Man! During the workshop, students learned numerous things about building puppets and the water cycle, including fascinating information about how snowflakes are formed!

Later, the students saw a phenomenal puppet show based on the very popular story *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. Afterwards, the puppeteers came out onto the stage and offered a demonstration as to how the puppets worked and the elements that are involved in performing a show of this caliber.

The Fish and Leopards really enjoyed the trip and were playing with their handmade puppets throughout the day as well as discussing their new knowledge about the science of snowflakes. Don't be surprised if you learn something new and exciting about snow and puppet shows this winter from your child after this exciting field trip opportunity!



## *PA Update*

This holiday season we feel blessed to be part of such a wonderful school community. Once again, the families at McGinnis Woods showed their generous spirit by donating items to the North Fulton Community Charities Adopt-a-Family Program. Your generosity directly helped over eight families in need and ensured that they will have a special holiday season.

The elves were also very busy helping our students shop for a special gift for a loved one. It was a delight to see so many young shoppers know exactly what Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother, Grandma, Grandpa or another special someone would like. Each came in with ideas and specific reasons- be sure to ask why they chose each particular gift. We had a great deal of fun helping them shop. Special thanks to Judy Campbell, Dawn Beisner, and Jennifer Goldman for spearheading this huge project and the many volunteers who helped during the week! The PA could not have done it without you.

The PA is always looking for volunteers for the various activities and events we have. If you are interested in being a part of the PA or participating as a committee member, please let us know by e-mailing us at [pa@mcginniswoods.org](mailto:pa@mcginniswoods.org). This is a great way to meet other parents and participate in your child's education. The PA is responsible for events such as the Fall Festival Basket Raffles, Holiday Shoppe, Valentine's Dance, Scene on the Green, Spaghetti Night, and the various fundraisers.

We look forward to volunteering with you in 2014.

Happy Holidays!





## *Preschool Corner*

Preschool learning is really fun! We have been learning about how children around the world celebrate special days such as:

Diwali- the celebration of lights.

Hanukkah -learning about menorahs, dreidels, and meaningful traditions.

The 5 Senses of the Holidays- exploring the sights, sounds, scents, tastes and textures of the holiday season.

Winter and Hibernation- seasonal weather changes that winter brings and all about hibernation.

Christmas - Santa, Christmas trees, and presents.

Kwanzaa-celebrating the seven core principles and homes decorated with art objects.

We incorporate language, science, social studies, art, and music in our daily learning in the preschool, all while having tons of fun! There is always something new being discovered in the preschool as our children learn all about their world!

Happy Holidays from the preschool family!

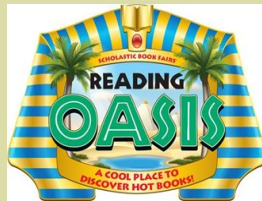


## *1st Graders Learn About Joy*

Community service is an important component of our school life, and we find that there is joy in giving back. The first grade students are doing a special community service project during the month of December. Both the Falcons and Cats classes went on field trips to Build-a-Bear at North Point Mall earlier this month, and each of the students made a bear. It was so much fun! We played games while we made our bears, and the bears were so adorable when completed. All of the students wanted to keep their bears, but they knew their bears were going to new homes. That's right! They are donating their bears to the Children's Wish Foundation where the bears will be distributed to very sick children. The students are experiencing first hand the joy of giving to others. We are very proud of all of our first grade students!



## *Scholastic Bookfair Update*



Students and teachers were on a mission to discover books at our annual Scholastic Book Fair. This year's book fair theme was Reading Oasis- A Cool Place to Discover Hot Books! The theme included Egyptian décor seen all over the book fair and in the library.



Having the book fair during our Thanksgiving Feasts afforded many families an extra opportunity to shop for books. Parents purchased books for classrooms from teacher wish lists and books as gifts for students. Students visited the book fair to create wish lists and purchase books for classroom holiday book swaps.

Due to your overwhelming support books were sent to every classroom in our school! Thank you for your continued support for our book fair and for all you do to encourage reading. Have a wonderful break and remember to read!



## *Robotics Qualifier*

Seven members of the McGinnis Woods Robotics Team traveled to Walton High School on Saturday, December 14 to compete in the First Lego League Robotics Qualifier. The competition was a wonderful opportunity for our students to present their presentation that they had been fine tuning throughout the fall and to show off the team's programming skills as well.

Although the team led by Mr. Tyler, Ms. Lyndsey, and Ms. Ruth, did not place as high as they would have liked, they enjoyed the competition, gained new insights about others' robots, and learned more for future competitions.



## *1800s Day*

Third grade recently studied Colonial America. They celebrated 1800's Day last week as a culmination to their curriculum unit.. The students had a great time learning how the Plymouth Colony lived. They came to school dressed in Colonial style clothes to participate in learning activities that helped bring their learning to life. They made homemade butter and decorated clove apples for scented home decorations. They also made gifts from wood and learned how to whittle, and made rag dolls to represent toys that children would have played with long ago. 1800s Day is always a favorite with the students and builds special memories which cement their learning and last a lifetime.



## *Chorus Concert*

The 4th-8th grade Chorus closed the year out with a bang during our annual winter concert. The students worked very hard this year preparing some oldies but goodies holiday songs. Maddie Moore stepped up to the microphone, and gave our ears a beautiful rendition of The holly and the Ivy. Other selections performed throughout the evening included “Deck the Halls”, “Walking in a Winter Wonderland”, “Candy Cane Lane” and “Rocking Around the Christmas Tree”, that literally rocked our socks off. The concert was all polished up with top hats and canes and familiar tunes that are hard to forget.



## *3rd Graders Ring in the Holidays!*

The 3rd graders recently hosted an early morning musical program for families and friends. The students sang musical selections, under the direction of Ms. Xylina, to welcome the holidays and then showed their excellent recorder skills as well. They sang two selections, a fun song called “There’s Someone in the Chimney” and a more serious selection entitled “Red and Green.” Their sweet voices and expressions made it very special.

The third graders have been learning to read music, under the direction of Ms. Deborah, as a precursor to their band instruction which begins wholeheartedly after the new year. At that time, the students will be playing either the flute, clarinet or trumpet as they advance their musical skills and expand their sight reading repertoire. Be sure to join us in the spring for their band concert because it will be an amazing time as they serenade us with the sounds of band music!



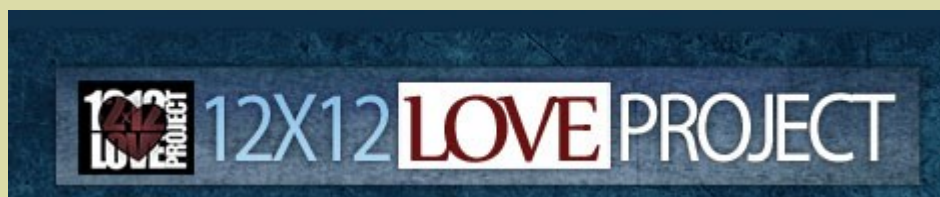


## *Jr. Beta Club and the 12x12 Love Project Update*

The Jr. Beta Club has been working hard to raise \$3,000 to build a 12x12 foot house for a homeless family of four in Guatemala through the 12 X 12 Love Project. Recently, we partnered with RosaMia to raise money to reach this goal.

RosaMia generously donated 20% of all proceeds we raised through the selling of gift certificates. With the help of RosaMia, the generosity of various donors and the support of the McGinnis Woods community, we were able to raise over \$1,300 dollars towards our goal.

We would like to thank all the families who helped us with this project. Your continued support is greatly appreciated and not only impacts us here in Alpharetta, but more importantly, will have a lasting impact in Guatemala!



## *Discovery Club Fun: Chess*

Chess Club with Mr. Tyler Driskell (Mr. T) has students from Kindergarten through 6th grade loving the game. Seventh grader Jacob Simon, a former club member, now assists Mr. T with all things related to the club. Jacob has been playing for many years, and has been known to occasionally beat Mr. T at his own game!

All of the students in Chess Club have been learning the basics of chess playing and important strategies to apply while competing against other students. The club also regularly plays against 'the computer' to test their skills and keep track of progress they have made on their journey towards becoming chess masters!

The following are some of the basic principles that the students have learned: 1) protect the king 2) take your time 3) always have back-up for every piece 4) "castle" your king and rook ASAP. The students in the club always manage to focus and have fun!

Many of the club members have been playing now for a few sessions, and are starting to be worthy opponents for Mr. T and their chess playing parents! If your child doesn't know how to play or would like to sharpen his skills, feel free to give chess club a try, and join us on the road to becoming a chess master during our next session of Discovery Clubs.



## Annual Holiday Sing-a-Long Cheer

Our annual holiday sing-a-long was so much fun. The students enjoyed performing favorite holiday selections for one another and some of the many parents who packed out the lunch-room! Favorites included: "Jingle Bell Rock", "Winter Wonderland", "Happy Hannukah" and "Someone's in the Chimney". These pictures really sum up the fun had by all!



## Art Show Excitement

Celebration of the Arts is alive and well at McGinnis Woods! Our recent Art Show in November was a great success. Students enjoyed showcasing their beautiful art pieces for their parents and friends to enjoy while snacking on special treats and listening to classical selections. The funds raised through the show go directly back into the program to continue to provide our students with exceptional opportunities to expand their creativity and sharpen their skills.

