

# McGinnis Woods Buzz



April/May 2016 Volume 10, Issue 8



**McGINNIS WOODS**  
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with  
the Passion to Excel*

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

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## **DATES TO REMEM-**

5/6	PreK and K Career Day
5/10	Band Concert 6:00pm
5/11	New Student Open House
5/11- 5/13	5th-8th Space Camp Overnight
5/12- 5/13	1st Georgia Aquarium Overnight
5/12- 5/13	3rd Tennessee Aquarium Overnight
5/17	Prek-4th Field Day
5/18- 5/20	4th Nature's Classroom Overnight
5/19- 5/20	2nd DeSoto Caverns Overnight
5/20	Q and U Wedding
5/24	Awards Day
5/26	PA Water Day Last Day of School

## **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**



This has been a phenomenal year filled with tremendous learning and growth for all of us at McGinnis Woods. Each year, we offer additional programs and opportunities for our students, and this year was no exception. Two new additions to our After School options were Science Olympiad and Oratorical Club. These programs led by members of our committed staff, provided our students with instruction and guidance in the areas of problem solving, collaboration, research, and presentation skills. Our Science Olympiad Team received their first trophy during an April competition when they placed 2nd place overall and won many additional medals in individual events. Thanks to Ms. Lindsey and Ms. Anne for their work with our students and their many hours of encouragement and planning.

Our ERB Testing week went well. Thanks to each of you for getting the students to school on time and encouraging them through the process. We were very proud of the students' efforts and are eager to receive our scores and share them with you.

May brings warmer weather, flowers and our annual overnight trips for students in 1st through 8th grades! Some of you will be able to take part in these special, memory building learning experiences. What a wonderful way to share in your child's education and wrap up the field trips for the year! Students in 4-8th will set out with their teachers to learn about survival skills, history and Outer Space during their trips to Alabama. These trips are sure to be amazing and STEM focused, too.

Please make note of all of the special activities which are scheduled during this month. We will have Band and Chorus Concerts, a Talent Show, Yearbook Signing, Awards Day, and the ever popular, PA Water Day, too. You will not want to miss any of these year-end activities. To kick things off, tomorrow evening is our Scene on the Green, so please join us at 6:30pm on the turf for an evening of food and fun. You will be able to take advantage of the tasty food, Kona Ice, candy, popcorn, Mr. Melvin the DJ, a lively Bingo game, and The Peanuts Movie along with our school community. So come out and enjoy the fun.

As the final round of assessments is completed and report cards are being prepared, we are planning for a fabulous Sunsational Summer Camp and next year! Please take the time to enjoy this final issue of the McGinnis Woods Buzz for the 2015-16 school year. We look forward to seeing you at McGinnis Woods during the coming days and weeks.

*Ms. Mary*

## *Parent Association Update*

The weather is not the only thing heating up! It's been such a fantastic year in "The Woods" and we are still going strong! We ushered March out with our fantastic Spaghetti Dinner. It is always so nice to see our McGinnis Woods families come together to share a table and a meal. The cafeteria was filled with delicious pasta, bread, salad and desserts along with lots of laughter and great conversation. Many thanks to Julie Lamotte for chairing this event and helping to set the stage for such a wonderful STEM Family Fun Night!

April kicked off with our biggest fundraising event of the year: the McGinnis Woods Dance-a-thon! To say it was a success would be an understatement! Thanks to your tremendous support, we raised over \$20,000!! On Friday, April 1st, the students, teachers and quite a few parents danced, shook, shimmied and even whipped the Nae Nae all while raising money for a great cause: our fabulous school!! The money raised will be used to purchase new technology for our elementary and middle schools and new turf for our preschool playgrounds. Colleen Beguiristain deserves heartfelt accolades for single-handedly coordinating this awesome event!

Mark your calendars and plan to join us on Friday, May 6th at 6:30 pm for the Annual PA Spring Scene on the Green! Bring your blankets, chairs and appetites and join us as we all watch The Peanuts Movie together under the stars. DJ-extraordinaire, Mr. Melvin, will be on hand to kick the night off with music and Bingo. The event is free to attend and we'll have water and popcorn for everyone! A food truck will be on-site for those who want to purchase dinner and the Kona Ice Truck will be making their annual appearance. It is such a fun and fabulous end-of-year event!

As long as you have those calendars out, be sure to make time to join us on the last day of school, Thursday, May 26th for our McGinnis Woods Tradition, the Annual End of Year Water Day! Come help us usher the school year out with an epic water fight on the field! We are looking for volunteers to help us set up and run the event and make sure we keep everyone soaked and happy throughout the day! We will send out a Sign-up Genius for volunteers as the event draws nearer, but if you already know you want to help go ahead and drop us an e-mail at [pa@mcginniswoods.org](mailto:pa@mcginniswoods.org) so we know to count you in!

We are already beginning to plan for next year and are always looking for volunteers. Do you have an interest in learning more about the PA? Have you been wondering how to become more involved? Do you have great ideas that you think would make a difference? If so, we would love to hear from you!! Drop us a note at [pa@mcginniswoods.org](mailto:pa@mcginniswoods.org) any time!



*See you at the Scene on the Green!*

## Preschool Corner



The Preschoolers have had a wonderful time celebrating the changing seasons and have been thrilled to welcome spring! During the PreK4-8th graders Spring Break, the Preschool was in full swing learning all about caterpillars and butterflies. The children were really amazed learning about the lifecycle of a butterfly. They enjoyed making butterflies and reading theme related books such as "The Very Hungry Butterfly." The children concluded the week with a special pajama day, which is always a favorite!

Each year we celebrate Week of the Young Child. During this week we focused on learning more about each individual child and what makes them special. We asked each child about their favorite foods, toys and furry friends. We also learn all about their family's heritage and culture so that the children learn how unique and special

they really are. We had a lot of parent involvement during the week, they really enjoyed the gift of time shared with our children. We ended the week with a preschool wide potluck luncheon which highlighted each family's favorites.

During our "All About the Earth Week", the children learned about globes, maps, sea and land. They made art projects out of recyclables and brought in items from home to recycle. We ended our week with a special visit from the petting zoo and my how those little animals stole our hearts. The children loved meeting the different animals and were very brave during their special encounters.

New to the Preschool curriculum is a focus on a different country each month. We recently highlighted China and its culture. The children had a fabulous time learning all about the country's beautiful culture. Special thanks to the families that came in and brought this culture to life by talking to the children and providing authentic snacks for our friends. It was a truly exciting week!

We loved seeing your smiling faces at the Spring Carnival and it was yet again a wonderful time!





## *Wildcat Chat With Coach Croom*

Our spring sports have come to a close. Track and Field ended with the Championship meet at Galloway on April 14th. This was an entire day of track and field events. Our athletes participated in a preliminary event in the hopes of making it to the finals. Our team worked hard, but we only had one Wildcat earn a spot in the finals. Taylor Evangelista not only made it to the finals, but did so in both the discus and shot put. Way to go Taylor! Our Wildcats ran hard and fast but we ran up against a lot of talented, competitive athletes. Thank you Coach Sonia and Coach Lisa for an awesome season.



Tennis this year was a lot of fun. Eight players were on the team and they played very competitive matches. One of the highlights of the season was when our team went to Crooked Creek Tennis Center and had a lesson with a pro to work on their skills. We enjoy developing our students tennis skills, as tennis is a sport that requires lots of practice and can be played for a lifetime. We were so pleased to have new tennis players take up the sport along with our more seasoned players. We were proud of our tennis Wildcats as each of our players displayed good sportsmanship and tennis etiquette throughout the season. We ended the season with a round robin played amongst ourselves. Our matches were close, yet Kaitlin and Gabe were the ultimate Wildcat champs. Special thanks to Coach Kammy and Coach Christy for providing leadership and encouragement to the players.

We celebrated the end of our sports' seasons by recognizing all our athletes at our first annual McGinnis Woods Sports Banquet. It was held in the gym on May 3rd at 6:00pm and was catered by Moe's. Our athletes were recognized and each teams' coaches presented awards. Thank you Sam Beckman and Kaitlin Marro for organizing this event for our athletes.

Even though our Spring Sports Season ended, our big and little Wildcats have continued to play. We just concluded a Spring Soccer Camp for all our students from 1st-7th grade. Coach Roger Gallivan, our soccer coach for Middle School students, led this amazing mini-soccer camp. He offered three sessions of soccer this spring and participating students received a cool t-shirt to commemorate the camp. Coach Roger desires to introduce soccer to future Wildcat players and to provide an opportunity for our students to show off their soccer skills. We will be ready for fall soccer thanks to Coach Roger and his player development.



If you would like to help with one of our sports teams, please contact Coach Cynthia at [ccroom@mcginniswoods.org](mailto:ccroom@mcginniswoods.org) to share your interest and availability. We are always looking for committed parents willing to invest in our student athletes.



*Congratulations to our 8th graders:  
Sergej, Mari and Molly.  
You will always be  
Wildcats!*

## *Jr. Beta Club Wraps Up the Year With Service*

Beta Club is working together to support our chosen organizations. The Furkids group is planning an ice cream day in May. All funds raised will be donated to Furkids to help take care of the dogs and cats at the shelter.



If you are looking for a volunteer opportunity for your entire family, please visit [furkids.org](http://furkids.org) to explore opportunities for service through the organization.

The group of students who have been visiting Dogwoods Forest Assisted Living in Alpharetta spent one more afternoon with the residents. On Wednesday, May 4th, students traveled to the residence to chat with residents and play some BINGO. It is such a great opportunity for both the students and the residents. The Jr. Beta Club School Group hosted a bake sale and an ice cream day this month. All funds raised were used to improve our school community by providing new playground equipment for students.

## *Student Council Update*

We have had a very busy month. On Friday, April 22nd we had our second Chick-fil-A order in day of the year. Many of our Kindergarten - Eighth grade students were able to enjoy a yummy lunch to celebrate the end of testing. The other amazing April activity was the second annual Staff vs. Students basketball game. We met in the gym for a friendly game of basketball between the teachers and the middle school students. Our McGinnis Woods cheerleaders and the Student Council officers kicked us off while the rest of the school was able to sit in the bleachers and cheer on their team. Fun was had by all!

We have lots of fun in store for May! We will hold our teacher contest and a thank you breakfast for our class representatives. Also, save the date and plan to join us at our annual Talent Show on May 25 at 1:30pm.





## Nurse Penny, School Nurse

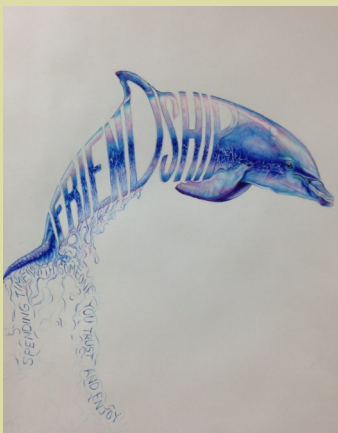


Penny Crews is our school nurse. She goes by many names which include Mrs Penny, Nurse Penny and even Mrs-Nurse Penny. She answers to all. She loves her position here and has been in our school for 15 years. Nurse Penny takes care of all of the medical aspects of our school (Preschool and Elementary). She also teaches HEALTH class to students' ages 3 years through 8th grade. This aspect of her job is very fun and the students enjoy learning healthy habits. Parents often hear at home what was learned during class.

Nurse Penny received her Bachelors of Science degree in Nursing at Valdosta State University. She has worked in multiple hospitals and home health agencies. She attends school nurse classes at Children's Healthcare frequently and is involved in organizations of school health.

She lives in Alpharetta and is active in her church. She likes to do Bible study, baking, reading, yoga and family time. Her husband is Scott and she has 2 sons, Addison and Andrew. Addison is 23 years old and graduated from Georgia College and State University last May. He is currently employed at Lincoln Mutual; Andrew is 16 years old and is in high school. She also has 2 Cocker Spaniels that she treasures and spoils, Cami and Spencer.

## "Friendship" and "Contentment"



April's word of the month was Friendship. The students learned that friendship is defined as *spending time with someone you trust and enjoy*. Students learned the importance and meaning of friendship throughout the month during morning announcements and in class.

Teachers identified exceptional students who exhibited great friendship traits throughout the month. These special students were recognized and rewarded with special Chick-fil-A coupons on the morning announcements!



The final word of the month for this year is Contentment. The definition being taught is that *contentment is deciding to be happy with what you've got*.

## Summer Safety Tips



Let's all work to make summer safe for kids!

Summer is a great time for kids to enjoy different indoor and outdoor activities. Whether you have young children or teens, learn ways to keep your kids safe and healthy while they enjoy the summer fun.

**Water safety**-Teach kids to swim, always supervise children while swimming, learn CPR, install fences around pools; Always wear a life jacket while boating.

**Sun safety**-Never leave children or pets in a hot car, dress children in loose, light-weight clothing, schedule outdoor activities for morning or late afternoon, use sunscreen of at least 15 SPF and be diligent to reapply frequently.

**Prevent bites and diseases**-Always use an effective repellent, check for ticks; make your yard a 'tick-safe zone' ([cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/in the yard.html](http://cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/in the yard.html)).

**Prevent injuries**-Supervise children at all times, watch high risk areas for fall such as stairs and climbing equipment, have children wear bright colored clothing, be sure to have head injuries checked and if needed follow the concussion protocol.

*McGinnis Woods wishes you all a safe, happy summer!!  
We hope to see you all at summer camp.*

## Middle Schoolers Enjoyed a Campfire Social



Middle school students had a great time at the campfire on Friday, April 22nd! This fun social activity was planned by the Middle School Social Committee, led by Ms. Nicole.

When students arrived, they spent some time on the playground, enjoying the beautiful weather. Then, they gathered in the gym parking lot for more fun! The students broke into small groups where some learned and practiced skits while others roasted hotdogs over the fire. After all students had a chance to practice their skits and eat,

they all gathered around the campfire and enjoyed watching each other perform!

Next, campers roasted marshmallows and made s'mores – yummy! Mr. Jamie (Ms. Nicole's friend who is a Boy Scout leader) was kind enough to join us again this year and did a wonderful job of telling scary and funny stories. He also helped Ms. Nicole lead the students as they sang crazy camp songs! The night ended with a quick but thorough clean-up – it was Earth Day, after all!





## *Last Parents Night Out of the School Year*

Our last Parent's Night Out for the school year was on Friday, April 22nd, and it was one fun night! Many of the participants came dressed in pajamas and brought blankets and pillows to lie on while watching the movie.

First we enjoyed a yummy dinner of noodles, hot dogs, chips and salad. Our theme for the night was "The Good Dinosaur" and we completed several dinosaur projects along with watching the movie. We also got our wiggles out with some "Freeze Dancing, hula-hooping and scooter racing down the main hallway!

We ended the evening by making ice cream sundaes. Be on the lookout for a Parent's Night Out over the summer. More information will be coming soon!



## *Spring Break Staycation Was Fun for All*



We had a wonderful time here at McGinnis Woods for Spring Break! Our students had an exciting week of group games, arts and crafts, and ended the week with a trip to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens. The children loved exploring the gardens and learning about all of the different plants and flowers. They especially loved walking across the Skyline Gardens to the Robinson Skyline Overlook where they saw so many giant statues and beautiful plants, waterfalls, and flowers.

The hit of the trip were the poisonous tree frogs, they loved looking at the different frogs from all around the world! We then had a picnic lunch in Piedmont Park where the children played a group game of Sharks and

Minnows in the park while enjoying the beautiful weather. We had a great week and are looking forward to the last couple weeks of school.





## *Summer Camp is Right Around the Corner*

Summer is approaching quickly and we are getting more and more excited about our Sunsational Summer Camp here at McGinnis Woods! Our Sunsational Summer Camp is filled with exciting themes and field trips, caring counselors, daily water park, STEM classes and so much more. We have many guest speakers and in-house field trips scheduled all throughout the summer to keep our minds learning.

We are visiting many Sunsational places this summer including Build-a-Bear, Top Golf, Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History, Stone Mountain, Zoo Atlanta and the Cumming Aquatic Center. We also offer many Specialty and Academic Camps that offer a variety of educational ways to sharpen your skills and expand your minds during the summer. Some of these exciting Camps include several different culinary options, swimming, cheerleading, and Jr. and Sr. Robotics. Swimming is filling up quickly so be sure reserve your spot today!

You do not want to miss out on any of the fun during our Sunsational Summer Camp and we hope to see you this summer!

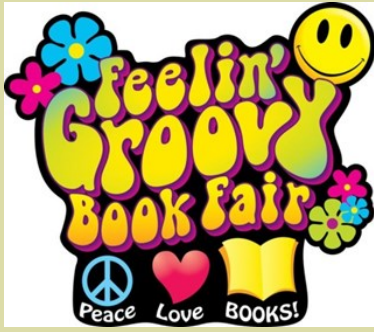


## *Second Grade STEM Learning*



The Second Graders have been busy working hard on a fun and exciting STEM project in class. The students were challenged to create a roadway system that had to navigate through at least 5 different types of landforms. They were broken into teams and together held several planning sessions where they brainstormed ideas, sketched out blueprints, and created lists of the materials they would need. The students then set to work and put their creativity combined with their engineering skills to the test! The kids worked with cardboard, construction paper, popsicle sticks, cotton balls, Qtips, toothpicks and lots of tape and glue! The end result of the projects was fabulous! Each team presented their completed model and had to identify each landform and explain how they adapted their roadways in their landscape.

## Scholastic Book Fair Is A Crowd Pleaser

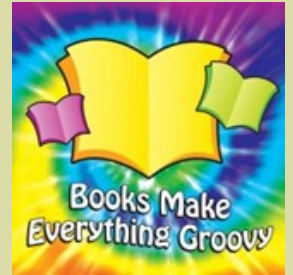


Our Spring Scholastic Book Fair was here and had everyone “Feelin’ Groovy!” We kicked off this annual event during our Spring Carnival. Parents and students found great books for fun and summer reading.

On Monday, April 25, McGinnis Woods students created their book fair wish lists. They made sure they included some popular titles like Lego Star Wars, I Am Pusheen the Cat, Ranger in Time, Pete the Cat and so many more. Our classroom teachers created classroom wish lists with hopes of receiving new selections for their class libraries and truly

enjoyed the books their classes received as gifts from students.

All funds raised from the book fair assist with purchasing of books and other materials for our library and classrooms. 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.



## Earth Week



During the week of April 11th, we celebrated our 7th Annual Student Earth Week at McGinnis Woods. Students listened to guest speakers from Keep Forsyth Beautiful and Zoo Atlanta and learned all about recycling, protecting our Earth’s natural resources and animal conservation efforts.

Parents also volunteered to read *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss to classes. The week ended with students purchasing unique items made from recycled materials at the school store. On the actual Earth Day, students were surprised with their own 2016 McGinnis Woods Earth Day bags. It was a great way to end a wonderful celebration.

## *May is Overnight Month at McGinnis Woods*

School overnights are an exceptional supplement to the school curriculum and learning which takes place in school each day. Overnight trips provide students with an amazing opportunity to learn outside of the classroom and often times, state. The trips start in 1st grade and continue through 8th grade



1st grade students and their parents will meet at Zoo Atlanta on the evening of May 7. They will participate in the Night Crawlers program which features behind the scenes experiences, theme activities, and up close animal encounters and many other unique adventures.

2nd graders and their parents will meet at DeSoto Caverns in Childersburg, Alabama for a fun day of activities including gem panning, rock climbing and water balloon challenges. The day ends with a family cookout, cavern tour and a once in a lifetime opportunity to spend the night inside the cave.



TENNESSEE  
AQUARIUM

3rd grade students and parents will meet at the Tennessee Aquarium. The fast-paced Sleep in the Deep adventure is a tour of both the River and Ocean Journey. Students will go where the aquarists go and learn about being a part of the Aquarium team. They will meet with some of the critters up close and experience the Aquarium after the lights go down. They will sleep alongside the largest exhibits and the magnificent creatures. Students will be attending the Chattanooga Zoo this year also.

4th grade is the first year students venture off without their parents on the overnight. Students will be enjoying Nature's Classroom atop Lookout Mountain in Mentone, Alabama. They take survival classes and have fun, outdoor adventures! Small groups hike, dine, and participate in team-building activities together. After dark, opportunities for learning abound while participating in a Night Hike or the Underground Railroad simulation. Weather permitting, every evening at Nature's Classroom finishes with Reflection and a snack around the campfire.



5th – 8th grade students will go to Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama this year. They will work as a team confronting NASA mission scenarios that require dynamic STEM, problem solving and critical thinking skills. Students will be immersed in astronaut training on various simulators and games, do teambuilding and leadership activities, construct rockets, learn the history of the space program and complete an engineering workshop.

*Each of the overnight trips provide hands-on , meaningful learning , as well as memories that will last a lifetime.  
These trips are a great way to cap off the year!*



## *A Beautiful Day for Spring Carnival 2016*



Spring at McGinnis Woods means it is time for our Annual Spring Carnival! Each year McGinnis Woods Families come together to enjoy an afternoon of carnival fun. We had games, crafts, food, ponies, a train and the ever popular spider jump and other activities for every member of the family. This year's carnival was on Saturday, April 23 and the weather was picture perfect and a great time was had by all!

We loved seeing our students on the ponies, our families enjoying a train ride and our big kids flying high on the bungee jump. No one will soon forget the incredible face painting, the delicious cotton candy, dunking their favorite teachers in the dunk tank, winning treats at the Cake Walk and the outrageous crazy hair stand.... just a few of the kid's favorites.

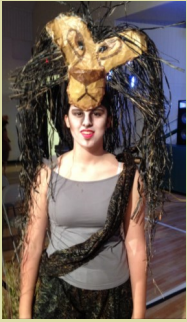
There was also a photo booth that everyone visited and were then able to take home some great memories.

Thank you for spending the afternoon with us, it was a great time for our school community to get together. We are already thinking about the fun we will have next year so please let us know if you have any great ideas to share!





## *The Lion King Jr Takes the Stage*



This year our Drama Club performed a wonderful rendition of Disney's Lion King, Jr. The two casts performed 4 shows over three days with each cast performing two shows. The cast members had prepared for the show since the fall of 2015 and their hard work really paid off!

The McGinnis Woods gym was transformed into the Serengeti where Rafiki, Mufasa, Simba, the Lions and all of the beloved characters brought the show to life on two stages set up in a unique theater in the round. The sold out crowds loved the energetic display of talent, costuming, dance, and songs.

The show was directed by Xylina Stamper and Musical Director, Brandon Evans. The fantastic, whimsical costuming was designed and created by Nicole Seltzer. The Make-up Artists, led by Jessica Marro, brought each animal to life, along with the beautiful set design created by Thea Stuart and McGinnis Woods resident artist, Dan Stegos. Many other volunteers assisted in the production manning ticket and merchandise tables and cuing our young actors behind the scenes.

After the show closed on April 30th, the cast enjoyed a wonderful cast party to celebrate their success! They are now voting to choose their show for their 2016-17 production. Peter Pan, Alice in Wonderland and The Little Mermaid may be coming to the McGinnis Woods theater sometime soon.





## *Pictures from Around the School*

