McGinnis Woods Buzz

February 2013, Volume 5, Issue 1



McGINNIS WOODS

Country Day School

Inspiring Students with the Passion to Excel

The	latest	buzz.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

02/20	Spelling Bee Reception 2:00 P.M. Talent Show Auditions 3:15 P.M.
02/25	Discovery Forms due
02/26	PA Spaghetti Dinner 5:30 P.M. Math and Science Night 6:00 P.M.
03/11- 03/15	Teacher Appreciation Week
03/13	Talent Show

McGinnis Woods Mission Statement

03/15

No Classes After School

Only

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.

A Message From Ms. Mary

This issue of the McGinnis Woods Buzz is jammed packed with interesting articles that highlight the unique learning, people and events taking place throughout our school community. Since February is a time to reflect on those people and things we love, I thought I would list the top 25 things that students, parents and teachers love most about our school:

- . Learning new things
- 2. Hands on fun
- 3. Amazing lessons
- 4. Nice, cool, kind and helpful teachers
- 5. Great field trips
- 6. Cool technology to learn with
- 7. Reading books in the library and classrooms
- 8. Robotics
- 9. Sports
- 10. Outdoor classroom, trails and stream
- 11. Wonderful friends
- 12. Parent Association
- 13. Recess time on the playground
- 14. Student Council and patrols
- 15. After School ... it is fun to stay!
- 16. Art
- 17. Discovery Clubs
- 18. Buddy Classes and Canine Assistant dogs
- 19. Boosterthon Fun Run
- 20. Encouragement to be creative
- 21. Jr. Beta Club
- 22. Every class has a special name
- 23. Parties and events
- 24. Families always feel welcome
- 25. Everything...

McGinnis Woods is awesome!

Wildcat Chat

Track & Field Season Preview

Track season begins in earnest this month with the first meet at Davis Academy on Wednesday, February 27th. Both the Boy's and Girl's team look to be competitive, and they are shooting for more records and medals.

Girl's Team:

Last year's team surprised many at the Championships, overall placing 5th. The team far exceeded the predictions at the beginning of the season.

This year's team brings back all the scorers from last year and it looks like this team will be a good one!

Our distance team will again be anchored by Courtney Stuart. She is our school record holder in the one and two mile. She is also our top pole vaulter. She will be backed up in the Mid-Distances by Katherine Gall, Maddie Moore and Vivian Longo. Our sprints will be bolstered by Christina Park and Jasmynn Innis. These girls are also some of our best jumpers!

Our throwing crew will be led by School Record Holders: Teema Yassine and Gabby Scott. We should see big improvements this season.

With all this talent, our relay teams should be very competitive!

Boy's Team:

Last year's team was the best ever in school history, placing second overall in the championship meet. They missed first place by three points!

Most of our point getters from last year have graduated, but we still have some excellent talent and experience to make a good showing during the last meet of the year.

Watch out for sprinter Jason Son. After two silver medals last year, he looks to be the number one sprinter this year. Our distances will be handled by Max Howard and Daniel Elkin. The mid-distances will be led by Chris Lee and Ethan Montgomery. Chris is also one of the top pole vaulters in the league. Hiriam Hicks looks to be a force in the jumps, and AJ Stein will be our top thrower.

Look in next month's issue for results and highlights from the coming season!



Valentine Dance

The Annual Valentine's Day Dance was held on February 9th, at the Holiday Inn off of Holcomb Bridge Road in Roswell. The event was a huge hit, and there were many families in attendance. The Holiday Inn kept the buffet line full with an assortment of delicious food including chicken fingers, fresh fruit and a taco bar to name a few. The DJ got everyone up on the dance floor and played some of today's greatest hits. The boys' team ended up defeating the girls in the Hula Hoop Contest by only two people! It was such an intense game. The Teacher Silent Auction was extremely popular with many of the auctions going back and forth

between families all night long. Some of the auctions included: a day at the park, Splatters and dinner, a painting session, and a Dave and Busters excursion. A huge thanks to all of the teachers that donated their time to raise money for the school! This spectacular event would not have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of the Parent Association Board who decorated and made everything run smoothly.



New Year, New Yearbook: Interview with Yearbook Editor, Ms. Kim

McGinnis Woods is a special school that embraces unique traditions and creates memory building moments. One of the traditions that we celebrate each May occurs when the students and staff enjoy our yearbook signing day. Assembling the yearbook is a massive task which requires careful planning, pacing and review. Our goal each year is to capture the many special people, places and events that set our school apart and make it remarkable. This tall task is a passion for Ms. Kim Kershaw, our yearbook editor. I recently took a few minutes to interview Ms. Kim about this project.

Ms. Kim has brought our yearbook to life since 2004. She has been tasked with the incredible duty of collecting exceptional pictures and featuring them on class and collage pages. I would like to share with you some of the questions I asked Ms. Kim and her responses:



Ms. Mary: Why do you volunteer for this project year after year?

Ms. Kim: As you know I love to scrapbook, and the yearbook started out as a scrapbooking project. I enjoy creating pages that preserve special memories for the students. The project has now gone digital, but we can still create beautiful crisp pages that document our year.

Ms. Mary: How do you actually complete this large task?

Ms. Kim: I create internal deadlines and pace out the project for specific sections of the yearbook. For instance the class pages of students in their standard uniforms are one section, pages featuring the specials teachers and Administration are another section, pages of special events and traditions are another section as are the collage and dedication pages. I hand the entire book in to our publisher in March of each year. That is always a time of great relief and accomplishment.

Ms. Mary: What is your biggest challenge when creating the yearbook?

Ms. Kim: The world has changed since I completed my first yearbook. We now live in a digital era. Parents used to print and bring in copies of great pictures for us to consider for the yearbook. Now people have great photos, but it can be challenging getting my hands on them. I need parents to not only take pictures, but then place them on a disc or email them to the classroom teachers so that they can be uploaded to our files and used in the yearbook.

Ms. Mary: I know that you recently announced the cover page contest. What does that entail?

Ms. Kim: Students in 3-8th grade are invited to create an eye catching, unique page that incorporates our mascot, the wildcat, or school logo into something special. These masterpieces are then displayed without names and teachers are asked to choose their favorites. This information is then tallied, and the winners work is prominently displayed and recognized in our yearbook.

Ms. Mary: What do you enjoy most about working on the yearbook?

Ms. Kim: I love yearbook signing day because it is so special to present the yearbook to the Teacher of the Year and the yearbook cover page winners! Everyone loves to see who the yearbook has been dedicated to as well. It is amazing watching the students open their yearbooks and find themselves and their classmates smiling back at them. It gives everyone a chance to remember the hundreds of special times we have enjoyed together. Each yearbook is a beautiful keepsake that our school community can treasure and be proud to be a part of.

After our interview was complete, Ms. Kim and I reminisced over pictures of students in yearbooks from long ago. We laughed and shared funny stories with each other. Many of the children we spoke of with great fondness are now in high school, some have recently entered college, yet each has left their mark at McGinnis Woods and will never be forgotten because of the wonderful history captured in our yearbooks!

Celebrating Valentine's Day in Kindergarten

Throughout the month of February, the Kindergarteners have found love in many lessons! They have played "A Heart Full of Words," "Roll and Draw a Love Bug," "Lovin' Addition," "Candy Heart Patterns," have placed the correct punctuation marks in different Valentine's Day sayings, revealed pictures after completing addition problems, counted by tens using hearts, and created graphs of hearts separated into many different colors.

Kindergarten classes spend a great deal of time developing the



reading skills of the students. The teachers have capitalized on this instructional time to read various valentine titles including *The Day it Rained Hearts* by Felecia Bond. After reading the story, the students wrote about things they wished would rain. One of our students, Kirthanaa, wished "...it would rain stars everywhere."



On Valentine's Day Kindergarteners had the chance to spread love to their friends. Armed with their decorated sacks and signed valentine cards, they exchanged their Valentine's Day cards and decorated their own heart shaped cookies. When the day was done, they took magnet hearts to their parents and showed off their handmade cards. Much love was had by all!



Field Trip Feature: Center of Puppetry Arts

The Pre-K classes went to The Center for Puppetry of Arts for our field trip in February. We saw *The Adventure of Mighty Bug*. The children enjoyed watching the show. The puppeteers used a variety of puppets including: body puppets, shadow puppets and rod puppets. The show was an awesome educational adventure! It explained that an insect has three body segments: the head, the abdomen and the thorax. Insects also have six legs. *The Adventures of Mighty Bug* was cleverly pre-

sented as a comic book. It featured the superhero, Mighty Bug, watching over the city of Bugville! But he wasn't the only arthropod with an eye on the town. Supervillan, Scorpiana, wanted to destroy the city of Bugville. Mighty Bug, with the help of Morpha Butterfly and the Professor, were able to defeat the evil Scorpiana and save Bugville! A great time was had by one and all!

A Note from the Art Teacher: Ms. Elise

It is hard to believe we are more than halfway through the school year. All students have greatly improved their art skills! Kindergarten through 7th/8th grade is busy drawing themselves doing their "favorite thing" for the art contest sponsored by the Sawnee Woman's Club. Most of the students at McGinnis Woods have finished their project for Square 1 Art, so look out for these projects around spring time! Everyone will receive stickers with their child's artwork on it, but you will also have the option to order a number of products in which your child's artwork can be placed. Examples include coffee mugs, water bottles, and necklaces.

Many new exciting art projects are in gear. I am using the three bulletin boards in my classroom for student artwork, so come by to see the beautiful "art gallery." Currently displayed artists include: Laurel Burch cats by 6th grade, Undersea Watercolors by 5th grade, and Relief Prints by 7th/8th grade.







Nurse Penny

Penny Crews is our wonderful school nurse. She goes by many names which include Mrs. Penny, Nurse Penny and even Mrs. Nurse Penny—she answers to all. She loves her position here and has been at our school for 12 years. Nurse Penny takes care of all of the medical needs of our school, including Preschool and Elementary. She also teaches Health class to students' ages 3 years through 8th grade. This aspect of her job is very fun, and the students enjoy learning healthy habits. Parents often hear at home what was learned during class!

Nurse Penny received her Bachelors of Science degree in Nursing at Valdosta State
University. She has worked in multiple hospitals and home health agencies. She attends
school nurse classes at Children's Healthcare frequently and is involved in organizations of school health.

She lives in Alpharetta and is active in her church. She likes to do Bible study, baking, reading, yoga and family time along with her husband Scott and their two sons, Addison and Andrew. Addison is 19 years old and attends Georgia College and State University and Andrew is 12 and is in Middle School. She also has two Cocker Spaniels that she treasures and spoils, Cami and Spencer.

Most of you know Nurse Penny, but if not please stop by and introduce yourself at the clinic, which is located at the end of the Pre-K building.

Preschool Corner



Greetings from the Preschool!

Everyone in the Preschool is excited about READING! The children are gearing up to celebrate Dr. Seuss and the NEA's Read Across America during the last week of February. We have pledged to read 125 books in the preschool, and the kids will get to add a layer to the Cat in the Hat's famous hat for every book read in class. Parents and our elementary/middle-school students have been invited to read to the preschool class-rooms during that special week, so join us in the fun and sign up to read today!

Our three and four-year-olds had a unique visit from the Tooth Fairy on Tuesday, February 19th! She reminded the children to take care of their teeth in honor of Dental Health Month. We always stress the importance of dental and physical hygiene with the children, but this visit will create a lasting memory about the importance of taking care of our teeth!

On February 20th, our preschoolers were treated to a performance by Betty Ann Wylie, award-winning Southern storyteller. A founding member of the 'Southern Order of Storytellers,' Wylie is acclaimed for her mesmerizing performances filled with stories, poetry, songs and audience participation. This performance brought Mother Goose and her instructional

tales to life.

There is always something special happening n the preschool. We so enjoy working with the children each day as we contribute to their growth and learning. We are sending weekly emails about the happenings in the preschool. Please let us know if you would like to be added to that email list.

Happy February!

Students Compete in GISA Spelling Bee



On February 7th, 2013 our school Spelling Bee winners, Siya Kalra and Shirin Dinasan, went to Greenfield Hebrew Academy to compete in Round 1 of the GISA bee. Both girls competed against 54 students from over 30 private schools!

After the rigorous task of not only spelling but also writing 100 words correctly on paper. Siya Kalra emerged as 1 of the 12 students to move forward to Rounds 2 and 3 to be held on February 22nd, 2013 at The Walker School.

In Round 2, students will compete again in a written competition of 100 words. Round 3 is an oral round, very much like our school Spelling Bee.

We are extremely proud of both Siya and Shirin. Both girls and the classroom Spelling Bee representatives will be recognized at our Spelling Bee reception later this month.



Grade Level Feature: 3rd Grade



The Third grade teaching team is comprised of four teachers with over 31 years of teaching experience combined. This committed group works to teach the children in a fun and engaging way that meets high expectations and offers individualized instruction along the way.

The Third Grade Owls are led by Ms. Kristen Spradlin and Ms. Tara Derveloy. Kristen started teaching in 1999 and is in her eighth year at McGinnis Woods. She earned her degree in Early Childhood Education from Georgia State University. She and her husband have two children ages 7 and 10, a dog, a fish and two tree frogs. In her free time, she enjoys reading, going to the movies, taking nature walks, working out and shopping. She also loves going to the beach and playing with her children.

Ms. Tara is enjoying her second year working with third graders at McGinnis Woods. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington where she received her teaching certification. She is originally from Louisiana, but I grew up in Atlanta. She has a cat named Sunni, enjoys running, travel, and going to concerts!

The Third Grade DOGS are led by Ms. Sam Beckman and Ms. Katie Steele. Ms. Sam grew up in Sandy Springs and graduated with her B.S. in Elementary Education from Kennesaw State University. This is her 7th year at McGinnis Woods. She has been married to her husband Brian for 14 years and has two children, Cole and Alexandria. They have a dog named Sophie. This year Cole is in 7th grade and Alexandria is in the 5th grade. She enjoys spending her free time with her family, reading, cooking and watching tv.

Ms. Katie is thrilled to be in Third grade at McGinnis Woods with Ms. Sam! She has a degree in Elementary Education from East Carolina University in North Carolina. She was born and raised in Delaware, and has taught in North Carolina, Texas, and Georgia. This is her sixth year teaching. She has been married for three years. She has two dogs, a Boxer and a Black Labrador. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking with her husband, baking, yoga, running and playing outside with their dogs.

PA Updates

We had a fabulous time dancing the night away at the Annual Valentine's Dance. A special thank you to all the teachers who donated to the Teacher Auctions; a social event like this would not be impossible without their contribution. Ticket prices do not cover the cost of the whole event and our teacher auctions are the only way to make up the difference. Thank you to all who attended, contributed and bid on auctions, we hope everyone had a great time! Below is a list of all of our auction winners, as well as the 50/50 raffle winner.

Auction Item	Winner
Barnes and Noble with Ms. Cece and Ms. Amy and then ice cream	Morasco
You and a friend can picnic at Wills park with Diesel the Dog and Ms. Noelle and Ms. Ruth	Karp
Splatters and McDonalds with Ms. Lyndsey and Ms. Kelli	Evangelista
Principal for a Day(lunch and T Shirt) with Ms. Mary	Pye
Principal for a Day(lunch and T Shirt) with Ms. Mary	Praneeet Venigalla
Principal for a Day(lunch and T Shirt) with Ms. Mary	Karp
You and a friend will go to Splatters and Mangia with the second grade team of teachers	Ribeiro
You and a friend will go to McDonalds for a treat then make some crafts and play games with Ms. Wendy and Ms. Tricia	Gallivan
You and 2 friends can bake and craft for an hour with Ms. Kristen, Ms. Jenn and Ms. Sam	Stuart
You and 2 friends can bake and craft for an hour with Ms. Kristen, Ms. Jenn and Ms. Sam	Black
You and 2 friends can join Ms. Pam, Ms. Nicole, Ms. heather and Mr. Adam to make lovely cupcake creations at MW	Yassine
You and 2 friends can join Ms. Pam, Ms. Nicole, Ms. heather and Mr. Adam to make lovely cupcake creations at MW	Vadapali
Nurse for a Day with Nurse Penny	Kershaw
Nurse for a Day with Nurse Penny	Gallivan
Join Ms. Jacki and Ms. Robyn for a Spa Day	Darji
You and a friend can join Ms. Stacey and Ms. Hiral at Splatters then Mangia(Pre-K or kindergarten only)	Evangelista
You and a friend can choose the type of art you would like to explore with one free lesson from Ms. Cay- lin. Materials provided	Pye
You and a friend go to the movies with Ms Tanya	Spencer
You and two friends join Ms. Katie, Ms. Kayla and Ms. Kesha to go to Dave and Busters for some game fun!	Yassine/Bowls
You and two friends join Ms. Katie, Ms. Kayla and Ms. Kesha to go to Dave and Busters for some game fun!	G. Campbell
Build a special Lego Robot project with Mr. Steve. You can make an amazing Electric Guitar Robot that plays real music, a wonderful Dancing Ballerina or even a robot puppy that walks on a leash!! You will show your robot off on morning announcements and it will be displayed in the trophy case for a month!	Weaver
School Of Rock with Mr. Josh and Coach Fairbanks for you and a friend. Join them to play electric guitar and drums then games on the Promethean Board.	Basset
A free week of Summer Camp at McGinnis Woods	S. Edwards
A free week of Summer Camp at McGinnis Woods	S. Davis
A night of babysitting with Ms. Tara up to 3 hours)	Stuart
Lunch for you and a friend at a local Mexican restaurant with Ms. Cassandra	Cobb
Front row reserved seating at the Spring chorus concert	Longo

50/50 Raffle Winner-Longo Family! Congratulations!

Spaghetti Dinner Night is fast approaching. Get your tickets now! This dinner is served at school as a convenience to our families participating in Math & Science Night. Different pasta dishes, salads, and desserts are served. Take a night off from cooking and join us for this night, all proceeds from this event benefit the Math & Science departments.

Teacher Appreciation week is March 11th-15th. Stay tuned for emails about the week's events.

We are looking for committed parents who believe volunteering benefits their children and the school. Without the countless hours from our various volunteers, the Valentine's Dance, Spaghetti Dinner and the multitude of other events would not take place. WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOU to help by volunteering an hour or more to help us continue the many traditions established at McGinnis Woods. Contact the PA at PA@mcginniswoods.org and tell us you are interested. We have varied positions open on the Parent Association Board as well as various volunteer opportunities that require only a few hours of your time.



Field Trip Feature: Carlos Museum

The third graders recently visited the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University in connection with the study of Ancient Greece. They toured the Greek and Roman gallery and saw pieces that were thousands of years old. They also saw one of the earliest bathtubs in the world and many different Greek vases that depicted scenes from classic Greek literature. We heard many Greek mythological stories and saw a variety of statues made of ivory, marble, bronze, and other precious stone.

The Carlos Museum has many other exhibits and collections to view from Egypt, Africa, Asia, and Ancient America. The students had a great time learning all about Ancient Greece and the roots to American democracy.

Discovery Clubs

It is already time for the last session of Discovery Clubs for this year! This session will be starting the week of March 4th and end the week of April 19. Registration forms are due by Monday, February 25th. This session we will offer Cheerleading, Chess, Cooking, Dance, Drama, Jr. Robotics, and Science again. The Drama club has been working on their show, *Aladdin*; the performance will be on Saturday, May 4th at the Dancing Goat Theatre.

Some of our new and/or returning clubs this session will be Kickball with Ms.Robyn, Monet's Mini Masterpieces with Ms. Jacki, Manga Cartooning with Ms. Monica, Science with Mr. Adam, and Young Elite Etiquette with Mrs. Clark from The Cotillion Group.



Young Elite teaches PreK - 1st graders about introductions, kindness, conversation, good sportsmanship, table manners and more. Some of the skills 2nd - 4th graders will learn about are: appearance, responsibility, respect, table manners and leadership skills. Both groups will have a student and parent party on the last day. S

Sign up today so that you don't miss out on the exciting opportunities and adventures offered in our Discovery Clubs!



Dental Health Month

We are pleased to announce that we will have a local dentist come to our school and speak to our students about oral and dental health and hygiene. Dr. Michael Hansen, from Pediatric Dental Town, will be joining us on Thursday, February 21, 2013 and will be instructing K through 2nd students. Pre-K had the Tooth Fairy from Dr. Hansen's office visit on Tuesday, February 19th, 2013.

Nurse Penny teaches dental health during her hygiene unit at the beginning of the year. She also covers this topic again in February for 'Dental Health Month.' Her belief is that it is important enough to instruct the students repeatedly. The students *love* this topic and Nurse Penny loves teaching it again during February, due to Valentine's Day and all of the candy that will be eaten. She instructs the students to, "Brush morning, night and after *sweets*!"

The dental office provided goodie bags to the students containing dental health supplies. There was also an incentive card enclosed containing a "brushing challenge". We know you will want to check this out!

The Word of the Month for February is Peace

Teachers and staff encourage their students to think about ways to make the word of the month come to life. The following poem was written by Nina Thahur, one of our Second Grade Fish.



Peace

Peace means to not fight.

You should always do it right.

You should be peaceful all day long, and always get along.

Martin Luther King did peaceful protest, because peaceful ways are the best

Different Ways Afterschool is Showing Peace

In the month of February, the After School students are discovering the meaning of 'Peace' in alignment with the Chick-Fil-A Core Essentials Program. The students decorated peace symbols including the dove, and they put these beautiful doves on the after school bulletin board. The students also signed their names on the word 'Peace' to show their determination and commitment towards bettering themselves and their



world. Having fun is what After School is all about, so the kindergarteners made a human peace sign using their bodies on the playground!

As the month progresses, the students will participate in The Peace Exchange. "The Peace Exchange is a cross-cultural exchange of art and messages of peace between students around the world" (Create Peace Project, 2012). The Peace Exchange gives the students postcards that are 6 x8 inches, and once decorated, they will send these postcards to other students in India. "The Peace Exchange is about connection. Connecting students to themselves, their creativity, their wisdom, and their heart. Connecting students to each other, in their classrooms, in their schools, and across continents as we bridge cultural, religious, and racial boundaries to inspire and enrich the lives of all participants" (Create Peace Project, 2012). The kids are really excited to express themselves and to learn about different cultures through this experience!

Math and Science Night!

Mcginnis Woods will host its annual Math and Science Night on Tuesday, February 26, 2013. There will be many activities that students of all ages will be able to participate in. For example, First grade will have a telescope on the playground so that they can gaze at the moon and stars to look for constellations or any other heavenly bodies. The children will then be able to go back into the classroom and make a constellation of their own. Pre-K will erupt a volcano. Fifth-Eighth grade will play a math jeopardy game. Fourth grade will make ice -cream and play math games using the skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Something new this year will be the judging of Fourth-Eighth grade students' projects for the Science Fair. Science Fair projects are due on Monday, February 25th, and projects will be out on display for family and friends to view. To make this fun-filled family event a success, we have our spaghetti dinner sponsored by the PA. It can't get any better than dinner and a fun learning adventure to follow!

How McGinnis Woods Helps Me Learn!

Here at McGinnis Woods we strive to enhance our students' love of learning by challenging their creativity and curiosity in a safe and encouraging environment. We believe that our hands-on approach and individualized instruction fosters self-confidence and self-esteem that will instill a lifelong love of learning in our students! Here's what some of our middle grade students said about how they learn and why they like learning here at McGinnis Woods.



"We do hands on experiments that enhance my learning abilities and help me remember the lessons,"

Hiriam H. 8th Grade



"Learning at McGinnis Woods is better than most schools because the teachers slow down and make sure you actually learn the material by teaching you different ways."

Maddie M. 7th Grade



"This is a great school for international students. It has given me many opportunities to learn academics and play sports."

Jason "Jaemin" 7th Grade

Academic Clubs at Summer Spectacular

McGinnis Woods Summer Camp Spectacular 2013

This summer, as a portion of our Summer Camp Spectacular, we will be offering several specific Academic Clubs. These will give the campers a chance to have fun learning more about a subject they enjoy in a focused, one week camp. The Academic Clubs will be hosted by the teachers of McGinnis Woods.

Some of our Academic Clubs will include: Magic Treehouse Camp, 1st and 2nd Grade Boot Camps, Mini Monets, Science Adventures and more!

Now is the time to make plans for the summer. Your student will not want to miss special, sun-filled days at McGinnis Woods this summer!

Registration packets can be downloaded at www.mcginniswoods.org or picked up at the from desk of either school.