

McGinnis Woods Buzz



November 2009 Volume 1, Issue 3



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

Inspiring students with the
Passion to Excel

11/9:	Food Drive Begins
11/12:	Kids Art Fair 4—7 p.m.
11/16:	Thanksgiving Feast 5th-8th, 12-1:30 p.m.
11/17:	Thanksgiving Feast 2nd-4th, 12-1:30 p.m.
11/18:	Thanksgiving Feast K&1st, 12-1:30 p.m.
11/19:	Thanksgiving Feast Pre-K, 11:30-1 p.m.
11/24:	Thanksgiving Feast Preschool
11/25-27:	Thanksgiving Break No Classes
11/26-27:	McGinnis Woods Closed

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

November is a month of excitement at McGinnis Woods. We are busily preparing for our Art Show, 1-3rd Grade Musical and our Thanksgiving Feasts. We enjoy this time of year because it provides us with many opportunities to showcase what we are learning with our friends and family. This will be our 11th year of Thanksgiving Feasts at our school. This exciting tradition has become part of our school's culture and is in line with our mission and goals. One of the stated goals of our school is "to develop and maintain a close-knit, family atmosphere that enhances our students' self worth." We believe that our feasts and other family events, such as our recent Fall Festival and upcoming Bingo Night, really help us accomplish this goal. On our feast days we will be in for a real treat as the students share what they are most thankful for and perform short songs, skits and original works with our extended school family.



November is also the time of year when we think about family near and far and become more aware of the needs of those around us. This has been a difficult year for many families in our area and the US. We will have several opportunities before the Holiday Season to demonstrate our concern for others. We are having a Food Drive that will benefit families in our area. We need canned goods and non-perishables to help restock the pantry at the Atlanta Community Food Bank. We are working, once again, with North Fulton Community Charities adopting families to supply gifts to during the Holiday Season. Flyers providing more details will be sent home to all of our students in both the Preschool and Elementary School.

We are always looking for energetic volunteers. If you have some time and like to Scrapbook, Ms. Kim and the Yearbook Committee would appreciate your help as we work on the 2009-10 yearbook. We would also like additional volunteers for our library and various other committees throughout the year. We will be starting Jr. Achievement in January. This is a great program which enriches our curriculum and inspires the students to think about their future careers. Please contact Ms. Jenn if you would like to help us out.

We, at McGinnis Woods, are thankful to be a part of such a caring community. From all of us to all of you, Happy Thanksgiving!

Wildcat Chat

The Wildcats finished the fall season on a high note. With plenty of participation and hard work, the teams represented their school well.

The Soccer Team finished up their season at 2-2. They had the biggest win of the season against Chrysalis Academy. The team set a school scoring record with 11 goals!

The Volleyball Team finished 1-3. They had some tough games, but they were always competitive. Their win came against a quality team, and all of the games were close. Next year we will be poised for more wins.

The Cross Country Team finished their season at the MAAC Middle School Championships. All the runners ran well. The girls took 19th and 28th in a race of 48 girls. This team is also young, but now experienced. They should do well next year.

The Basketball Team began practice in October. The Wildcats have 14 girls and 10 boys playing on the teams. Both teams will be building on the experience of last season and should make their mark this year. The first game is December 1. Look for results soon.



Student Council Election Results:

Student Council elections were recently held. All students ran an excellent campaign. Student Council representatives for the 2009/2010 school year are as follows:

President - Brittany Johnson

Vice President - Mackenzie Johnson

Secretary - Adrienne Lee

Treasurer - Shane Moore

Field Trip of the Month: Historic Atlanta

The Parrots, Pandas and Crabs took a fascinating trip into Atlanta on October 26th. Accompanied by several parents, the children had lunch at the historic Mary Mac's Tea Room. Lunch consisted of southern delicacies such as fried chicken, homemade macaroni and cheese and green beans. Many of the children said they had never tried macaroni like this before! Ice cream was served for dessert and the children left Mary Mac's both full and happy.

Then, the journey continued to another Atlanta landmark, The Fox Theater. The children viewed the play, "Junie B. Jones-1st Grader, At Last." Since the students were familiar with the Junie B. Jones book series, they were quite enthusiastic. Many also remarked about how cool they thought the Fox Theater itself was, especially the "stars on the ceiling" and the "old timey bathrooms." A good time was had by all!



PA Board Update



Once again, many thanks to all of the families who contributed to this year's annual fund. We hope you have had a chance to check out the Sport Court that was recently installed. This is another fantastic addition to our school.

Our Sally Foster fundraiser was terrific, and the winners of the raffle prizes were announced at the Fall Festival. Congratulations to Tayler Evangelista, Lana Whitfield, Carly Bachism, Hannah Huang and Megan Moore.

The Fall Festival baskets were a huge hit! Thank you to everyone who contributed a special item. Congratulations to all the winners!

This month we will be collecting canned goods for the Atlanta Community Food Bank from November 9th through November 20th. They are in need of all types of non-

perishable food including: tuna fish, canned meat, cereals, grits, dry beans, rice, macaroni & cheese, peanut butter, jelly, single serving foods, canned soup, fruit, vegetables, pasta, spaghetti sauce, and sugar. Glass containers are restricted. Toiletry items like shampoo, bath soap, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrushes, disposable razors, and shaving cream are also needed. For individuals with restricted diets and allergies, they are grateful for grocery store gift cards in small denominations (\$10 – \$25). All food pantries are struggling this year. Let us help in any way we can.

Lastly, we will be adopting families from the NFCC again this year. However, because they are requesting that the items be delivered during the first full week in December, we will be putting up the trees a bit early on November 16. The trees will be decorated with ornaments requesting gifts for families in need. Each year the children excitedly participate. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to demonstrate the spirit of the season and help families in need as we do each year. Please make this a special holiday season for these families by helping with this event. More information will be coming home soon.

We wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving as we all count our blessings.

October Guest Speaker: Paul Ossmann

McGinnis Woods had a visit from a very special guest speaker in the month of October. Paul Ossmann, a meteorologist from WXIA, talked to students in the 3rd through 8th grades about a variety of topics including his journey to becoming a weather forecaster, what it is like being on TV, and the formation of tornadoes. He also chose volunteers from the audience to help him create a weather forecast. He ended with information about Doppler, his weather dog, and the kids sang "Doppler Rap." A big thanks to Ms. Chris from the third grade Geckos for arranging this presentation. Ms. Chris previously worked at CNN and is good friends with Mr. Paul Ossman.



Preschool Corner (Infants through Pre-K3/4)

Is it really November? Time is flying by! We had a great time at our Fall Festival. Many thanks to Ms. Michelle for all of her hard work planning this wonderful event. Recently we had our Halloween parties. We celebrated with costumes, songs, a parade, games, and goodies. Thank you to all of our parents for your help.

During November, the children will continue to enjoy the many changes the fall season brings us. From the rich fall colors to the new seasonal foods, there is never a dull moment. We will be emphasizing the importance of the First Thanksgiving gathering between the Native Americans and the Pilgrims. If you would like to share in this special time of year with your child's class, please contact the preschool administration to arrange a visit. Appropriately, our word of the month is **Gratitude**. What a wonderful time of year to remind our children of all the things we have to be grateful for.

Our children's days are filled with intentional play and exposure to fun, hands on learning experiences. They are learning new concepts every day and flourish when given the freedom to try things without worrying about the result; they are more involved with the process or the doing. Each day our children are discovering that doing for one's self is both satisfying and rewarding.

The administrators, teachers, and staff are thankful for all of our families, and we wish you all a happy and safe Thanksgiving!



Specials Program: Featuring Ms. Yanira Cedillo and Spanish



Yanira Cedillo is the Spanish Teacher for Pre-K—8th grade students at McGinnis Woods Country Day School. She also helps with the after school program, where you often see her lending a hand wherever she is needed.

Ms. Yanira is originally from the Island of Puerto Rico. In 2002, she received her BA in Education from the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico. After completing her Teaching Certification in 2003, she began work as a preschool teacher for the Head Start Programs there. She then became interested in the area of special education and decided to enhance her qualifications by specializing in this area. She returned to school and acquired her qualifications to work with children with special needs. She worked in that capacity for two years in the public schools of Puerto Rico.

Ms. Yanira has been at McGinnis Woods since 2007. She loves teaching at McGinnis Woods because the children are respectful, and more importantly, show the curiosity and the desire to learn Spanish as a second language. The students also enjoy learning interesting aspects of the Hispanic culture. Ms Yanira is energetic and enthusiastic in her classroom and strives to keep students engaged and motivated. As a teacher, her main objective is to provide students with the necessary tools to interact and comprehend when encountering someone from the Spanish speaking world. In her own words, "I always strive to take them to the next level."

Ms. Yanira is anxiously awaiting the arrival of her first child. Her adventure of coming to visit a cousin in Georgia ultimately ended in her moving permanently to the U.S, finding a teaching job and starting a new family. Upon reflection, Ms. Yanira comments: "A lot can happen in a short time, and even though sometimes things get a little stressful, and I do miss my friends and extended family in Puerto Rico, I have grown and achieved so much, that I wouldn't have it any other way."

Afternoon Discovery Clubs Spotlight: Young Voices

McGinnis Woods Young Voices is a vocal performance group for first, second, and third grade students. Students meet once a week with Ms. Amber for rehearsal. In rehearsals, students work on vocal production-using their head voices, diction-correct vowel production, and performance etiquette. The McGinnis Woods young Voices is currently preparing for their first performance on Thursday, December 10th. The Young Voices will be performing with the upper grades chorus, the McGinnis Woods Singing Sensations. Mark your calendars, and plan to join us!



A Little About our Teachers: Featuring the Pre-K Team

Bugs, Ducks, and Owls....Oh My! The Pre-K class names may lead you to believe that you are entering an uncharted wilderness; however, the varied backgrounds of the Pre-K Team allows them to skillfully guide these little creatures through a learning adventure filled with letter sounds, reading, writing, exploring the globe, numbers, counting and even addition.

The Pre-K 4 A Mama Ducks are Robyn Hogan and Tamara Baker. Both Robyn and Tamara have joined the Pre-K Team this year from Kindergarten. Originally from Savannah, Georgia, Ms. Robyn moved to Atlanta in 1985. She has a degree in Early Childhood Education from Ashworth College and is currently attending Grand Canyon University to further her education. Ms. Robyn is joined at McGinnis Woods by her children, Spirit, and Ashton, who attend our preschool.

Ms. Tamara has been working with children for over 15 years ranging from preschool through high school aged students. Before joining McGinnis Woods four years ago, Ms. Tamara taught kindergarten at Clear Spring Christian Academy. She is the single mom of two college students. Her son attends the University of Kentucky and her daughter attends Georgia State University.

The Queen Bee and Mighty Mantis of the Pre-K 4 B class are Ms. Lisa Aber and Mr. Mike Williams. Ms. Lisa is celebrating her 10th year as a McGinnis Woods staffer and her 6th year teaching in our elementary school! Originally from Port Charlotte, Florida, she attended Florida State University and received a degree in International Affairs. Ms. Lisa and her husband, Chris, have two fabulous daughters attending McGinnis Woods, Madison, a First Grade Panda and Emerson, a Pre-K Duck.

Mr. Mike is a Chicagoland native. He attended Illinois State university and has been working in the Early Childhood field since 1996. He was the director of Kid's Wonderland in Fremont, California before joining the McGinnis Woods staff in 2007. Mr. Mike enjoys hiking, camping, mountain biking, swimming, coin collecting and his cat, Loki. He is also in charge of our After School and Summer Camp Programs.



The Wise Owls nest is presided by Ms. Lori Rogers and Ms. Angie Johnson. Hailing from South Carolina, Ms. Lori Rogers received her Bachelor of Arts in German from the University of South Carolina. This is her 4th year at McGinnis Woods. Ms. Lori loves to read and relax; however, she spends

most of her free time chasing the men in her life: Jacob, a Kindergarten Tiger, Daniel, a Pre-K 3/4 Rock Star and Chris, her husband of 15 years. Ms. Lori turns into "Frau Lori" in the afternoon to teach a German elective for the upper grades.

Ms. Angie Johnson is originally from England. Twelve years ago, Coca-Cola, her husband's employer, brought them to the states. After completing her education in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, she returned to England where she worked as a team leader for a large banking organization. Ms. Angie has been working in education for over 6 years and she earned her CDA last year. She has two wonderful children, Heather (8) and David (10).