

McGinnis Woods Buzz



January 2014 Volume 8, Issue 1



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz . . .

Message from Ms. Mary...1	12x12 Project.....4	The Place.....7
Wildcat Chat.....2	Valentine's Day Dance....4	Demolition.....8
PA Update.....3	Grade Level Feature.....5	Hands-on pictures.....8
Math and Science Night..3	Spelling Bee.....6	Make-up Days.....9
Preschool Corner.....3	NASA.....6	
Yearbook Winners.....4	Word of the Month.....7	
Discovery Clubs.....4	100th Day of School.....7	

DATES TO REMEMBER

02/08	Valentine's Dance 6:30 p.m. -9:30 p.m.
02/12	Open House 9:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m.
02/17	President's Day School in Session
02/19	Science Fair Projects Due
02/25	Math and Science Night 5:30 p.m. -7:30 p.m.

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

Each of us at McGinnis Woods greeted 2014 with enthusiasm and a sense of anticipation. Teachers and staff were glad to be back in their rooms for the Teacher Workday on January 3rd and extra excited to have classes resume on Monday, January 6th, but after that typical day, a series of unusual weather events led to lots of precipitation both inside and outside of school. January also brought us three amazing new students, dehumidifiers, drywall, Spelling Bees and winners, re-enrollment packets, demolition of the old house, a well attended Open House, a wonderful visit with a guest speaker from the Kennedy Space Center, basketball wins and losses, and Day 100! To say that we are looking forward to a milder and less eventful February would be a real understatement!

We do hope that you will find some time to read through this edition of the "McGinnis Woods Buzz." This is just one avenue of communication that can keep you up to date with things happening at the school. We hope that you have made plans to join us this Saturday evening at our annual Valentine's Day Dance sponsored by our dedicated Parent Association Board and also our upcoming Spaghetti Dinner coupled with our Family Math and Science Night on Tuesday, February 25. Both of these events are memory makers filled with great family time.

We are always looking for additional parent volunteers to serve on site-based school committees, serve on our Parent Association Board, shelve books in the library, or help out with Junior Achievement classes or after school robotics or sports. In the near future, we will be looking for volunteers to come and share about their careers and experiences during our career days. You never know how your investment of time might change a child's life or inspire a goal. Recently one of our families lent us robotics kits that they had stored away from past classes they had taught. Those kits extended the learning of our 4th grade students and solidified understandings of simple machines. Their willingness to simply share of their resources and time not only benefitted their own child, but also the lives of many more. That is what community is all about, and we are so fortunate to be a part of such a rich and diverse community of learners. If you would like to contribute to our school and have a great idea of how you might be able to plug in, please pick up the phone or write me an email so that I can direct you to the perfect opportunity today!

Mary Johnson
Principal



Wildcat Chat



Basketball 2013-14

Basketball season has come to an end. We have had a great season for all of our boys' and girls' teams.

Our B team girls only lost one game all season! We started the season learning the fundamentals of the game and ended the season as real competitors. Our B team girls played their hearts out! Mrs. Robyn was extremely proud of how our girls never gave up and hustled on the court. Our A team girls ended the season with a strong and hard fought to win against Faith Lutheran. We will miss our eighth graders: Teema Yassine, Maddie Moore and Gabby Scott as they move on next year. They were a true inspiration to our younger players and showed great leadership on our team. Let's give a big thank you to Coach Robyn for all her hard work and dedication to the A and B teams! We could not have been so successful without Coach Robyn.

Our boys' B team finished the B tournament strong! The tournament was held at Torah Day School. We played The Howard School for game one and beat The Howard School 22-15. Kameron Scott was sinking his three point shot, while Nirvan Parikah was making his two point shots. MJ Yassine was shooting his three pointers while Andrew Novokshanov lead our team to victory with his strong leadership. All our players played hard and were great sports. Game two we had to play a fresh team, Torah Day who was the number one seed. Our boys were a little tired from all of their hard work in game one and couldn't see it through to the end, but we will be ready for them next year. Our B team boys started the season as amateurs and finished the season like pros. Our boys improved tremendously over the season under the tutelage of Coach Jim and Coach Heather!

Our A team boys played The Cottage School in the A team tournament ending their great season. Our eighth graders will be missed: Cole Beckman, AJ Stein, and Daniel Elkin. They were great sports and leaders on our team. We hope to accomplish great things next year with our returning players: Ethan Montgomery, Harish, Ben Goldman, Max Howard and Jacob Simon were strong defenders and played very competitive basketball.

Thanks to all the parents who have been so supportive! We appreciate all the snacks and encouragement!

GO WILDCATS!

PA Update

We are off to a great start with 2014! We are very excited and looking forward to all of the PA upcoming events such as Valentine's Dance, Spaghetti Dinner Night and Teacher Appreciation Week. These events are not possible without the help of our parent volunteers. Every year a group of parent volunteers organizes a vast array of events and projects that bring our McGinnis Woods Community together in fundraising, charity work and social gatherings. When we volunteer and share our time and talents, we have an opportunity to strengthen our community, connect with other families and improve our children's experience at McGinnis Woods. As we begin the second half of the school year and send in our re-enrollment packets, please consider volunteering for some of these events in the future. We have volunteer opportunities that will work with your availability, time commitment and talents. Please contact us at pa@mcginniswoods.org if you are interested in volunteering.

Please save the date for the upcoming events:

Valentine's Dance – February 8, 2014

Spaghetti Dinner Night – February 25, 2014

Teacher Appreciation Week – March 10-14, 2014

Math and Science Night

Our annual Math and Science Night will be on Tuesday, February 25th from 5:30-7:30. We have some exciting and fun games planned for children of all ages. We have activities like a taste test, making gak, and even shopping at a grocery store! You will have the opportunity to win some fabulous prizes playing an estimation game. The PA will provide a delicious Spaghetti Dinner for you and your family before the event.

The students have been working very hard on their Science Fair projects. Teachers will pick several projects to be judged for the Science Fair contest. We will have all the chosen projects on display during Math and Science Night. That evening, we are planning on announcing the Science Fair winners! You don't want to miss this either! We look forward to seeing you at this great event!

Preschool Corner

In January, our children have been learning about Wintery things including snow and snowmen. They have made snowmen out of marshmallows and cotton balls. They have found out what shape snowballs are and how every snowflake is different just like each one of them. The children learned that some snow is very light and fluffy while other snow is very heavy and dense. The children had a blast pretending to have snowball fights! They experimented with ice and discovered what happens when ice melts.

Another theme this month has been bears! We studied about different types of bears: grizzly, black, brown, panda and teddy bears, too! The children participated in a whole preschool literacy activity, where they brought their teddy bear to school. Each child then wrote or told their own story about what their teddy bear liked most about preschool!

Every day is special at the Preschool. We enjoy caring for our little ones and watching them learn, grow, and transform right before our eyes.



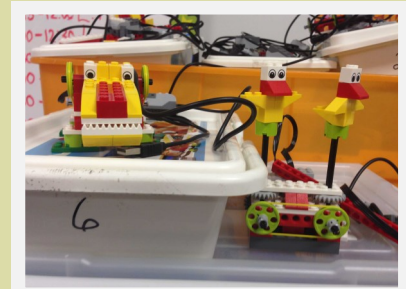
2013-14 Yearbook Contest Winners Announced

Every year we like to provide the students an opportunity to design a piece of the Yearbook. This year we ran an art contest for the front cover, back cover and title page of the yearbook. We opened the contest to all the students from 5th to 8th grade. Each student was asked to design his or her page with McGinnis Woods themes including our McGinnis Woods tree, cool wildcats and fun school activities. Also our school name, the school year, a dedication to the staff and our mission statement, "Inspiring Students with the Passion to Excel" had to be included on the cover.

We received eight different entries that you will see pictured in the yearbook when it arrives in May. The tough part for us was selecting just three winners! Each entry was creative, unique and had special qualities that we absolutely loved. The winners of this year's contests were announced during our Wildcat Chat morning broadcast on January 23. The winners are: 5th grader, Akshitha Surapaneni for front cover design, 5th grader, Maret Black for back cover, and 8th Grader, Christina Soobin Park for the title page. Their featured artwork will be proudly displayed and treasured for a lifetime. Congratulations to our winners, and thanks to all who participated.

Discovery Club Update

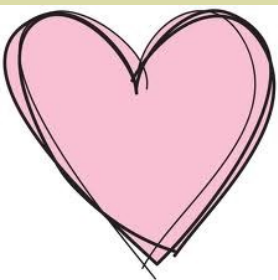
Jr. Robotics is an introduction to Robotics for Kindergarten through third graders. The class is held this session on Mondays with Mrs. Ruth Adams. The students are building and programming using Lego kits. This session the students were able to design and create their own "bird" robots and program them. They are having an excellent time.



Beta Club: 12 by 12 Love Project

The Beta Club's 12 by 12 Love Project is at the finish line. Thanks to the help of Rosa Mia Restaurant and all the families that participated, we were able to sell gift certificates to help us get closer to our goal. Currently, we are only a few hundred dollars away from making a Guatemalan family's dream of owning a house become a reality. To do so, the Beta Club will be running the Change for Change Project to help us raise the remaining amount. The Change for Change Project challenges students to bring in as much change as they can to make change in their world. The two classes that collect the most change will win a prize. To make this more challenging for the 4th-8th graders, we will add a sabotage cause to our efforts. Any paper money added to the collected change will count against that class total. This will make it more fun. We hope you will continue to help us fund this project by participating.

Valentine's Day Dance



Please join us this Saturday evening at The Holiday Inn located at 909 Holcomb Bridge Road in Roswell, for our annual Valentines Day Dance. You do not want to miss this fun-filled evening. We will have a great DJ who will keep everyone up and moving with games, songs and line dances, amazing teacher auction items to bid on, wonderful food stations including salads, breads, cheese, a pasta bar, chicken fingers, desserts and beverages will provide great food for the whole family. Limited tickets are available, so please do not hesitate to contact Elysia Gallivan, PA Valentine Dance Chairperson, at 678-357-2273 or ebgallivan@gmail.com today! We hope to see you on Saturday.

Grade Level Feature: 4th Grade



The 4th grade team is comprised of four teachers who diligently collaborate to create dynamic, hands-on experiences for their students. The teachers are committed to integrating technology, setting high expectations, and meeting the needs of each student.

The 4th Grade Suns are taught by Ms. CeCe Walls and Ms. Kayla Graham. Ms. CeCe knew that she wanted to become a teacher at a very young age, especially since her mother was an educator for over thirty years! Before teaching, she started her educational journey to become a nurse, and then a journalist. She knew something was missing, so she followed in her mother's footsteps, feeling an instant connection. She received her Bachelor's Degree with an emphasis in English/Language Arts at Grand Canyon University. She has taught in private

schools in Chicago and Atlanta. She has been a part of the McGinnis Woods family since 2006. She has two children, a daughter named NiaMiah, age 12, and a son Elijah, age 16. In her spare time, she listens to music, goes to the movies, reads books, goes to different museums to learn about culture, dances, and loves telling stories.

Ms. Kayla Graham is a native to the Alpharetta area. She co-teaches with Ms. CeCe. This is Ms. Kayla's second year at McGinnis Woods. She received her Bachelors of Science in Middle Grades Education from Kennesaw State University in May 2012, and is certified to teach in Georgia. As a child, she always knew that she wanted to be a teacher so she is glad to have achieved this dream. She has one adopted Corgi mix named Bella, who she loves to take on walks. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, baking, reading, going on hikes, and playing tennis. She also enjoys traveling and learning about other cultures.

The 4th Grade Meteors are taught by Mrs. Ruth Adams and Mrs. Katie Steele. Mrs. Ruth Adams is a graduate from Kennesaw State University with a Bachelors of Science in Elementary and Early Childhood Education and a certificate in Leadership Studies. She is a current attendee of Liberty University where she is pursuing her Masters of Education in Teaching and Learning in Elementary Education. Ms. Ruth will obtain this degree in May. She has a Valley Bulldog named Diesel who is six years old. She loves to spend time with him and her wonderful husband, Matthew. She believes that all students have the capability to learn, and she believes in setting high expectations for all students

Mrs. Katie Steele taught in Third grade at McGinnis Woods last school year. She is excited that she moved up to Fourth grade with some of her previous students! She has a B.S. degree in Elementary Education with a Language Arts concentration 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 seventh year teaching. Ms. Katie has been married for almost 4 years and is excited that their first child, a boy, is due in early spring. She has two dogs, a Boxer and a Black Labrador. In her spare time, she enjoys jet skiing, cooking with her husband, baking, art projects, scrap booking, yoga, running, tennis and playing outside with their dogs. Lastly, she loves sports and enjoys cheering on the Philadelphia Phillies, Flyers, and Eagles!

SPELLING BEE



Who would “bee” the school Spelling Bee champion? That’s the question each student would ask during our week long Spelling Bee competition. During the week of January 13th, students in Pre-K thru 8th grade competed in our annual school bee. Each class conducted its own classroom spelling bee in December and chose two classroom representatives. Each day the representatives competed against other students from their grade level.

The competition was fierce as each classroom representative was well prepared and had studied hard over our winter break. At the end of the week, students in 5th-8th grade had their competition to determine our school champion and runner-up. After an hour of competition and spelling words from our unpublished list two winners emerged. Our 2014 school Spelling Bee champion is, eight grader, Kasey Baker and the 1st runner-up is, fifth grader, Andrew Krause.

Our winners will continue their spelling challenge during Round 1 of the GISA Spelling Bee on February 7th at Mill Springs Academy. From there our spellers will venture to Greenfield Hebrew Academy for Rounds 2 & 3. Please congratulate all of our spellers for their hard work and achievement. We are so incredibly proud of them!



4th–8th Interacts with a Rocket Engineer

Dr. Ali visited from the Kennedy Space Center to speak to the 4th-8th grade students. He discussed the importance of clean water. He showed them how to clean water in space using different filtration objects like carbon, coal, sand, cotton, coffee filters, or stockings. The students were separated into groups as they worked diligently to filter the dirty water. Some groups' demonstration was successful based upon how they layered their container with the different objects.

Then, students used fine motor skills to put rocket pieces together, and finally, they watched them fly outside to determine which rocket could travel the furthest.





Word of the Month: Knowledge

The Word of the Month for January is knowledge. We define knowledge as discovering something new so you can be better at whatever you do. We have spent the month pointing out when students are working hard to acquire new knowledge. Some students who worked extremely hard to master this character trait were rewarded on the morning announcements with a Chick fil-A coupon. The word for February is courtesy.

During the first semester the students at McGinnis Woods worked hard in school to learn and master the new material their teachers were teaching them. On the morning announcements during the last two weeks of January we celebrated many of these achievements with Honor and Principal Honor Roll Certificates. To receive an Honor Roll certificate students made all As and one B during one or both quarters of the first semester. To receive a Principal's Honor Roll certificate students made all As during both quarters of the first semester. Congratulations to all of our students for their hard work.

100th Day of School

The McGinnis Woods students have been in school for 100 long days. It is about this time each year that school starts to become routine right? Wrong!

The best way to teach students is to use topics that motivate them and the best way to make it *stick* is by making memories. Using the fact that students have been stuck in school for 100 days, and then turning it around to make it a celebration, is nothing short of brilliant teaching!

The activities were all *so different* and interesting; it was truly a testament to the creativity of our fun-loving staff. Some of the topics being taught in these lessons were: teamwork, art skills, measuring, predicting, engineering skills, physical fitness, sorting, creating, hand-eye coordination, constructing, and (of course) counting.

Although every teacher had a *different* twist on how to use the 100th day of school to motivate their students, there was **one constant**. Every student enjoyed themselves as they built long – lasting educational memories.



Beta Club: The Place

McGinnis Woods' Junior Beta Club has recently held a clothing drive to benefit The Place of Forsyth County. We are proud to announce that we have collected over 500 items from our elementary school students, with additional donations from the preschool. In the elementary school, we created an incentive to reward the top two grade levels donating the most clothing. In first place was the fourth grade, who have earned extra recess. In second place was the fifth grade, who earned a popcorn party. Thank you for all your generous donations!

House Demolition!

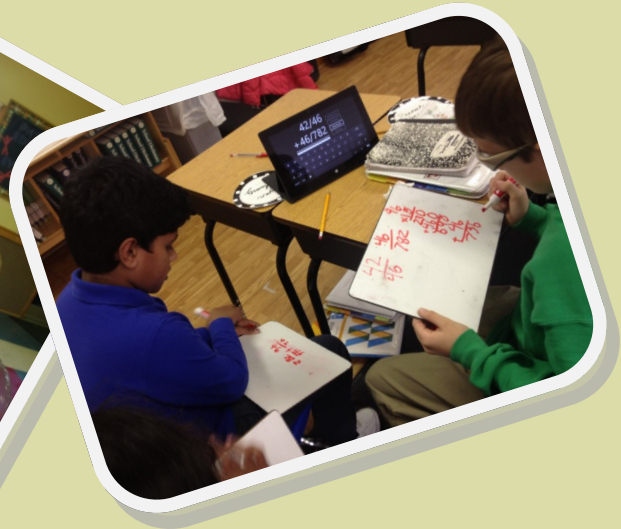


Before



After

Hands-on Learning in PE and Math



Make-Up Days

January was a challenging month for us due to the extremely cold weather which led to a burst pipe and missed attendance days and then last week's hazardous snow and ice.

At this time, we plan to make up two of the days which were missed due to the pipe issue. We will hold regular classes on Monday, February 17th, Presidents Day and also Friday, March 14th which was originally scheduled as a Staff Development Day.

We are awaiting word from the Georgia Department of Education regarding additional make-up days for last week. We will be sure to inform you about additional days as soon as we know.

