

McGinnis Woods Buzz



April 2011, Volume 2, Issue 7



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

DATES TO REMEMBER

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---------------------|
| 4/23: | Spring Carnival
11 am -2 pm | |
| 4/25: | Drama Club Performance,
Lord of Life, 6 pm | |
| 4/29: | Volunteer Appreciation
Breakfast, 8 - 9 am | Non
-Uniform Day |
| 5/1-
5/6: | Air Quality Awareness
& Children's Book Week | |
| 5/6: | Library Books Due | |
| 5/8: | Scholastic Book Fair
Week | |
| 5/10: | Band Concert, Lord of
Life , 6 pm | |

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
lifelong love of learning.*

The latest buzz...

A Message From Ms. Mary .. 1	Drama Club Performance...3	Classroom Spotlight.....5
Wildcat Chat 2	PA Board.....4	Spring Carnival.....6
"Specials" Program 2	National Poetry Month.....4	Field Trip of the Month....6
Preschool Corner..... 3	About our Teachers.....5	Jump Rope for Hearts.....6

A Message From Ms. Mary

It is difficult to believe that May is right around the corner and this school year is rapidly coming to an end. Students who started out the year small, timid and shy have blossomed into taller, more confident versions of their former selves. Notes once hastily written on note cards have taken shape and become speeches, power points and full fledged conversations in Spanish. "Magic" has happened here, not once, but over and over again. Yet, if you get too busy going through the motions of your daily routine, just doing life, it is easy to miss the small accomplishments that add up to real successes; the magic of the moments.



I am so fortunate because I get to witness the "magic" on a regular basis. Some teachers and educational experts refer to it as the "aha moment", but I do not think that that description pays it full justice. I believe it to be magical! This year I have seen struggling readers beam with success once the letters on the page finally made sense; angry frustrated children agree to forgive one another and shake hands forgetting the small offenses that once loomed big; compassionate students putting their concern into action by jumping rope or holding a bake sale to help those suffering from heart disease or natural disasters, and committed volunteers giving of their time and energy to make our school an extra special place to be for their child and the many other children who make up this special community.

The year is flying by. I encourage you to not get so caught up in your comings and goings that you forget to look for the "magic" all around you. We have tried to capture some of these specials moments in this newsletter.

Enjoy!

Ms. Mary

Wildcat Chat

Track Team Finishes the Season Strong!

Our Track & Field teams over came many obstacles to have a fine ending to the season at the MAAC Track & Field Championships April 11 and 13. Many strong performances were made and many records broken.

Leading the way for the Girl's Team's 6th place finish was Tomisin Odeyoinbo. "Tee" was the meets overall high scorer with 35 points. She won three events (200, 400, Triple Jump), then also anchored both relays to high places.

She was backed up by Adrienne Lee with her places in the High Jump, Pole Vault, and 800. She was also on both relays. Courtney Stuart had a

fine two days breaking the school records in the 1600 and 3200, placing in both.

8th Grader Lindsey Campbell had a great two days with PR's in the 3200 and Shot Put. Emmalyn Cushman ran hard to some good marks in the 800 and 1600.

The Boys Team finished in 8th place. Top scorer was Sam Zoldock in both the Triple Jump and Pole Vault. Teammates Brad Dull, Chris Lee, and Jared Smith, also contributed to the team's improved score. The boys set four new school records in the meet.

We are now looking forward to a full array of sports during the 2011-2012 year.



"Specials" Program: Featuring Nurse Penny and Health Education

Penny Crews is the school nurse for the McGinnis Woods Preschool and Elementary School. She is a registered nurse and received her bachelor's degree in Nursing from Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia. She has worked in hospitals as well the home health industry, and has been at McGinnis Woods for ten years. She takes ongoing pediatric and school nurse related medical education courses to keep abreast of the latest medical developments.

Nurse Penny enjoys her position at McGinnis Woods and really likes working with children. Teaching health at McGinnis Woods has made her more conscience of her own health and health related issues. Nurse Penny feels that Health Education is a very popular subject among students. She loves hearing what the students share with their parents about certain class topics (even though it is not always exactly what was taught.) The students learn about so many things from the health curriculum including nutrition; safety; body organs and systems; drugs; fitness; emotions; and constantly about illness and GERMS. Approximately one month is devoted to each topic, and a variety of teaching materials are utilized.

Nurse Penny teaches the students weekly in PreK-4th and every other month in grades 5th-8th. In the upper grades, health class alternates with counseling. One of her favorite learning tools is to give the students a memory phrase every week that summarizes the topic. The students repeat the phrase several times during the class, and this really seems to help the students retain what they learned. There are a few "health traditions" that the students LOVE to participate in each year including "Organ Annie," the green jar experiment on germs, Glo-germ, and of course smoothies during the last week of school. Nurse Penny feels strongly that the McGinnis Woods staff, students and parents are the BEST!

Nurse Penny is married to Scott and lives in Alpharetta with their two sons, Addison and Andrew. She enjoys cooking, especially baking, as well as gardening, completing puzzles and reading. She loves dogs and has two precious cocker spaniels named Cami and Spencer.



Preschool Corner (Infants through Pre-K3/4)

Spring is definitely in the air at the preschool!! The children have been learning about weather and clouds, as well as about the earth and recycling. The classroom windows are painted with brightly colored spring pictures and drawings. Egg hunts and Spring Parties will be held on Friday, the 22nd. Watch for pictures of the fun events on the screen in the preschool lobby.



During the month of April, NAEYC celebrates Month of the Young Child. At the preschool, the staff has been wearing purple ribbons to show their support for young children. Each family received a purple calendar of fun events to do as a family throughout the month. For more information about Month of the Young Child check out www.naeyc.org.

The teacher of the month for April is Ms. Amy Williams. Ms. Amy is part of the teaching team in 3TB. Ms. Amy always has a big smile on her face and enjoys spending time with the children. When Ms. Amy is not at the preschool chances are you could find her at a Braves game. The classroom of the month is 3B. This class, led by Ms. Yara, is always busy exploring and learning new things. Be sure to stop by and see what they are doing.

The carnival is coming!! Mark your calendar for April 23rd from 11 a.m. -2 p.m. Wristband sales are going on now. The carnival will be held rain or shine, so see you there!

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the preschool book fair. The total sales amount was \$1012. Thank you for helping make our first preschool book fair a huge success. Mark your calendars now for the fall book fair. It will be held on November 7th-12th.

On Friday, May 6th at 3:30 p.m., we will be hosting a Trike-a-thon for St. Jude's Research Hospital. Our goal is to raise \$2,000. Over the past few years our cumulative amount raised has been over \$8,900, and last year, we nearly reached our goal with \$1,700 raised. More information to come, so keep an eye out! Let's make this our best Trike-a-thon yet!

Our curriculum spotlight for this month is art. Art is an important part of our curriculum. Drawing, painting, cutting, pasting, and playing with play dough are enjoyable and provide important opportunities for learning. Children express original ideas and feelings, improve their coordination, develop small muscle skills, learn to recognize colors and textures, and develop creativity and pride in their accomplishments by exploring and using art materials.

As always, feel free to stop by the preschool at anytime and see all the wonderful things that are going on in our classrooms.

Upcoming Drama Club Performance

Join us on April 25 at 6:00 p.m. at the Lord of Life Church auditorium for our Drama Club's culminating performance led and choreographed by Ms. Xylina. This fun music packed performance will feature the students who have worked throughout the school year in the Drama Discovery Club. This club focuses on improv, dance, teamwork and the development of individual theater skills. Cast members will perform selections from *Hairspray*, *Sweet Charity*, and *Cinderella*. This will be a special time!

PA Board Update

Join us for the end of year party, Scene on the Green, on Saturday, May 14th to celebrate the upcoming summer vacation. Jim & Nick's will be catering the event, and we have also included some tantalizing vegetarian dishes. The movie presentation will be *Gulliver's Travels*. We will have the ever popular Bingo and some great auction items to bid on.

On behalf of the PA, we would like to thank all the families of McGinnis Woods, who have made our teachers feel so special, not only during teacher appreciation week but throughout the entire year. Every other month, classes have worked together to create a special luncheon for the teachers. Our last one will be held on May 5th by the 1st Crabs, 4th Suns, 5th Frogs, 6th and 7th/8th grades. We appreciate all of the Room Reps who have coordinated these luncheons throughout the year.

Speaking of Room Reps, we are looking ahead to the next school year and want you to consider joining us! If you are interested in being a Room Rep in your child's class, please email Alison Sparrow at ahalfon@yahoo.com. This is a great opportunity for you to get involved in your child's class room. Results of numerous studies show that children do better in school when they see their parents volunteer in their school. Moms and dads are welcome and encouraged to be Room Reps!

As we wrap up our PA incentives for the Fun Run this week, we would like to thank everyone, once again, for their contribution to the Fun Run. This was such a great experience for the children, as well as a great opportunity for our school. Thank you.

April is National Poetry Month

The students at McGinnis Woods have been enjoying hearing and creating poetry this month. Many of the grade levels have spent time learning about different types of poetry including: Haiku, Diamantes, Prose and Couplets.

Here are a few examples from our 2nd grades:

I Would Love to be Giraffe

I would love to be a giraffe;
I could play in fields,
I would stretch my long neck.

I would love to be a giraffe;
I would have so much fun,
No one would be bigger than me.

I would love to be a giraffe;
to eat plants up in the tree,
nothing is too high.

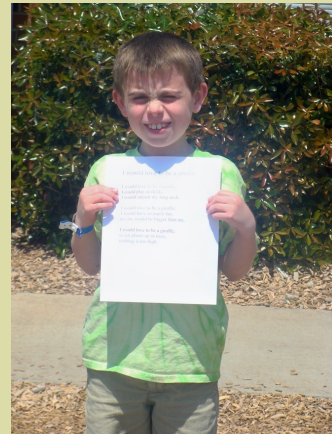
By McKinley Bowles, 2nd grade Fish

Moon

dusty, cold
Exciting, smiling, floating
Mysterious, gray, hot, red
Shining, glowing, burning
Bright, fiery

Sun

By Siya Kalra, 2nd grade Cats



A Little About our Teachers: Featuring the First Grade Team

McGinnis Woods has an amazing team of first grade teachers who enjoy each day with their young charges. The teachers have varied interests and backgrounds, but work well together to provide a great education! Here is a bit about the members of this team:

Mr. Josh Reiter and Ms. Anna Little lead the 1st grade Crabs. Mr. Josh is an up-beat, creative mastermind. He has been teaching at McGinnis Woods for nine glorious years. Mr. Josh holds a Bachelor's Degree in both English Literature and Human Communication. He attended undergrad at Fredonia State University in NY and completed his Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education at Mercer University. Mr. Josh and his wife, Jill, have two children. Their daughter Violet, who is almost 3, and son, Ben, who is one, come to school everyday with Mr. Josh where they learn plenty in the McGinnis Woods Preschool Program.



Ms. Anna was born and raised in the metro Atlanta area. She graduated from Georgia State University with a Bachelors degree in Early Childhood Education and is a certified teacher. She knew being in a classroom setting and teaching children was her calling. She fell in love with first grade and hopes to have her own classroom one day. Anna enjoys traveling, reading, hockey, attending concerts, and spending time with her dog, Ike.

Ms. Kelly Shaffer and Ms. Josie Bunster make up the 1st grade Pandas. Ms. Kelly is enjoying her fourth year at McGinnis Woods! She loves teaching first graders and enjoys the enthusiasm for learning and exploring that her students have each day. Ms. Kelly loves chocolate, sports and reading all kinds of books. She and her husband, Emmett, have three girls: Olivia is in the first grade, Ariana is a freshman at Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee, and Erica is a television reporter for a local station also in Nashville. Ms. Kelly is huge football fan and enjoys attending and watching football on the weekends. She has lived in Johns Creek for the last twelve years before relocating here from southern California.

Ms. Josie was born in Santiago, Chile, and moved to Atlanta when she was eight. She attended the University of Georgia and has a Bachelor's degree in Spanish and Public Relations as well as a Master's Degree in Non-Profit Organizations. She loves teaching at McGinnis Woods and has been married for one year to her husband, Nick. Her hobbies include cooking, working out, and spending time with her family and beloved puppy, Boggy.

Classroom Spotlight: PreK4 Whales Correspond with Pen Pal

The PreK4 Whales have been corresponding with a pilot on the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan! They initially sent their pen pal an e-mail filled with lots of questions and information about their class. Since that initial contact they have received pictures of Lieutenant Ritter, his plane, and the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan which are proudly displayed on their class bulletin board. Lieutenant Ritter's mother-in-law, Mrs. Tammi Kimsey, visited their class and shared more about what Lieutenant Ritter does each day, how he learned to fly planes, and what the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan crew is doing to aid the people of Japan. The Whales especially enjoyed learning about how planes land on a ship, what life is really like on a ship, and seeing pictures of Lieutenant Ritter's wife and baby living here in the states.



Annual Spring Carnival

We invite you to join us at the annual Spring Carnival which will be held this Saturday, April 23, 2011, from 11am-2:00 p.m. It will be a wonderful time of games, refreshments, crafts, spider jump, pony and train rides, and a giant obstacle course! Pre-sale admission is \$12 per child and \$7 per adult. All admission will be \$12 the day of the event.



Field Trip of the Month: High Touch High Tech

The 2nd Grade classes did not have to travel far for their field trip in April! High Touch High Tech brought the field trip to them. The students explored the life cycles of both plants and animals while learning biology basics. Through hands-on activities they learned about actual animal adaptations that help them survive. We also investigated how weather and environmental changes can affect living things. The lab teachers from High Touch High Tech made science so understandable and fun!



Second Graders to Jump Rope for Hearts!

The second grade classes joined together to raise money and awareness through the Jump Rope for the Heart program! The students, led by PreK assistant Mr. Tyler Driskell, partnered with the American Heart Association (AHA), a national non-profit organization that specializes in researching diseases of the cardiovascular system.

During the Jump Rope for the Heart program the 2nd graders met weekly with Mr. T to explore how to live a heart healthy lifestyle through positive health decisions and the anatomy/function of the human cardiovascular system. On April 19th, the students took part in a special Jump Rope for the Heart field day event where they participated in various semi-competitive exercise games while raising money for the AHA! As Mr. T told the students of the 2nd grade, *"We are raising money to cure sick hearts and make them healthy again, and make healthy hearts even more healthy!"* The students were very excited to be a part of helping this very worthy cause. If you would like to help the 2nd graders and the AHA, please contact Mr. T at tdriskell@mcginniswoods.org or any of the second grade teachers for details.

