



McGinnis Woods Buzz

January 2011, Volume 2, Issue 4



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

Inspiring Students with the
Passion to Excel

DATES TO REMEMBER

- 1/24: Re-Enrollment Due**
- 1/28: Non-Uniform Day**
- 1/29: Open House, 11 am- 1pm**
- 2/1: 100th Day of School**
- 2/5: PA Valentine's Dance
6:30-9:30 pm
Holiday Inn Roswell**
- 2/14: Fun Run
Kick Off**
- 2/18: Spirit Shirt Day**
- 2/24: Fun Run**

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...

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A Message From Ms. Mary

January 2011 has arrived filled with snow and unexpected schedule changes! After our five day school delay, we are pleased to be back working and learning. This has been an extremely busy week which included our annual Family Math and Science Night, a Greek Banquet in the 3rd grades, guest facilitators from High Tech-High Touch Science in the 2nd grades, girls and boys basketball games, and a Pep Rally! This newsletter issue is packed with great information about school happenings and events coming up in the near future.

On Thursday, we had a day long, five year campus review by the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC). The rigorous accreditation process is important in the life of every school and helps to provide and maintain important standards of that detail the qualities of effective schools. McGinnis Woods has achieved the highest accreditations through GAC, SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) and NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children).

During a tour of the facilities, Dr. Jackson, our GAC consultant, was touring one of the PreK classes when she walked up to a student and asked, "What are you doing?" The child was in the throws of making a huge collage about the word "purple." Cut up magazines, scissors and glue sticks were everywhere... including in his hands. He smiled shyly and responded "Nothing." She tried again to engage him. She smiled warmly and said, "what are you learning?" He looked at her earnestly and replied, "Nothing" and smiled quite proudly. She then moved to the child across the table who was equally engrossed and had many purple items glued to her collage and said, "Tell me about what you are learning? The little girl smiled largely and said, "The same thing as him!"

One of the things that I find special about working with students is the many ways they make me smile. Needless to say, we were all tickled and somewhat puzzled by their responses. What the consultant didn't know is that I had overheard the teachers preparing the children earlier in the day that the class would have visitors and that they should do what they always do, work hard, be themselves, and change "nothing". Our literal thinkers had taken the instructions to heart... Their responses of, "Just doing nothing" was their innocent interpretation of what their teachers had encouraged them to do. Words are powerful tools and the students were determined to make their teachers proud and do what they had been instructed to!

We once again received GAC's highest accreditation level, *Accredited with Quality*. This recognition of our school's efforts should affirm, encourage and re-energize us all to continue to do what is best for our students and to fulfill our mission each day.



Wildcat Chat

Wildcat Sports Report

With both the boys and girls basketball teams standing at 5-1, the 2011 season looks to finish as a successful one. The wintry weather has affected the schedule with a few cancellations, but the teams march on this month toward the finish of the season.

The Girls B-Team finished their year without a win (0-4), but they reached their goal of gaining experience and learning the fundamentals of the game. Real progress was made during the season and these girls are looking forward to next year.

The Girls A-Team has yet to play a game since December, with all the weather cancellations. They won their last home game of the season January 19 and will compete in the Wildcat Basketball Tournament January 25 & 26.

The Boys Team lost a heart-breaker January 6 at the Cottage School, 28-26. This was their first loss of the season. They look forward to the rematch with Cottage at the Wildcat Basketball Tournament. They finished their regular season with a win at home against Epstein School on January 19.

Final results for Basketball Season 2011 will be posted in the February Newsletter.

It's almost Track & Field Time!

Track & Field practice will begin February 10, 2011. We look to have much improved teams from last year and we will be running for some records and championships. Do you like medals? If you do, go out for Track & Field. Learn more in the February Newsletter!



Classroom Spotlight: Study of Native Americans and Dwelling Project

Part of the fourth grade curriculum is an exciting, in-depth study of Native Americans. Each year our students learn about various tribes, cultures, and the many contributions of the first people of America. After extensive research, the students prepare a ten paragraph report on a specific tribe and then construct a replica of the dwelling in which their tribe lived. Students are encouraged to use materials that closely resemble those used by the Native Americans. Some of the amazing dwellings our students have made represent teepees, long houses, pueblos, log houses, and huts.



PA Board Update

It seems that 2011 is going to be full of surprises. After a snowy start, your PA is off and running. Math and Science Night was fabulous and a fun time of community throughout the school. We hope that everyone had a chance to see some of the new science equipment that was purchased through our 2010-2011 Annual Fund being used in the Science classroom.

Coming up quickly is our Valentine's Dance on Saturday, February 5! Make sure to mark your calendars as this event has become an annual tradition that can't be missed. There will be food, music, dancing, a silent auction, and great company. Don't miss the fun. You will want to be part of this memorable event. Look for information coming soon.

We will begin February dancing and finish it running! The Boosterthon Fun Run will kick off on Monday, February 14 and run through February 24. This is a great program for our children. This year's theme is *Leadership Launch* and will highlight important character and fitness traits. The students look forward to the Fun Run because they see Boosterthon team members who inspire them to do their best and help to build their confidence through their positivity. Stay tuned for more information regarding the specific project we are raising funds for this year.

Happy New Year! Let's make it the best year yet.

The Annual Family Math and Science Night

McGinnis Woods had its annual Math and Science Night on Tuesday, January 18th. Students and their families enjoyed all kinds of interesting activities! The Pre-K Team lead a delicious science experiment in the cafeteria, making ice cream! One of our Kindergarten classes had students using their senses of smell and hearing. Ms. Wendy and Ms. Rebecca's second grade classroom helped students make invisible messages through a chemical reaction and special secret ink. In Mr.



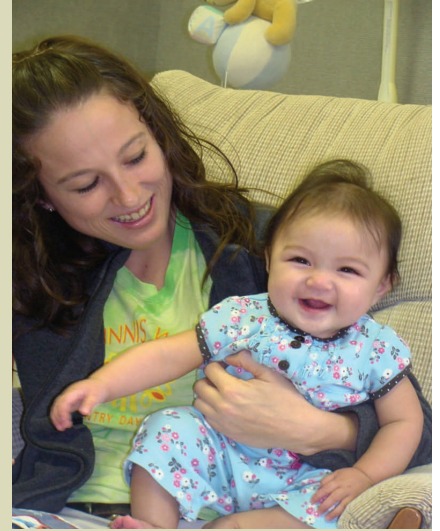
Ken's science room there were several science stations including static electricity and using microscopes. Parents even had a brain teaser to solve during the evening! Special thanks goes to the Curriculum Team for organizing this fun, family event and to the PA Board for making the delicious cookies and brownies. All in all, it was a great night of



Preschool Corner (Infants through Pre-K3/4)

Happy New Year from the Preschool! We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday! The theme for the month is "Let it Snow." The children are learning about winter clothes, snowmen, animals that hibernate during the winter, winter animals, along with ice, cold, and snow. The nursery rhyme of the month is "Mary had a little lamb". Ask your child if they can recite it for you.

In the coming months, the preschool will be having some special visitors highlighting dental health visiting the preschool. Also, in March, the preschool will be hosting a preschool book fair. Watch for more details in the next few weeks.



"Specials" Program: Featuring Steve Wells, IT and Technology Instructor

Mr. Steve Wells is the Technology Instructor and IT Specialist for McGinnis Woods. He co-coaches the McGinnis Woods Wildcats Robotics Team with Mr. Tyler Driskell. Mr. Steve has taught K-8 technology and worked as the IT Manager at other schools and universities in the state. He has worn many different professional hats throughout his life. He has built waterfalls and koi ponds, worked in the television broadcasting industry and even worked on the United States Senate Television Network installation. He has been a house painter, carpenter, electronics technician, and swimming pool equipment installer.



Mr. Steve loves life and enjoys spending time with his two daughters, Jessie and Hannah, college students at the University of West Georgia. He resides in Cumming and tries to get out on water every chance he gets fishing in many local rivers, ponds, streams, and lakes, from a boat, a canoe, while wading and even in an inner tube! His other favorite pastime is playing all types of music from Medieval to rock on the mandolin. He loves working at McGinnis Woods and enjoys all of the families.

A Little About our Teachers: Featuring the Third Grade

Kristen Spradlin, Chris Chase, and Dawn Thompson make up the third grade team known as the STARS and the DOLPHINS. Ms. Kristen has been at McGinnis Woods for six exciting years. She has a degree in Early Childhood Education from Georgia State University and has been teaching for eleven years. She has two children at McGinnis Woods, Connor, who is in the third grade and Ella, a Kindergartener. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, going to the movies, nature walks, spending time at the beach and watching her children play.



Chris Chase has been at McGinnis Woods for two years. Prior to McGinnis Woods, she taught in Forsyth County. Ms. Chris has a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism and a Master's Degree in Elementary Education. She has four children, twin girls, age ten and two boys, ages 12 and 14. Additionally, she has two pets, a dog named Bay and a tabby cat named Savannah. Ms. Chris is passionate about teaching and strives to motivate her students for success.

Dawn Thompson "looped up" with the second graders to join the third grade team this year. This is her second year at McGinnis Woods. Ms. Dawn has been an assistant teacher at various grade levels for six years. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Paralegal Certificate from National Center for Paralegal Training. She and her husband have three children. Her eldest is a freshman in college this year. She is passionate about teaching

Field Trip of the Month: The Georgia Aquarium

The Pre-K classes went to the Georgia Aquarium in January. The classes took the self-guided tour on an adventure through the Aquarium. We visited the Georgia Explorer gallery where we tried to find the Loggerhead sea turtle and slid down the whale slide! The River Scout gallery was also exciting! The children could not wait to see the Piranhas and alligators! Other favorites were found in the Cold Water Quest and Ocean Voyager galleries where the children sat and watched the Beluga Whales and the penguins and rode on the moving sidewalk through the tunnel, ending with sitting in front of a 6 million gallon exhibit. The children loved everything in the Coral Reef, but their very favorites were the whale sharks, manta rays, beluga whales, jellies, and the loggerhead sea turtle. A great time was had by one and all!



Open House

Please join us on Saturday, January 29, from 11-1 for our Annual Open House. This is a great opportunity to check out the entire curriculum, visit classrooms and meet teachers and staff who inspire our students each and every day. Bring a friend!

Afternoon Discovery Clubs Spotlight: Cheerleading

Go Wildcats! Go!

The Cheerleading Afterschool Discovery Club focuses on teaching the fundamentals of cheerleading including chants, cheers, and pompom routines. The Cheerleading Club helps students develop coordination and flexibility as well as voice enthusiasm. Old school cheers are combined with new school attitude.

The course is currently being taught by Ms. Stacey Jahanfar and Caroline Awbrey. It is targeted towards students in PreK4 through 4th grade. Come join the fun!



Annual Spelling Bee

Just how important is Spelling? Well, if you ask any of the students at McGinnis Woods they will tell you very important. During the week of January 17th, students from PreK through 8th grade competed in the school spelling bee.

Competition was fierce as students were well prepared for the Spelling Bee. They studied long and hard over winter break to learn many challenging words.

When asked what her favorite part of the spelling bee was, Kavya Vadapalli said, “Hearing my name announced as the Third grade Spelling champion.” Every speller was supported by classmates in the audience. Students sat and listened attentively watching the bee take place. “I liked watching the people,” said Sam Mesi, a kindergarten student.

After three days of competition a winner emerged. Ishani Narassah, a sixth grader, spelled “commencement” as the winning word. She will represent our school when we compete in the GISA District Spelling Bee. Our first runner-up was Gehna Chaubal. Please congratulate all of our students for a job well done. Until next year, happy spelling!

