

McGinnis Woods Buzz



February 2016 Volume 10, Issue 6



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz . . .

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DATES TO REMEM-

3/3	Kindergarten Fernbank Museum Field Trip
3/4	3rd Grade Market Day At McGinnis Woods
3/4	Wildcats Book Day
3/7- 3/11	Teacher Appreciation Week
3/7	2nd Grade Seussical the Musical Field Trip
3/10	Report Cards Sent Home
3/16	Help The Pets Day Donation Collection for FurKids
3/21	2nd-8th Grades Science Fair Projects Due
3/24	Spring Picture Day (Optional)
3/29	STEM Family Fun Night

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

What a great month of learning we have enjoyed at McGinnis Woods during February. Our students have had many opportunities to read and learn about Americans who founded our country and significantly impacted our history. Students prepared reports about presidents, learned from guest speakers and made unique presentations, while dressed as their assigned presidents, for parents and friends.



Our students in 2nd, 4th and 5th-8th learned about the Civil Rights Movement in America and throughout the world. Some of our students had the opportunity to visit Martin Luther King, Jr's Atlanta childhood home, museum and final resting place. Our older students explored the new National Center for Civil and Human Rights Center in Atlanta. There they saw amazing artwork and meaningful displays which taught about many Civil Rights Movements throughout history. We believe these field trips expand our students' worldviews and help them develop empathy for others and a greater knowledge about leaders who made the world a better place.

Thanks to the many volunteers who gave of their time to make our Career Week a huge success. Our students learned about Project Management, Logistics, Computer Engineering, Veterinarians, Scientists, the Secret Service, Architecture, and Artists, to name a few. Our students were inspired and excited about our very gifted McGinnis Woods community.

The month also provided us with plenty of fun times and cause for celebration. We enjoyed our Valentine's Dance at the Holiday Inn Roswell, Parents Night Out, Spelling Bee Reception, and our annual Candy-grams delivery. McGinnis Woods is a very busy place, rich in opportunities and learning for all. Please take a few minutes to read this newsletter to learn more.

Happy Leap Year!

Parent Association Update

February has been a wonderful month in the Woods! For a short month, we've had a lot of excitement around the school!



You might recall in December we shared that the PA had purchased a 3D printer for the STEM room. Well, it has arrived and is probably humming out a new project while you read! The students and teachers alike are thrilled with this new edition to the STEM program and are eager to try new things. Whether it is a student lead inspiration or a group project as a class, there are sure to be new things being created daily at McGinnis Woods!

Speaking of new things...have you stopped in the gym to see the NEW bleachers! We learned that the floor of the gym needed to be reinforced before the bleachers could be installed. While we had a long weekend in February, it seemed like the perfect time to get this accomplished. They are a wonderful add to the gym and we know that the school will use them for years to come. Whether it is pep rallies, sporting events, or a speaker to address the whole school, these bleachers are perfect!



Now—when we think about perfect, we cannot think of a better way to describe the Annual McGinnis Woods Valentine Dance...we hope that those who joined us would agree! The children and parents alike cut a rug on the dance floor and stood in line for the professional photo booth. The Teacher Auction Items were a big hit and helped us raise more funds towards those great bleachers we were just talking about. Thank you for all your support...and for sharing your cool dance moves! We sure know how to have fun together!

Now...speaking of FUN...we have so much on the calendar approaching....



Teacher Appreciation Week is next week—are you ready to help us celebrate our terrific staff? More details will come home this week and the Teacher Raffle starts at the end of this week!

We have a FUN Spring Fundraiser planned that we will be sharing with you soon. We hope that all our families will embrace a change this Spring and help us finish off our fundraising!

And FUN will come with our Spaghetti Dinner with the upcoming STEM night...more on that later too!

For a short month, we packed in a bunch of activities...and we look forward to even more in the months to come.



Preschool Corner

February was an extra fun month of learning in the Preschool. The themes of the month included: Groundhogs Day and Shadows, Valentine's Day, love, and Presidents both past and present.

Our little ones enjoyed learning about Groundhogs Day because he is such a cuddly looking creature and a great weather man, too! They loved learning about his all-important shadow and the way it predicts the coming of spring.

During We Love Each Other week, children learned ways to show love toward one another every day. Kind words, nice tone and miles of smiles were emphasized. The children especially liked learning about Valentine's Day. They decorated valentines and made patterns with hearts during math practice. They also made heart collages and crowns. Our children LOVE to create, so these activities gave them a chance to shine. We ended the week with Valentine parties and another successful Parent's Night Out!

In honor of Presidents Day, we celebrated America the Beautiful. The children made their own American Flags and Statue of Liberty. They talked about all the wonderful, patriotic landmarks scattered throughout America, including Mount Rushmore. They also took a virtual tour of the White House on Google Maps.

Our Author Spotlight for February was Eric Litwin, writer of the always popular Pete the Cat series. The children enjoyed participating in many Pete the Cat activities like sorting buttons by size and color and adding together buttons to see how many they had. Of course, they read plenty of Pete the Cat stories.

We had a visit from The Reptile Guy and many of his reptilian friends. Children met and were able to touch a snake and a turtle. We have many brave and curious preschoolers who enjoyed this special visit.

We also hosted an Art show. The students' creations were beautifully framed. Thanks so much to those of you who purchased the children's art, as this will help support our stellar art program.

Save the date for our Scholastic Book Fair which returns on March 14-18. You will enjoy the many books and trinkets that will be available for purchase.

March is sure to bring more exciting activities and visitors to the preschool, so stop by anytime and see all that makes McGinnis Woods so special!



Wildcat Chat With Coach Croom



We are off to a great start with enthusiastic wildcat athletes ready to begin practicing for our spring sports. We will be playing tennis and participating in track and field. 20 students have signed up for one or more sport and ready to go!

Our coaches this year for track are Ms. Sonia, Ms. Lisa and Ms. Robyn. Our coaches for tennis are Ms. Kammy and Ms. Christy. All our coaches are excited to work with our wildcats and look forward to a great spring season.

Our track team is practicing at Fowler Park two days a week, where we utilize the track and we also practice one day a week on campus, where we practice our field events. Our tennis team practices at Sharon Springs Tennis Facility two days and McGinnis Woods one day for conditioning. We have some beginner tennis players learning a new sport! Our first tennis match is March 2nd at Sharon Springs where we will play Atlanta Girls' School.

Track and Field has numerous events that our students are working to master throughout the season. Our first track meet will be March 2nd at Davis Academy. We are looking forward to learning, improving, and having fun this spring while participating in the long and triple jumps, shot put, discus, and multiple running events.

Please join us at an event to support and cheer on our Wildcat Team.



Presidential Party in the 1st Grade



In celebration of President's Day, the 1st grade Falcons decided to have a "Presidential Party"! First, we welcomed a wonderful presenter from the Atlanta History Center. Not only did she teach us about the "Founding Fathers of America", she even dropped off a suitcase full of amazing, presidential "dress up" clothes, important replica items, engaging teaching tools and more! Other "Presidential Party" activities included: a "noun, verb or adjective?" basketball game (Barack Obama), a "parts-of-speech Alligator – Bathtub Toss" (John Quincy Adams), left-handed art (James Garfield, eating ice cream (a favorite of George Washington) and much more! This celebration proved to be a wonderful memory maker for all.

Dyslexia Day at the Capitol



The 7th and 8th graders of McGinnis Woods were proud to be a part of Dyslexia Day at the Capitol on February 2. Over 125 parents, students and educators associated with Decoding Dyslexia Georgia, a parent-led grass roots movement, gathered to raise awareness of dyslexia and advocate for policy changes, such as early screening, access to appropriate assistive technology, mandatory remediation programs and specialized teacher training. Volunteers spoke with legislators, sharing their stories about the struggles of navigating the public school system while having a student with dyslexia. In addition to meeting with legislators, students observed the active legislative session to show support of the Senate

Resolution 743, sponsored by Senator Hunter Hill. Representative Rich Golick sponsored House Resolution 1235. Ultimately, the Dyslexia Day at the Capitol was a success due to the passion and dedication of our 45 community partners, families, volunteers and educators. We hope to see you there next year!



Learning About Cooperation



This month's Chick-fil-A word of the month is cooperation. The students are learning that cooperation is defined as, *working together to do more than you can do alone*.

Students have been learning and practicing the meaning and importance of cooperation throughout February during morning announcements and counseling classes with Ms. Jenn. Teachers also were on the lookout for exceptional students found cooperating with other students throughout the day. These special students were acknowledged with special Chick-fil-A coupons and their names announced on the morning announcements on Tuesday, February 23.

Mr. Dean, Band Instructor



Mr. Dean has been involved in music since he was 11. His first instrument was drums and then he moved on to guitar and piano. Growing up in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Mr. Dean played all styles of music including rock, pop, jazz and classical. In his early 20's, in Chattanooga, he led a jazz quintet and played with the Chattanooga Symphony, as well as popular local bands. After leaving Chattanooga, he toured the U.S. extensively for 4 years traveling from coast to coast playing in dance and show bands in the country's top Casinos and Hotels. Finally, he settled in the Atlanta area in the '90s and has performed all over the metro area in bands and as a solo performer. In addition to being a multi-instrumentalist (guitar, drums, bass, keyboards, ukulele, clarinet, flute, trumpet) he composes in his spare time. He also has a strong computer background and has been involved in music technology for many years and does consulting in that field.

Mr. Dean holds a bachelor's degree in Music Education, with a focus on percussion From Kennesaw State University. He also has an associate's degree in computer programming from Dekalb Technical Institute.

Mr. Dean's focus since 2003 has been teaching. In addition to being the Band Director at McGinnis Woods Country Day School, he maintains a roster of 30+ private students.

Mr. Dean is blessed with his wife Angela, their 11 year old son Devin, and their 5 year old daughter, Taylor, and a teenage golden retriever named Riley.

10 Tips for Family Health Shared by Nurse Penny

- Eat smaller portions and don't force "clean plate" rules.
- Don't allow eating in front of the TV.
- Expose to different foods.
- Plan outings and take healthy food/drink options.
- Make exercise fun!
- Set a screen limit.
- Stash cellular phone for the night.
- Don't use candy for reward.
- Get the entire family involved in activities.
- Lead by example.



Printed from Web Md/family health

4th Grade Team Makes Hands-on Learning Come to Life



The 4th grade team is comprised of three seasoned, certified teachers who are passionate about teaching. Ms. Cece, Ms. Sammi and Mr. Christian enjoy working together to meet the needs of our bright and engaging students.

Ms. CeCe knew she was going to be a teacher at a very young age. Her mother has been teaching for 30+ years. Her mother's passion and example inspired CeCe to pursue her own teaching career. Ms. CeCe has been teaching at McGinnis Woods since 2006. She has a B.S. in Elementary Education with an emphasis in English, and is certified in Georgia. She is currently working on her Graduate Degree at Liberty University, as a licensed reading specialist. She loves to read, watch movies, barbeque, skate, go to museums, concerts, plays, and so much more. Her son Elijah is a freshmen at The University of Wisconsin, and daughter, NiaMiah, is in 8th grade.

Ms. Sammi has been with McGinnis Woods since March 2015 and has a Bachelor of Education in Primary Teaching, with an emphasis in English Literature, History, and Art from the University of Wales in the United Kingdom. Ms. Sammi has over six years teaching experience in three different countries including the USA, Egypt, and her native country of Great Britain. She loves baking, reading, walking her two dogs; Chewbacca and Brienne, and attending comic conventions. Ms. Sammi has been married to her husband, Kevin, for almost three years and they have a daughter, Evelyn Rose, who turns 2 in March.

Mr. Christian was born and raised in Northern VA. His family roots are in Western New York. He earned his Georgia K-5 Teaching Certificate from KSU in 2012. Last fall, he had the pleasure of teaching 5th grade Math and Social Studies here at McGinnis Woods. Mr. Christian also coached the school's touch football team. This year he is teaching a 6th grade Math class and assisting in both 4th Grade classrooms. He enjoys teaching all subjects, however, he truly enjoys sharing his passion for History with the students.

Middle School Electives

Middle School students at McGinnis Woods are able to choose from a variety of electives throughout the year. Each quarter, students are able to choose one elective in order to take a class that they are passionate about, or to try something they haven't done before. Electives have ranged from academic pursuits, like creative writing, Singapore Math and mock trial to the creative, such as Zentangle, sketchbook, and comic strip art. We have also had fitness based electives, including: fit boys with strength training and fit girls with yoga and Zumba. Other electives that students have enjoyed include technology, keyboarding, Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens, Brain games, Outdoors and yearbook. There is always something the students find interesting or unique for their quarterly elective.



Sunsational Summer 2016



You don't want to miss out on an exciting, "Sun"sational Summer here at McGinnis Woods! We have a schedule full of fun field trips and daily activities to keep campers busy. We offer many Specialty and Academic Camps during the summer. Specialty Camps are designed to give campers an opportunity to learn a new skill or to continue developing their passions. Many of our popular Specialty Camps are back this summer and include: swimming, cooking, cheerleading, cake decorating and football. Academic Camps are available for students to keep their minds fresh over the summer and include: Fun with STEM, Camp Invention, Art Smorgasbord, grade level Boot Camps, and Jr. and Sr. Robotics.

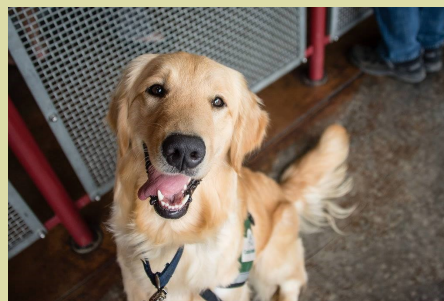
Registration is now open. We can't wait to see you at camp this summer!



Alpharetta Canine Assistance

Canine Assistance service dogs assist children and adults with physical disabilities or other special needs in a variety of ways. Some of the tasks the dogs perform include turning lights on and off, opening and closing doors, pulling wheelchairs, retrieving dropped objects, summoning help, and providing secure companionship. The dogs eliminate feelings of fear, isolation, and loneliness felt by their companions. Most Canine Assistants service dogs are born, raised, and trained at our facility in Milton, Georgia. The majority of the service dogs are retrievers, including both Golden Retrievers and Labradors.

The 2nd grade Fish and Leopards have had the opportunity to read to some of the Alpharetta Canine Assistants service dogs in class. The children thoroughly enjoy being able to read to the dogs when they come to visit. The canines get a chance to experience a different social atmosphere while the children receive the opportunity to practice their reading skills aloud. The 2nd grade classes have had an enjoyable experience working with the Alpharetta Canine Assistance program.



Welcome to Our New Staff



McGinnis Woods is pleased to introduce you to two new staff members. Augustin Orozco-Tello, who joined our staff in February. He is a floater during the day and helps in our after school each afternoon. Helona Andresson has joined out after school classes, as well. Both of these staff members have had great experience in the past and come highly recommended.

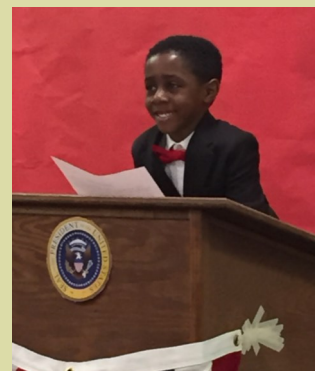
Agustin Orozco-Tello likes to be called Mr. A. He has worked with kids for six years, with ages ranging between 3 and 18. He recently graduated with his Bachelor Degree in Religious Studies focusing on Youth Development. He was born in Argentina, but has lived in Atlanta since he was 8 years old. He and his wife live in Duluth, GA with their brand new son, Leo, who was born December 17th, 2015, and their two dogs Max and Annie. Augustin enjoys playing sports, hanging in his hammock, playing guitar, the outdoors, camping, and attending and serving as Young Adult Leaders at Influencers Church Atlanta.

Helona Andresson recently moved to Atlanta from the Bay Area in California six months ago. Helona attended Gavilan College and graduated with a criminal justice degree. She loves working with kids so her career path has led her into child education. In her free time, she likes to go running, ride her motorcycle and dirt bike, and travel.

Presidential Presentations Bring History to Life

The First Grade Cats Class has been learning about presidents for the month of February to connect with our social studies curriculum and to tie into President's Day. The students were assigned a president to research at the beginning of the month, and they took that information to create a report typed on the computer. The class had fun learning about the different presidents in class, too, while using props, costumes, books and videos from our rented "Presidential Trunk" from the Atlanta History Center.

On Friday, February 26th, the class had "President Presentations." Each student dressed up as his or her chosen president and presented the report to the class, to family and friends! Seeing them in costumes and listening to their reports was such a delight! This was a great way to work on writing skills, typing skills and oratorical skills.



Student Council and Jr. Beta Club Updates

Student Council:

Student Council had a very busy February. The officers and team spent many hours preparing hundreds of Candygrams and delivered them to recipients on Thursday, February 11. In March the Student Council will host a classroom contest called *Teacher Trivia*. There will be classroom and individual prizes for those who know their teachers best!



Jr. Beta Club:



Eight students visited Dogwood Forest Assisted Living Facility on Monday, February 29. They distributed cookies and valentines during lunch and then played BINGO with some of the residents. A wonderful time was had by all. Another group of students is planning a trip to Furkids pet rescue on Monday, March 21st. We will be holding a pet drive March 16th to collect donations to take to the shelter. Please be on the lookout for a flyer with more information soon!



2nd Graders Visit MLK Center



The second graders celebrated Black History Month by visiting the Martin Luther King Jr. Center and eating a southern style lunch at Mary Mac's Tea Room. They enjoyed walking around the center viewing the eternal flame, the burial site of MLK Jr. and Coretta Scott King, the Gandhi and Rosa Parks Exhibits, the World Peace Rose Garden, and the many artifacts inside the center. Students viewed a documentary where they were able to hear Martin's "I Have a Dream" speech and an emotional tribute in honor of his passing. After getting the opportunity to explore the center, the group headed to Mary Mac's for some comfort food, but not before taking a drive past Martin's childhood home!



McGinnis Woods Students Compete in GISA Spelling Bee



On February 11th, 2016 our school Spelling Bee winners competed in the GISA Middle School Spelling Bee at Mill Springs Academy. Our school champion, Andrew Krause and runner-up, Joshua Chisolm competed against students from over 58 private schools.

Students had the rigorous tasks of spelling 50 words correctly plus completing 50 vocabulary questions on paper. When asked what the most challenging part of the competition was, our school champion, Andrew Krause responded, “the tie-breaker words.” Joshua Chisolm, our runner-up said, “the vocabulary was the most challenging for me.”

Both boys would love to win next year and attend the GISA Spelling Bee again. “It would be fun to go to it again,” said Andrew. Our entire school body is extremely proud of both Andrew and Joshua. Their hard work and dedication demonstrates what our school motto is all about.

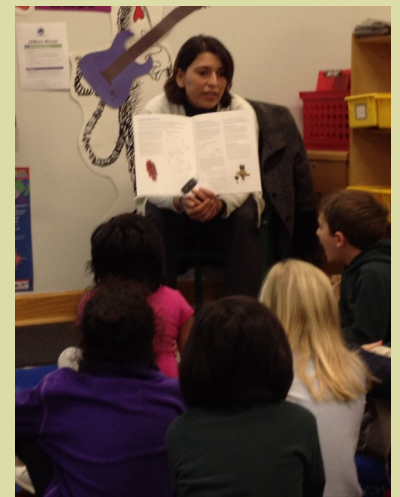
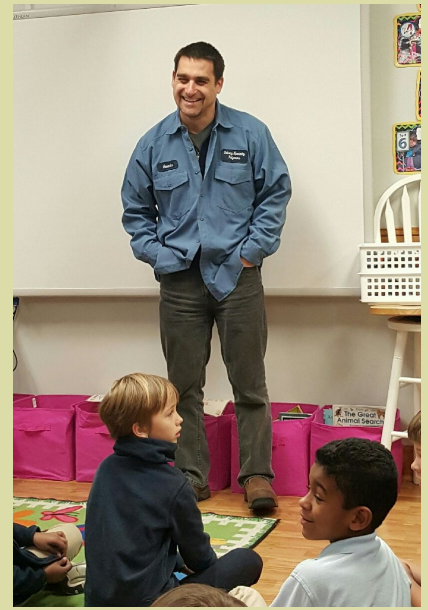
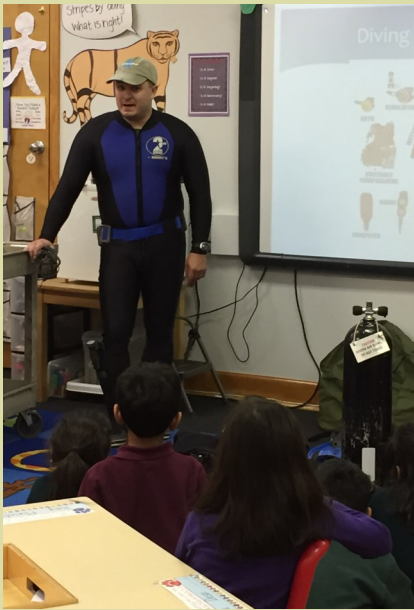


Wildcat Book Day Planned for March 4th

On Friday, March 4th, McGinnis Woods will be celebrating our first annual Wildcat Book Day! This event is based on World Book Day which is celebrated in over 100 countries worldwide. The aim of our event is to encompass the love of the written word and inspire our students to explore the wonderful world of literature. We ask that all our students join in on this event by dressing up as their favorite book character. There will be prizes for the best dressed character from each grade level and throughout the day, students will participate in literature themed activities with their teachers. We are looking forward to McGinnis Woods students filling our school with magical, wondrous, and memorable characters that we know and love from our favorite books.

McGinnis Woods World of Work Week Great Success!

McGinnis Woods held its amazing World of Work Career Week this month. We were so thankful to have many guest speakers sharing information about their careers. Students were able to see many different career paths that are open to them and the steps to get there. Some of our jobs represented were veterinary medicine, finance, dentistry, architecture, secret service, engineering, and many others. A special thanks to all those who came out to speak to our students. It truly impacted each of them.



Pictures from Around the School

