

# McGinnis Woods Buzz



August 2017 Volume 12, Issue 1



**McGINNIS WOODS**  
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with  
the Passion to Excel*

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

PA Update.....2	Mr. Magnet Visits PreK 4.....6	Nurse Angle Joins the Team.....8
Preschool Corner .....3	Community Helpers Visit.....6	911 Call Center.....9
PreK Guest Speaker.....3	Meet Ms. Elizabeth.....7	Jr. Beta and Student Council.....9
Wildcat Chat.....4	Meet the 4th Grade Team .....7	Solar Eclipse 2017 .....10
Wildcat Cup .....5	Word of the Month.....8	Summer Camp Success.....10
		Pictures Around the School.....11

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

9-4	Labor Day McGinnis Woods Closed
9-7 9-8	PreK Field Trip to Kroger
9-13	2nd Grade Field Trip to Tellus Museum
9-14	3rd Field Trip to Consolidated Gold Mines
9-15	5-8th Field Trip to Oakland Cemetery
9-21	Kindergarten Field Trip to The Art Barn
9-26	Citizen of the Month Lunch
9-27 9-28	PreK -8th Yearbook Photos
9-28	4th Grade Field Trip to Aqualand Marina
9-29	1st Grade Field Trip to Elachee Nature Center

## **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**

The 2017-18 school year is off to a great start as we have already completed nineteen days of fun, meeting new friends and engaging activities. We are so pleased with our students and their enthusiasm for learning both in and outside of the classroom. They have settled into our school routine and are showing academic growth.



Discovery Clubs, Sports teams and Robotics have also begun. We are thrilled to be offering 3D With Me this year as a Discovery Club. As a school we are always trying to expand our STEM instruction and opportunities, so this club really supports our goals. The Robotics clubs and team have also begun building and making plans for the coming school year. Our team will be competing in the First Lego League when it is competition time this winter.

Curriculum Nights were well attended as families came to learn about their student's grade level curriculum and ways that they can partner with their child's learning and the school. We also had a great turn out at the PA Family Pizza Party this past Tuesday evening and are so thankful for the new volunteers who have stepped up to give their time and energy here at the school.

As tomorrow ushers in September, we want to remind you that the school will be closed on Monday, September 4 in honor of Labor Day. We have so many wonderful activities planned for the coming month, so please be sure to make note of the "Dates to Remember" section in the McGinnis Woods Buzz, so that you can be a part of the life of our school through field trips, PA activities or sporting events. Another great way to keep informed is by check out and liking our Facebook page at McGinnis Woods Country Day School.

Here's to another great year!

*Ms. Mary*

## *Parent Association Update*



Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! We hope it got off to a great start for everyone! It's always sad to see summer come to an end but it is so nice to have such a wonderful school to return to! Our Parent Association Board is very excited about the year ahead!

The McGinnis Woods Parent Association is designed to raise funds to enhance our school and build a sense of community while supporting the school's mission of Inspiring Students with the Passion to Excel. Our parents are so important to the school's success and volunteering with our Parent Association is a great way to support the school. Last year's fundraising efforts enabled us to purchase new sports

uniforms and make significant contributions towards keeping our school's technology competitive including the purchase of an interactive Promethean table for our STEM room, iPads, Surface Pro and Fire tablets, new desktop computers, graphing calculators, microscopes and coding software. The PA also provided funds for a Teacher Training day on which a speaker from Learning Ally led the teachers in activities and lessons pertaining to working with students with Dyslexia and other processing issues pertaining to the written word. This year we hope to be able to assist with the purchase of a new server. We additionally support our teachers and staff through grant programs and appreciation events. None of this would be possible without the strong support of our McGinnis Woods families.

We are kicking September off with our first fundraising event of the year. We are excited to bring back Square One Art! Square One Art replicates our children's artwork on a variety of keepsakes. Mr. Dan has already been working on creating some masterpieces with your children so stay tuned for info on how you can purchase, mugs, stationery, phone cases, ornaments and all sorts of other fun things personalized with your children's one of a kind artwork.

Mark your calendar for our first ever Builder Bunch Brick Bash on Tuesday, September 26th at 6:00 pm. Builder Bunch will bring one million (!! ) Legos to our gym for a fun night of bonding and building! This event will be open to our Pre-K through 5th grade students and their parents and parent-child teams will race to build the coolest car, the strongest bridge and the train with the most capacity. One Million Legos + Our school gym = 1 cool fundraiser! Information for registering for this exciting new event will come home shortly so keep an eye out as you're not going to want to miss this one!

Thanks to everyone who came out for the PA Pizza party. It was nice to talk and share a meal with you. If you could not make the Pizza Party but are interested in getting involved or want to learn more about the PA, please drop us a line at <http://www.mcginiswoodspa.org/index.php/contact> We will have a large array of volunteer opportunities throughout the year and hope you will consider joining us in some capacity. There are jobs both big and small and both during the school day and after hours to accommodate your busy schedules. Many hands make light work!

We would love to hear from you! With your help, we are hoping to make the 2017-2018 school year the best yet!

## *Preschool Corner*



Welcome back to a great school year! We are now into our first full month of school and off to a terrific start. There are lots of new faces in our classes and we want to extend a warm welcome to all of our new friends and staff.

Fall is in the air and we have lots of exciting things happening this month and look forward to sharing them all with you. Be sure to check all of the fun new science items we have added to our classrooms, as we are eagerly learning to use the test tubes, bug observation jars, and texture and sound tubes.

On August 31, we had special visitors from the Kohl's Literacy Project visit our classrooms. It was lots of fun! Thank you to Katie Waugh, Jackson and Layton's mom, for bringing her team to share their favorite stories with us in 3TA class. They also read to our PreK classes in the Elementary School. If you would like to read to our little ones, please stop by the front desk and let us know. We love volunteers!



## *Lee Bryan Performed for PreK*



The Pre-K classes had an amazing in house field trip this month. They were pleased to welcome back Lee Bryan "That Puppet Guy." He performed *Travelin' Tales* for the young audience. It was a wonderful way to kick off learning about maps and globes.

The show was a tantalizing trio of timeless tales from India, China, and North America. Lee Bryan combined storytelling with audience participation. The children were thrilled to take part in the stories. He truly made the stories come alive as the children watched Lee Bryan bring his puppets to life before their very eyes!



## *Wildcat Chat*



McGinnis Woods is excited to welcome Coach Staci to our team. Although she is new to our school,, she has many years of experience in her field. Coach Staci was born and raised in Northern Indiana and graduated from Purdue University. She has spent most of her adult life teaching in private schools in New York City until relocating to Alpharetta. She is very excited to be a part of the MWCDS community and looks forward to an exciting year!

The fall season of sports has already kicked off. Currently we are fielding teams in soccer, cross-country and girls volleyball for students in 5th—8th grade. If your student hasn't signed up yet, it's not too late. Students have until the September 8th deadline to sign up. That is when final rosters must be turned into the MAAC league officials.

McGinnis Woods has a “no-cut” policy and a wonderful coaching staff to teach the children, so this is an excellent opportunity for students to try a new sport and firm up some skills. In addition, if any of the children are interested in being a manager to assist the coaches please contact me.

We are looking forward to a wonderful Wildcat year in sports. Please join us to cheer on our teams and visit the concessions stand, too. Our first Cross Country Meet was rained out, but we will be hosting our first Volleyball game of the season today at 4:00 today.



## *Go Wildcats!*

## Wildcat Cup



The Middle School's Wildcat Cup is back for another year and better than ever! Last year our Middle School students were separated into houses, similar to The House Cup of Harry Potter fame. Students were separated into houses based on their homerooms and earn points throughout the year. These points were given in areas such as academics, art, athletics, character and even secret competitions! Last year's Winners were the 7th and 8th Grade Frogs and their flag will hang in the middle school for the entire 2017-2018 school year!

This year The Wildcat Cup had a major update. At back to school picnic, students were surprised with new hallway art and décor. This included a shield representing 5 new houses, new pennants and cups, a wildcat, and a "steps to success" wall. On the first day of school students participated in a sorting ceremony, where each grade level was mixed into a house based on a Latin Character word. Integritas meaning integrity, Humilitas meaning humility, Fortis meaning courage, Servimus meaning service, and Sapientia meaning wisdom. Even the students' locker tags and our success wall have been made to incorporate our school houses. The students even started the year with a trip to Urban Escape Games, where they worked with their houses to escape one of three rooms and practice their teambuilding skills. Students have been hard at work since day one earning points for their houses.

Integritas – 88 points

Humilitas – 92 points

Fortis – 93 points

Servimus – 98 points

Sapientia – 88 points



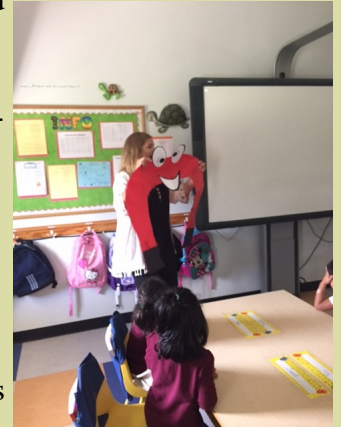


## *Mr. Magnet Visits the PreK 4 Turtles*



Science is not just hands on, but exciting, engaging and fun! When the PreK4 Turtles learned about magnets, they actually got to meet...Mr. Magnet. Assistant Teacher, Ms. Ashley, dressed as Mr. Magnet and created a new way for the PreK students to understand how magnets work. After explaining the concept of magnetism to the students, including attraction and repelling, she gave the students the opportunity to attach magnetic items to her magnet costume. The students loved the activity and quickly grasped the concept of magnetism. This is a lesson they will not soon forget as

they continue to learn about Science through STEM activities.



## *Community Helper Appreciation Day*



On September 27th, McGinnis Woods will have an opportunity to celebrate some of our local community helpers. We believe it is important for our students to become familiar with the many men and women who serve our communities as first responders and support every day. Students in our pre-school through first grade will visit with the Forsyth County Fire Department, members of the Forsyth County Sheriff's office, an Army Chemist, and an EMT. They will hear about their careers, learn what they do each day, and see the tools and vehicles needed to do their jobs. In addition, students will present the helpers with a token of their appreciation for all they do each day.

## *Meet Ms. Elizabeth*



Elizabeth Silva has joined the Administrative Team at McGinnis Woods as Program Coordinator. Elizabeth takes care of many facets of the office and eagerly assists parents and teachers each day. She loves meeting all of the students and actively works to make their days special.

Mrs. Elizabeth was born in Mississippi, but was raised in Georgia. She attended Reinhardt College in Waleska, Ga where she received a B.A. in Early Childhood Education. She is currently enrolled with Georgia Southern University and is working towards her masters in Educational Leadership.

She lives in Cumming, Ga where in her free time enjoys baking, reading, and spending time with her family. She and her husband, George, have one son, Banks, who is in the Preschool at McGinnis Woods. She also has a large immediate family, 27 brothers and sisters, so she is always at a family get together or attending a family birthday party! Before coming to McGinnis Woods Mrs. Elizabeth worked as a teacher for 14 years. She spent one year in public school and thirteen years at a local private school. She has taught first, third, fourth and fifth grades and is a wonderful resource to our the teachers. After so many years in the classroom Mrs. Elizabeth is excited to take on an administrative roll in an education setting like McGinnis Woods and is eager to work with a school community of outstanding administrators, teachers and families to call her new school home.

## *Meet the 4th Grade Team*



This year's fourth grade team is eager to start the 2017-2018 school year here at McGinnis Woods! Ms. Crystal, Ms. Rachel and Ms. Brittany have had a variety of experiences, altogether totaling more than two decades of educating young minds.

Ms. Crystal was born and raised in Dahlonega. She attended Brenau University for her Early Childhood Education degree and graduated in 2003. She then returned to Brenau in 2006 for Masters in Early Childhood Education. Ms. Crystal holds a Georgia certificate and has taught in Lumpkin County for 12 years, and then she moved to Forsyth County and taught at Elementary for a year and a half. She is an avid crafter and loves to sew, spending time with her family, and cook. Ms. Crystal is the 4th grade Peacocks homeroom teacher.

Ms. Rachel grew up in Upstate New York and has a Bachelor of Science in Education with a focus on inclusive education from SUNY Fredonia. She also has a Master of Education in Literacy. Ms. Rachel is Georgia certified and has 6 years of teaching experience, with half her experience in public school and half in the private school setting. She loves baking, walking, and spending time with family. Ms. Rachel has been married to her husband, Tim, for over 3 years and they have a handsome little boy, Isaac, who will be one on August 12th this year. She is the 4th grade Dolphins homeroom teacher.

## *First Word of the Month for 2017-18: Respect*



The Word of the Month for August has been *Respect*. Respect is defined as *showing others they are important by what you say and do*. Each morning during our daily announcements, we share a thought for the day regarding our Word of the Month. This provides an opportunity for the students and teachers to discuss these important character traits.

Throughout the month, we look for students who are working to demonstrate the highlighted character trait in their daily behavior. Some students who work to master each character trait will be recognized on the morning announcements and will receive a Chick-fil-A coupon to celebrate their achievement.

Each of the classes in Kindergarten through 8th grade also honor a student who exhibits great citizenship, strong learning characteristics and positive behavior as the Citizen of the Month each month. These students are celebrated with a special lunch off campus at a local restaurant. Parents are invited to join their Citizen of the Month for the festivities!

## *Meet Nurse Angie*



Ms. Angie is our school nurse. She recently joined the McGinnis Woods over the summer. Nurse Angie has been a Registered Nurse for 17 years, working in various healthcare settings. Her most recent experience was as a school nurse at a local private school. She obtained her nursing degree in Wisconsin, following her degree in education from Iowa. Her education experience includes teaching pre-school, tutoring, and coaching. Nurse Angie handles all the medical needs of the school and teaches Health classes 3 year olds through 5th grade. She is excited to be a part of the McGinnis Woods Family.

Nurse Angie was born in Aurora, IL. She was raised in Wisconsin where she married her husband and had 2 children. She and her family relocated to Cumming, Georgia in 2011.

Her daughter attends West Forsyth High School, and her son attends Pinecrest Academy where her husband teaches high school AP History. She enjoys the mild Georgia winters and appreciates that her parents were able to relocate to Georgia to be close.

Nurse Angie's priority is to keep the McGinnis Woods community safe and healthy. She enjoys getting to know everyone on a personal level and has her door open to anyone for a visit, requests, or concerns.



## *3rd Graders Visit the 911 Call Center*

The Third Grade Heroes and Superstars had the pleasure of visiting the Forsyth County 911 Call Center and District 12 Fire Station. We toured the Call Center and were able to see how a 911 call is processed in real time. We met the amazing operators who process the calls with great knowledge and patience.

We also had the opportunity to tour the local fire department. We took a look at all the equipment, and even got to go inside the fire truck. Our third graders had such a fun visit and were truly inspired by the amazing first responders we met!



## *Jr. Beta Club and Student Council Plans for 2017-18*



The Jr. Beta Club has been busy planning for our beginning of the year activities. The returning 6-8th graders have met to plan the first fundraiser of the year which will be an ice cream day on September 22nd. We will chose our charities for the year and send out invitations to new members in 5th –8th grades at the end of the first marking period. We are excited to begin to show our leadership skills within our community. Thank you for your continued support in reaching our goals and helping us help others.



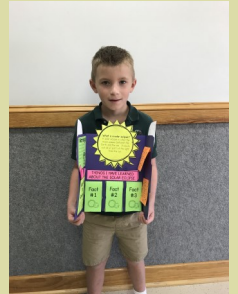
Student Council will be holding elections for officers next week, September 5th -8th. We have eleven amazing candidates putting their hats in the ring to become one of the four officers. All of last years' officers were eighth graders and have moved on to high school, so we can't wait to get a new board in place. We are eager to start our activities and open the school store. Be on the lookout for more information about the election results and school store coming soon.

# *Solar Eclipse 2017!*



The McGinnis Woods family was so excited about the recent solar eclipse! Fourth through eighth grade classes used NASA approved solar eclipse viewing glasses to safely witness the eclipse first-hand, while the younger grade levels watched a live feed of the eclipse that was broadcast on the NASA channel throughout the school.

All grade levels and classes focused on lessons relating to the eclipse prior to the big event. The middle grades science classes made pinhole viewers and compared the view using the viewers and the solar eclipse glasses, and Mr. Alex had exciting lessons for his technology and STEM classes. Third graders experimented with light and shadows to prepare for the eclipse and they even researched the locations of future eclipses. Ms. Laura's class "acted" out an eclipse, with students representing the sun, moon, and earth. They were able to create a living model of the eclipse, as well as models using coffee filters and construction paper. Students even learned about eclipses during PE and Guidance Counselling. All of our teachers made the most of this special learning event, as this was a great experience for all.





## *Summer Camp Success!*



Our Sunsational Summer Camp 2017 was a hit! We spent the summer learning about interesting summer camp themes, went on exciting field trips, participated in STEM and art classes, and cooled off in our water park and weekly water activities. We even had an ice cream truck that visited us every week.

Throughout the summer, we had many special guests visit us and we enjoyed a number of talent shows and surprises along the way. We offered a wide variety of Specialty and Academic Camps to sharpen our campers' skills and expand their minds. Some of the camps included swimming, cooking, STEM, Jr. and Sr. Robotics and art camps.

Campers also enjoyed field trips to exciting and interesting places such as Tellus Science Center, Art Barn, Cumming Aquatic Center, Atlanta Botanical Garden and the Consolidated Gold Mine. One of the highlights of the summer was when our campers spent a day in July giving back to our local heroes at nearby fire and police stations. Campers brought our local heroes homemade cookies and posters to show them how much they are appreciated!

Sunsational Summer Camp at McGinnis Woods is a highlight of each summer. We are already planning for next year's camp and the exciting times we will have together!





## *Pictures from Around the School*

