



# McGinnis Woods Buzz

October 2010 Volume 2, Issue 1



**McGINNIS WOODS**  
Country Day School

Inspiring Students with the  
Passion to Excel

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- 10/11: Elementary Picture Re-takes, Standard Uniform**
- 10/15: Early Release  
1:15 p.m.**
- 10/18: No Classes/Staff Dev.**
- 10/22: Report Cards**
- 10/23: Fall Festival  
3:00—6:00 p.m.**
- 10/24: "Peace Out to Drugs"  
Red Ribbon Week**
- 10/29: Pep Rally, 1:00pm  
Non-Uniform Day**

## 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

We have had an excellent start to the 2010-11 school year. Our students have adjusted well to the year and have participated in so many great activities, field trips and events. Engaging instruction and learning has taken place each and every day, and we are very proud of the progress being made.

Our PA has worked with us through the Annual Fund to purchase and install a new server and network which is providing the staff with excellent, top of the line computer access in all of our classrooms.

We have also been working with Promethean World. They have chosen our school as a bi-monthly training site resulting in the installation of interactive whiteboards throughout our school. Our teachers have been trained to use the whiteboards to make their daily lessons more interactive and engaging.

International Night, one of our favorite events of the year, was a huge success! We had more than four hundred attendees visiting nine countries including Mexico, Singapore, Portugal, England, China, Japan, India, Italy, and France. Every country featured wonderful background information on colorful displays, native dress, interesting activities, artifacts and delicious traditional foods. Thanks to the many parents who helped to make the night a celebration of the diversity in our community of learners!

Our fall sports teams are wrapping up their busy practice and competition schedules. All of the soccer, cross country, and volleyball players, as well as the coaches and parents, are to be commended for their commitment and excellent sportsmanship.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for our upcoming Fall Festival on October 23 from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. You will not want to miss this family event. It is a highlight of the season and includes pony rides, arts and crafts, costume contests, games, cake walk, amazing raffle baskets, a haunted house and great food. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Wildcat Chat

*Fall sports wind down with some great performances.*

Wildcat Fall Athletics has had a great second year so far. Team rosters are at all time high numbers, and the teams are competitive in every sport. With one week to go in the season, here are the results thus far:

### **Cross Country:**

The Wildcat runners have put a real stamp in MAAC league meets so far this season. Our girls have consistently placed in the top ten in meets that have ninety or more girls. Front runners include Adrienne Lee and 5th grade runner, Emmalyn Cushman.

The boys team is young and inexperienced, but is working hard to improve. Top runners include Chris Lee and Daniel Elkin.

### **Volleyball**

The Volleyball Team has finished its season and has counted many successes for this year. The team had many very close games, and Coach Ken Haughy is encouraged for the future. Eighth grade players included Adrienne Lee, Lindsey Campbell, and Natalie Mies.

The MAAC Championship Meet results will be posted on the next Newsletter.

### **Soccer:**

The Soccer team is currently riding high on their record of 3-3-0 for the season. This is a much improved team over last year. The team has broken all scoring records and looks forward to next year.



## **“Specials” Program: Featuring Ms. Xylina Nuckles, Music and Drama Teacher**

Since her childhood, Founder and Director of Standing Ovation Performing Arts, Xylina Nuckles Reynolds, has held the highest regard for performing arts and music. She graduated from Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, with a degree in Theatre and Performing Arts. Ms. Xylina has been teaching the Drama Afterschool Program here at McGinnis Woods for a few years. This year, she is beyond thrilled to be the new Music Teacher. Ms. Xylina has also added an exciting new class to this year's afterschool for the students entitled, *So You Think You can Dance?* Using her exuberant personality, Ms. Xylina has been able to perpetuate her love for music and drama by performing leading roles in several acclaimed musicals such as *A Christmas Carol*, *Chicago*, *The Wiz*, *Junie B. Jones*, *Annie*, and *Rapunzel*, just to name a few. She has also toured in Amsterdam, Hungary, and Budapest doing what she loves most, the Arts! Xylina looks forward to this exciting school year at McGinnis Woods! She enjoys helping children reach their potential. “It is such a gift to be able to share my passion with your children,” says Ms. Xylina.





## PA Board Update

October has rolled in, everyone has settled into their school schedule, and the Parents Association is in full swing with our school wide programs. One of the new additions to the calendar is our monthly food drive. There is an unprecedented need in our local North Fulton Community Charities' (NFCC) food pantry for food donations this year. The food pantry relies heavily on the community to keep its shelves stocked. The McGinnis Woods community can help those in need. On the first Wednesday of every month, each child is asked to bring in at least five canned/boxed/bagged items to be donated to NFCC. Every child participating will receive a ticket for a non-uniform day the following Friday. This is a great way to get your child involved in a community service project that is ongoing. Thank you in advance for donating generously to those in need.

Fall Festival is coming on October 23, and the PA baskets are back! Classroom themes were sent out to the classes with suggested items, but you are more than welcome to come up with your own creative ideas. We look forward to seeing what each class can come up with, and the baskets will be raffled off at the Fall Festival. Make them bigger, make them better, make them awesome! It's all about the baskets!

## Field Trip of the Month: The Botanical Gardens

The Kindergarteners recently had an exciting opportunity to visit the beautiful Botanical Gardens in Atlanta. The students' field trip to the Botanical Gardens was in conjunction with their study of plants. First, the children took a canopy walk on bridges high in the trees. They were able to see a long way from the bridges, but were also able to see the tall trees up close. Next, they enjoyed the opportunity to see a man made waterfall as well as a pond full of lily pads. The students were excited to find out that tadpoles were living in the pond and would soon be turning into frogs!

The students also toured the Dorothy Fuqua Conservatory and learned that to conserve means to use just a little. Inside the Conservatory, they walked through habitat areas designed to imitate the rainforest and the desert. The rainforest area was so wet that some of the children got rained on! The students also learned about some rainforest animals, such as the poisonous Dart Frog. People can be poisoned just from touching his skin! Following a picnic lunch, the kindergarteners returned to MWCDs even more interested in plants than before!



## Preschool Corner (Infants through Pre-K3/4)

October in the Preschool is jam packed with learning based on our theme, Brewing Up Some Fun! We will be learning about vehicles and transportation coupled with community helpers. The community helpers we will highlight are fire fighters, doctors, nurses and dentists. We will also have a visit from the Forsyth County Fire Department during Fire Prevention Week and a visit from a local dentist. Later in the month we will shift our focus to the signs of fall including pumpkins, scarecrows and black cats! Our pumpkin decorating contest and fabulous Fall Festival will cap off this month of learning!

We have many amazingly patient and creative teachers in our preschool. This month we are happy to announce Caryn Hodges as our Teacher of the Month and Room 3B as our Room of the Month! Please be sure to thank and congratulate our excellent educators who make each day special for our children!



### Afterschool Discovery Clubs: Wildcat Football Takes the Field *by Josh Reiter*

According to legendary coach Vince Lombardi, **“Winning isn’t everything; it is the only thing.”** In the hire-and-fire madness of professional football, this may be true. However, looking back on my own football experience, I found it is not the win-loss record I reflected upon most.

More than anything else, it was the friendships I made and how being part of a team makes you part of something bigger than you could ever be on your own. Football helped teach me the value of working together to achieve a common goal, importance of sportsmanship, and perhaps most importantly, that putting all of myself into something had a reward all its own.

I feel privileged that I have the honor to coach the Football Discovery Club here at McGinnis Woods. This gives me the opportunity to pass on the things that I have found to be important in the game of football: teamwork, sportsmanship, hard work and the acceptance of all players (no matter how gifted of an athlete a student may or may not be.) I have had a wonderful time teaching “athletes-to-be” of all shapes and sizes for three years now. I plan on coaching a lot more too, so don’t be shy! Come and be a part of our team. The players may even use the skills they learn during Discovery Club to win more games. Winning is definitely not the *only* thing...but it does increase the fun! Go Wildcats!





## A Little About our Teachers: Featuring the Middle School Team

The middle school all star line-up consists of Mr. Ken Haughey (Science), Ms. Pam Charlton (Math), Ms. Heather Bailey (Language Arts), and Ms. Nicole Seltzer (Social Studies). Aside from academics, these teachers strive to help middle school students obtain the right game plan, as they transition into young adults. Class sizes are small and instruction is individualized to meet the needs of all players, so academic potential can be met. Independence is promoted, and students have a voice in their education, on and off the field.

This is Mr. Ken's first year at McGinnis Woods. He is passionate about science and teaching middle grade students. Prior to coming to McGinnis Woods, he was a life science teacher in the public schools where he taught for a total of twelve years. He received his Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Secondary Science from Kennesaw State University. His science classes are bustling with lab experiments, research, and are very "hands-on." Mr. Ken and his wife, Mary, have two children, Kyle (10) and Anna (8). They also enjoy a variety of pets including two dogs, a cat, fish, and a guinea pig. In his spare time, Mr. Ken enjoys caving, camping, repelling, volleyball, and running.



Ms. Pam grew up in the heartland of Illinois and graduated from Illinois State University. She did graduate work at the University of Illinois and then went on to teach sixth grade in self-contained classrooms in both Illinois and Florida. When she relocated to Atlanta, she took a position as the upper school math coordinator for a private school. That was when she discovered that teaching math all day long was a perfect fit for her. This is now her sixth year at McGinnis Woods, and she can't imagine doing anything else. She has one son, Zach, who is 20 years old and attends Ole Miss in Oxford, Mississippi.

Ms. Heather, another new member of the team, graduated from the University of West Florida with a B.S. Degree in Elementary Education. She also received dual certificates in Integrated Curriculum as well as Special Education. Ms. Heather is newly married to husband, Ron. She has three lovely children, Isaac (13), Isabella (14), and Troy (17). She enjoys boating, traveling, and camping.

Ms. Nicole graduated from Florida State University with a degree in English Literature and a minor in Film Studies. She moved to Georgia in 2000 and began working at McGinnis Woods in the preschool. Ms. Nicole has been with McGinnis Woods for ten years. She is married to her husband, Jeff, and has two children; Josh, who is in first grade and Rebecca, who is in 3A. Ms. Nicole also earned her Middle Grades Certification in Language Arts and Social Studies as well as her Master's in the Art of Teaching. In her spare time, Ms. Nicole takes her son to Cub Scouts and soccer and her daughter to ballet. She also enjoys movies, music, sewing, reading, and arts and crafts.

## Coming Soon...McGinnis Woods' Fall Festival

Join us on Saturday, October 23 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. for our 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Festival featuring games, food, crafts, spider jump, ponies, costume contest and lots of fun! There will be a special performance by the McGinnis Woods Chorus. Get your entry bracelets now! Advanced purchase entry bracelets are \$5 per adult and \$10 per child. Event day admission is \$10 per person. Children under two are free.



## Upcoming Art Fair

Bring the whole family and join us on Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. as the lunchroom is transformed into a “Night at the Museum” featuring our own McGinnis Woods Art Gallery of student work! Mr. Joe Parson, the Art Teacher, has been working in partnership with KidsArt Fairs on an art enrichment program that culminates in a one evening event that will showcase the students’ art. “The Art Fair gets students and their families involved in art. When a child’s artwork is framed and displayed at home, it makes the child more confident in his/her abilities and helps to build self esteem! I hope that everyone will join us at the show,” says Mr. Joe.

Art work created by children whose parents plan to attend will be professionally framed and displayed. The framed artwork may be purchased if desired. Music and refreshments will be provided. It will be an exciting event and volunteers are needed. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Mr. Joe at [jparson@mcginniswoods.org](mailto:jparson@mcginniswoods.org).



## International Night

International Night was once again a huge success! Nearly 400 students and parents joined us for a night filled with culture, food, and fun! Italy, Mexico, Portugal, United Kingdom, Singapore, Japan, China, France and India were all proudly represented. Here is what a few of our globe trotters had to say:

*“My favorite country was France because I really want to go there one day. I ate a chocolate croissant and it was delicious!”*

**Madison Aber, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Fish**

*“I really enjoyed India. I felt like my culture was represented well. I liked seeing pictures of special places such as the Taj Mahal and special people like Mother Teresa. I also enjoyed seeing Ganesh, the god of learning, surrounded by water and flower petals.”*

**Gowri Krishnan, 4<sup>th</sup> grade Suns**

*“I liked China because I learned how to use chopsticks!”*

**Anna Li, Kindergarten Tigers**

*“It was interesting to learn about unique food from different countries. I enjoyed trying some of them – especially the sushi in Japan and the taquitos in Mexico.”*

**Tomisin Odetoyinbo, 7<sup>th</sup> grade**

*“My favorite country was the U.K. I learned that Northern Ireland is actually part of the U.K. I also really enjoyed the jam tarts - they were delicious!”*

**Mackenzie Johnson, 7<sup>th</sup> grade**

