

McGinnis Woods Buzz



January 2017 Volume 11, Issue 4



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz . . .

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DATES TO REMEM-

1/20	5th-8th Spelling Bee
1/20	2nd and 4th High Touch High Tech
1/23	100th Day of School!
1/23	Re-enrollment Packets Due
1/24	Citizen of the Month Lunch
1/26	3rd Grade Field Trip to Cobb Energy
1/27	5th-8th Grades Field Trip to Georgia Aquarium
1/28	McGinnis Woods Open House 1pm - 3pm
1/23 - 1/27	National School Choice Week
	Save the Date.... February 11 Valentine's Dance

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

We are excited to be celebrating National School Choice Week during the week of January 23 through 27, culminating with our Open House on Saturday, January 28 from 1:00-3:00pm. So much is in the news these days about schools and the many challenges which they face each and every day. Scholars and experts believe that the educational system in the United States needs to be revamped and new avenues to improvement must be instituted by addressing every aspect of education including teacher training, certification programs, school governance, curriculum, student discipline, and the role of school choice. In 2011 National School Choice Week was formed to raise public awareness of all types of education options for children. These options include traditional public schools, public charter schools, magnet schools, online learning, private schools, and homeschooling.



At McGinnis Woods we are pleased to be a part of the School Choice movement by being an effective school option which instills a love of learning, high expectations coupled with hands on learning and a close partnership with parents each and every day. Our teachers and staff are dedicated to making each day of learning count through individualization of materials and providing students with whatever they need to succeed. We thank each of our families for choosing McGinnis Woods as your school of choice!

Be sure to take the time to read about all of the amazing things happening at McGinnis Woods. We hope that you will join us for the Valentines Dance on Saturday, February 11 at the Polo Golf and Country Club!

Ms. Mary

Parent Association Update



January brings us a new year, and new opportunities for the McGinnis Woods PA to plan events to make McGinnis the best place for our children to learn and grow!

After the incredible Holiday Shoppe in December, we are still floating from the joy! Again, a huge thank you to all the family members that stepped into elf shoes for an hour or two and volunteered to help our children shop! We are so very grateful to see so many people jump in to assist. We hope that 2017 continues to bring many hands!

We hit the ground running in January! Our Pre-K and Kindergarten classes are hosting one of our Teacher luncheons next week on January 25. This is a great way to show our incredible staff how grateful we are for all they do! We are certainly lucky to have so many talented people working with our kids!

February brings us one of the favorite events of the McGinnis Woods Family, the Annual Valentine's Dance. Unlike some other schools in our area, McGinnis Woods invites ALL of our family members to join us in the celebration! Children from the preschool through the middle school come together to the dance. Traditionally, we offer heavy appetizers for an evening meal, a dance floor and a top area DJ to complete our package. Teachers, parents, students and friends spend time together and rarely are they sitting down! The Valentine's Dance is a great way to see the community that is built at McGinnis Woods.

The Valentine's Dance is a fundraiser for the school as well. Each year our wonderful teachers put together fun opportunities for the students to do activities with them outside the classroom setting. These packages are then auctioned off at the dance to raise money for the school. So whether your child has always wanted to be Principal for the day or hang out with the famous Mr. Josh, there is bound to be an event offered that your child would love. The best part is that while they are making memories with the teachers, the PA is able to use the funds to invest back in the classrooms or for general school improvement. How can it get better than that?!

This year we are excited to be at a new venue...The Polo Fields Country Club! More information is coming home soon, but mark your calendar to get your groove on February 11!

Speaking of calendars, a look ahead gives us Teacher Appreciation Week March 6-10. Think you might want to help us plan? We will be sending a note to invite anyone who has expressed an interest in the planning to join us for a planning breakfast in the next week.

March will also bring us the Dance-A-Thon as we once again "Dance Into Spring Break! As you can see, we have so much to look forward to in the coming months!

We will see you at the Valentine Dance,

Your PA Board



Preschool Corner



Hello from preschool! We are excited about the new Preschool Admin team! Comprised of Samantha Seitz, Tonia Usher and Jason Santimore, this dynamic trio has a combined total of over 67 years in the Early Childhood Education field! Samantha Holds a Degree in Early Education and Development and has worked with both individual schools as an Administrator / Director and as a franchise Director to open and establish new schools, and has taught children ages infant thru 18 years old. She loves helping to create an amazing, safe place for children to learn and grow! As well as with teachers and staff to develop a child specific curriculum to meet the needs of the individual child, and help families in their academic goals. One of her favorite parts of the day is getting to engage with the children in all aspects of their educational and social/emotional development, and working with the teachers to hone their teaching skills. She has one very spoiled 12 year old fur child.

Tonia has been with McGinnis Woods for over 13 years. She has worked with all age groups, but her favorite is to work with the 2 year olds, because she can act the silliest with them! Tonia holds degrees in Early Childhood and in Psychology. Tonia excels in making sure everyone is on task and has a fantastic "Can Do" attitude! McGinnis Woods

was her very first interview after moving from New Jersey and she has been a positive influence ever since! She and her husband Rob are wonderful parents to their amazing son Kale, and 3 fur children.

Jason joins us with a Degree in Speech Communications. He was in the Navy working as a nuclear reactor operator on a nuclear powered cruiser! After leaving the Navy, he went to college and after graduation found himself working in childcare and has worked with children ranging in age from young toddlers to 5yrs old. Jason brings a fun loving attitude to our school! He most enjoys working with the 4 to 5 year olds, as he loves to see their faces light up when they understand new concepts. He has a beautiful 8 year old fur child named Maggie Mae who loves to take him for walks.

The preschool is very busy this month learning about winter weather, hibernation and space! We read books about winter animals and hibernation and discussed the reason that animals hibernate in the winter but not in the summer.

Please mark your calendars for Crazy hats, pajamas, crazy socks and so many more silly and fun things happening during our Spirit Week planned for the week of January 30th. Check out our monthly calendar of themes and events in order to participate.



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Wildcat Chat Winter Sports



Our Wildcats are wrapping up their basketball season this month. Our boys and our girls have had challenging games. We are playing in two different leagues with varying competition and we have lost big and we have won big. We are learning the true spirit of how to be a good loser and a humble winner. Our basketball skills have improved tremendously. Playing tough competition has made us strong, physically and mentally.

Our girls won big against Heritage where Kate Poag scored 23 points, Tori scored 10, and Tayler scored 6. Our girls played tough and worked together to pull off a great win! Our boys beat Atlanta Academy two times this season! Both games were very competitive as three pointers were being sunk .

We look forward to more winning scores on our scoreboard throughout the rest of our season. Please come out and support our Wildcats!!



Go Wildcats!

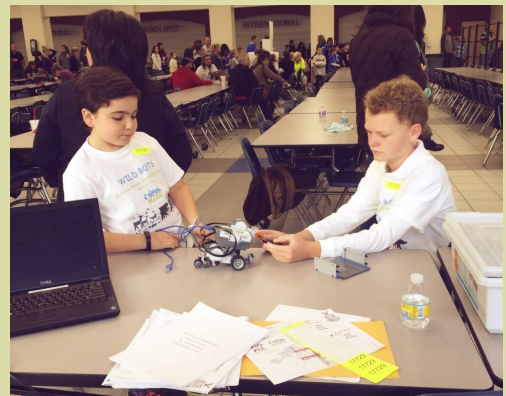
Wild Bots Attend First Lego League Competition

December was a fun-filled month in robotics with our Wild Bots Team! On Saturday, December 3rd, the Wild Bots team attended the FIRST Lego League (FLL) competition of the season at South Forsyth High School. The students had worked very hard on building the FLL pieces, obstacles and robots, arranging them on the FLL mat and practicing the missions given by FLL on the robotics table.

For the competition, students built robots and programed them to successfully complete the missions. The competition theme this year was Animal Allies. Students were required to research a problem people had when interacting with animals and how this problem could be solved. Students completed research on their topic of choice using a variety of databases, worked collaboratively to write the problem and solution, and built a Project Board for the FLL competition. In addition, students created a Core Values Board highlighting what they had learned and how they were able to use what is learned in robotics in other parts of their lives and other school activities. Students presented their Project Board, Core Values Board, Robot Programming and Robot, and participated in the Robot Games based on the missions given during the FIRST Lego League competition.

The Wild Bots team did a great job overall during the presentations and scored highest on the Core Values presentation, receiving an almost perfect score. During the Robot Games, students were able to complete several of the missions given and were very proud of their accomplishments.

Coach Sandra was very proud of the Wild Bots team and all of their hard work. The students worked very hard preparing for the competition, helped one another, were kind to each other, and should great team work. Ms. Sandra looks forward to working with the Wild Bots team next semester as they focus on building and programming Sumo Bots.



Ms. Lourdes Loves Spanish and it Shows!



Lourdes Wiegand became our Spanish Teacher mid-October and has done a great job working with our students and staff. Her positive, creative approach to each day makes learning fun and Spanish a breeze.

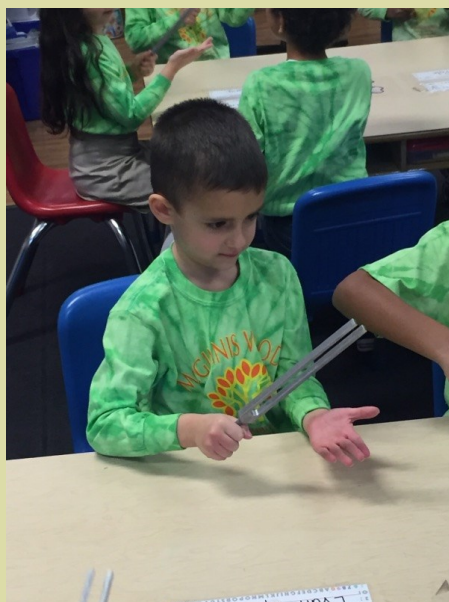
Lourdes is a native of Panama City, Panama. She moved to the United States many years ago to attend school and has been here ever since. She is a graduate of Florida State University (Go Noles) and has taught Spanish to students of all ages in different school settings.

She has three daughters and two granddaughters who she enjoys spending her free time with. She enjoys walking trails and spending time in nature, as well as reading a good book. She loves visiting museums and learning about other cultures.

Lourdes is happy to be a member of the McGinnis Woods teaching team. She counts it an honor and truly enjoys teaching all the children and watching them grow. If you have not met Ms. Lourdes yet, please stop by and say “hola.”

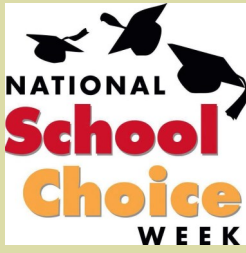
High Touch, High Tech Teaches About Sound!

On Friday, January 6th, the kindergarten and first grade students had a visit with a scientist from High Touch High Tech. He moved from class to class, and students were able to enjoy and learn from several hands-on science activities! As physicists, the students focused on sound energy. Using vibe sticks, palm pipes, and tuning forks, they experimented with sound moving through solids, liquids and gases. There was a lot of learning going on through great hand-on, minds-on experiences.



National School Choice Week

Discover Your Educational Adventure at the Woods!



McGinnis Woods is so excited to celebrate the upcoming National School Choice Week (Jan. 23 - 27).

This is an important week to us because we get to celebrate the wonderful and one-of-a-kind students who attend our school. Not only do we celebrate them, but we also YOU, the parents! You are the ones who actively made the CHOICE to send your child to a school that challenges them and fits their needs, rather than simply accepting a basic, standard, cookie-cutter education for your unique child!

To show our excitement, we are celebrating in the following ways:

- 1) Decorating the school with student's quotes about McGinnis Woods
- 2) Having daily, interactive questions on The Morning Announcements, where the students will make choices about which educational adventure they would like best
- 3) Daily raffle prizes to give away National School Choice Week scarves for the children
- 4) Best of all, a Pep Rally on Friday, January 27 at 2:00 pm in the gym to celebrate the uniqueness of McGinnis Woods and its students

Please plan to join us in celebrating the great things about YOUR school of choice...McGinnis Woods!

Day 100 Preview

Things are buzzing around McGinnis Woods as we fly towards the 100th Day of School! It is always a fun and exciting day at the school as we reach the number 100! Classes will celebrate the day and the number by highlighting what we have already accomplished this year and by finding ways to bring the number to life! Some classes will be busy bringing in collections of 100 things, writing about what we would spend \$100 on, drawing what we would look like at 100 years old, solving math problems that equal 100 and even dressing up as if we were 100 years old! Stay tuned for exciting news about this year's **100th Day!**



Our word of the Month: Knowledge



The Word of the Month for January is knowledge. Knowledge is defined as *discovering something new so you can be better at whatever you do*. This month the owl is the animal being showcased to represent knowledge.

Each morning on the announcements we refer to the character trait in some way. This week we asked the students to consider this nursery rhyme and see how it could help them as they continue to acquire knowledge:

“A wise old owl
Lived in an oak.
The more he saw,
The less he spoke
The less he spoke,
The more he heard.
Why can't we all be like
That wise old bird?”

As the month continues, we look for students who are going above and beyond to master this character trait. These students will be recognized on the morning announcements for their efforts and will receive a Chick-fil-A coupon in recognition of their growth.

It's time for S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G!



Yes, the time has arrived for the annual McGinnis Woods School Spelling Bee. Students competed in class spelling bees before holiday break. Our class spelling bees determine which three students will represent their class during the school spelling bee. Every class has two class representatives and one alternate.



Students from every grade are given specific word lists to practice and review for their big day. Each class alternate also has to practice and review in case one of the class representatives is unable to participate.

Our school Spelling Bees have been taking place during the week of January 17th, 2017 beginning with our Pre-K and Kindergarten students. The spelling bees will conclude on Friday, January 20th, 2017 where a Spelling Bee champion and First-Runner Up will be named.

We are excited to announce that Joshua Chisolm and Andrew Krause are the 1st and 2nd place winners this year and Monet Smith is the alternate. These students will represent McGinnis Woods in the GISA Spelling Bee which will take place in February at Cumberland Academy. Congratulations!

Teachers Learn About Coding



During our January Teacher Workday we learned about different ways to bring STEM and hands-on learning into our exciting classrooms. During our session we learned that Computer Science is currently one of the areas of greatest anticipated need for employers and that by 2020, the need for new graduates with computer science knowledge will increase by 22%.

At McGinnis Woods, we want our students to be ready for the world ahead of them and value teaching in new and exciting ways to keep our students well prepared and ahead of the curve. Obviously we need to continue to educate ourselves in ways that will keep in Computer Science and the use modern technology fresh and relevant. Our teachers learned ways to engage students in learning how to code using java script and to do so in fun and creative ways. They also learned how to implement "unplugged" activities that will give students from Pre-K through 8th grade the foundations needed to learn how to code even without a computer.

We then practiced our skills and explored actual coding games that help students write code to complete fun and colorful puzzles using the website Code.org . The teachers of McGinnis Woods are very excited to begin implementing coding in many different ways in their classrooms.

Teachers "Break Out" of Their Workday!



Not only did our staff learn how to write code during the recent Staff Development Day, but they also worked together as a team to solve puzzles to "break out" of our teacher work day! Ms. Sammi has been using a "Breakout Box" in her class and shared her experience and enthusiasm with the staff, emphasizing just how rewarding this problem solving experience can be.

During a "breakout" students are given a task and must solve puzzles based upon what they are currently studying and collaborate to break into a locked box. The tasks use a variety of codes and clues which the students must McGinnis Woods staff learned about the benefits of the hands on learning and critical thinking that the breakout boxes brought and then had to put their own knowledge to the test and break into their own box! Our teachers worked tremendously together and were able to "Breakout" in under 25 minutes! We look forward to seeing more students work together and problem solve to "Breakout" soon!

3rd Grade Wax Museum



Each year the 3rd Graders participate in the Wax Museum. This is an amazing, out-of-the box, biography book report. The students were required to choose someone from history who made an impact in a STEM field that interested them. Not only did the students read a biography about their person, they also researched their person and created a timeline of important events in this person's life.

On Wax Museum day, the 3rd Graders come to school dressed as their person, prepared to give a 1 – 2 minute, notes free, speech as if they were a wax figure in a museum. The Wax Museum is open to the “public” and parents and other students come to see all the students share what they had learned. The students did an amazing job and very informative for all of the museum visitors. This is traditionally one of the third graders favorite events of each year and this year it proved to be amazing!



Discovery Clubs 3.0

Our third session of discovery clubs started this week. We are once again offering Arts & Crafts with Ms. Sam, Cooking with Ms. Tanya, Jr. Robotics with Ms. Wendy, Video Game Coding with Ms. Sam, Basketball with Coach Chason, STEM with Ms. Wendy and Ms. Stacey, Cheer with Ms. Stacey and Drama club with Ms. Xylina. This session runs until the week of February 14 for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday clubs. Monday and Friday clubs end on the last Friday and Monday of February due to holidays.

The students are all busy with the activities in the clubs. This is a picture of the last session of Cooking Club that made fruit sushi using fruit by the foot and Rice Krispies instead of seaweed. There is sure to be more excitement in all of the clubs for the rest of this year. Our last session of clubs for this year will run during the months of March and April. Be on the lookout for the registration forms that will be sent home and emailed by the first of March.



Middle School News

2016 ended with a bang in the Middle School. Prior to our holiday break, students in the Middle school participated in Secret Santa! Middle school students helped to organize and run the event in the two weeks leading up to the break. Students chose a name at random and brought in small treats or gifts for that person, leaving them only a small clue as to who their “Santa” was. Students brought in themed items, like favorite drinks and snacks, or silly items that their person might enjoy using for hobbies or fun. Students revealed themselves on the last day of school at the classroom holiday parties.

Not to be outdone by 2016, 2017 brought some excitement as well! Student, teachers and parents alike noticed some new “artwork” going up on the walls before the end of the year. When students returned in January, they were greeted with the completed work. *The Wildcat Cup* is the newest addition to the Middle School. Similar to The House Cup (for you Harry Potter fans out there), students have been separated into houses or teams based on their homeroom. Within their team, individuals or the entire team have the opportunity to earn points in a number of different areas. Some of these areas include academics, art, athletics and even secret competitions! Classes earn points, which are then placed in their team cup. At the end of the year all of the points will be tallied and that team will have bragging rights until the next winner of the cup is named the following year. We think the Wildcat Cup will motivate our middle schoolers by adding a new level of excitement and friendly competition between classes. Be sure to check out the Wildcat Cup display whenever you visit the middle school.



Wildcat Cup Point Standings	
Secret Santa Competition - Thanksgiving Secret Santa	
Seahorses - 4 points	
Stars - 4 points	
Dragons - 4 points	
Frogs - 4 points	
Art Competition	
Seahorses - 1 point	
Stars - 1 point	
Dragons - 1 point	
Frogs - 1 point	
Secret Santa Competition - Secret Santa Winner	
Frogs - 1 point	
Secret Santa Competition - Secret Santa Winner	
Stars - 1 point	
All	
Frogs - 4 points	

TOTAL POINTS
Seahorses - 5 points
Stars - 5 points
Dragons - 5 points
Frogs - 10 points

Pictures from Around the School

