

McGinnis Woods Buzz



March 2013, Volume 5, Issue 1



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz...

Message From Ms. Mary.....1	Yearbook.....5	Honesty.....10
Wildcat Chat.....2	Preschool Corner.....6	Fernbank.....10
Coach Fairbanks.....2	Ms. Elise.....6	After School Artist.....11
21st Century.....3	First Grade Feature.....7	Summer Spectacular.....11
Bandastic.....4	PA Update.....8	Discovery Clubs.....11
Aladdin.....4	Fulton County Court.....9	Market Day12
Math and Science.....5	Sawnee Art Winner.....9	

DATES TO REMEMBER

	Earth Week
	4/15 - Green Uniform Shirt
04/15-04/19	4/16—Earth Pledge Day
	4/17—Lorax Day
	4/18—Earth Day Guest Speaker
	4/19—No Paper Day
04/22	Earth Day!
04/25	Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast
4/26	Chik-Fil-A Order In Day
04/27	Spring Carnival 12-3pm
04/29	Career Day
04/22-04/26	Standard Testing
	1st Grade—8th Grade
04/22-04/26	Scholastic Book Fair

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 lifelong love of learning.

A Message From Ms. Mary

March is coming to a close and spring is here. This is such an exciting time of year in the life of a school because the children have really settled in, and they are learning at an amazing rate. We see exponential growth, and it is very rewarding.

During the week of April 22nd-April 26th, the students in 1st-8th grades will be able to apply their skills as they take the Stanford 10 test. This test is a national test and compares our students to other students taking the test across the nation. The test will be administered each day. Parents often want to know how they can help their child prepare for the test. We ask that you do not schedule any appointments or trips during testing week. We also ask that you help your student get plenty of rest each night, have a healthy breakfast and be on time each day to provide for a smooth testing environment. Each student will need two sharpened #2 pencils and a great attitude in order to maximize this testing opportunity. Test results will be distributed to parents before the end of the school year.

We have recently added a few new members to our staff. Ms. Elaine Francel has joined us as a part-time Director of Curriculum and Advancement. Ms. Elaine has been spending time in our classes, and she is enjoying getting to know our students and families. Mr. Gene Smith has joined us as a part-time custodian. He is working on Tuesdays and Thursdays to assist Mr. David with the many cleaning and repair needs in our school facilities. It takes many committed team members to make our school run well.

McGinnis Woods will be open during Spring Break for all of our After Schoolers and their families. A field trip to Splatters is planned for each age group. Pre-K and Kindergartners will go on Tuesday from 10:30-11:30 and the 1st through 8th graders will visit Splatters on Thursday. Students will be creating clay tiles.

Summer is right around the corner, and we are planning fun and exciting theme based camps led by our committed staff. Registration materials have been sent home and will be emailed to you as well, so be sure to sign up your camper today!

We hope that your Spring Break is filled with sunny days and happy times. We look forward to greeting you all again on Monday, April 8th.

Happy Spring!

Ms. Mary



Wildcat Chat

Track & Field Teams Begin with a Strong Showing!

Track season has gone very well so far. In fact the teams, both Boys and Girls, have been performing much better than expected. They have been scoring points and winning events and medals. Well done, Wildcats!

Girls Team:

This year's Girls Team has been performing ahead of schedule so far. They have been competitive in every meet, scoring in the top three each time.

Courtney Stuart leads all scorers. She is our best distance runner, and she has picked up on the hurdles as well. Her 7-10 pole vault is ranked fourth in the State and she is winning her races as well. Katherine Gall has been having a career year. Her times are coming down, and she has surprised some of her opponents with her fitness. Maddie Moore has stayed consistent in the high jump and relays, and Vivian Longo has already taken a full minute off her mile time. Christina Park has been sprinting well, and Jazzy Innis has backed her up. Our throwing crew is led by School Record Holder Teema Yassine who already broke the Discus Record. Now for the Shot Put!



Boys Team:

The Boys Team has performed much better than expected. They are improving every meet! Chris Lee has been scoring numerous points in many events. He is the reason the boys team have stayed competitive in every meet so far. Our distance guys, Max Howard and Daniel Elkin, have been improving their times each meet. Ethan Montgomery continues to be impressive in many events. Our 5th Grade boys are also improving, and they will become more competitive in future meets.

Coach Hal Fairbanks



Coach Hal Fairbanks is the PE Teacher and Athletic Director at MWCDS. He has been here for 4 years and has been an educator for 31 years. Coach Fairbanks is also Head Cross Country, Head Girls Basketball and Head Track & Field Coach.

He studied PE at Metro State College in Denver, Colorado, receiving his BA in PE K-12 in 1980. Coach has worked in different schools and grade levels in Atlanta. He has coached Volleyball, Basketball, Cross Country and Track at many different grade levels, including college.

Coach's outside interests include the pole vaulting. He runs a pole vault training company called "Pole Vault Atlanta". Many McGinnis Woods students come attend his company! He also enjoys music and plays in a band. He always enjoys being active outdoors.

Coach has had a blast running the sports programs at McGinnis Woods running, and he has enjoyed the continued success of the athletes.

21st Century Learning



Have you ever wondered what the term 21st Century Learners is really all about? According to Education Week,

“The term 21st-century skills”is generally used to refer to certain core competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving that advocates the belief that schools need to teach to help students thrive in today’s world. In a broader sense, however, the idea of what learning in the 21st century should look like is open to interpretation—and controversy. The 21st century has introduced us to new and different methods of performing and completing tasks. It has also shown us we must prepare our students to become 21st century learners and seamlessly transition to the technological advances that are upon us.”

Each day the faculty of McGinnis Woods strives to inspire students with the passion to excel as we work with our students to develop 21st Century Learners. We are striving to bridge our passion to excel with the thirst, knowledge and technological tools and competencies needed to reach this goal.

To help us accomplish this task our school has established both a Technology Committee and School Improvement Team. Both teams meet monthly. The Technology Committee discusses and works to develop ways to encourage the use of new and existing technologies in the classroom. Teachers as well as the Instructional Technology specialists attend workshops and other trainings to aid in effective instruction using technology and collaborative tools in learning projects with the students.

In conjunction with this merging of content and technology in our school, we have begun the process of adopting and implementing the new Common Core State Standards. Our School Improvement Team distributes information, provides training opportunities and curriculum along with devising plans to keep our school on target with Common Core standards.

The new Standards challenge educators to be creative in their approach and teaching methods. It also require students to synthesize information from various sources and use multiple instruments to obtain information. McGinnis Woods is certainly committed to this effort and ensures staff is equally prepared.

As the school year comes to a close and another year approaches, administrators, teachers and staff alike are doing their best to make sure McGinnis Woods continues to inspire, encourage, and stimulate the young minds of our students each and every day as we try to meet the challenge of 21st Century Learners.

Bandtastic 2013

For the past three years our band director, Ms Deborah Scarrazo, has taught, encouraged and accompanied McGinnis Woods' students to Bandtastic, a one day band festival designed for musicians from private, public and home schools in the state of Georgia. This annual event is conducted by guest directors and held at the Falany Performing Arts Center at Reinhardt College in Waleska, GA. The festival brings together directors with students longing to play in a larger group for a day of fun and music.

Students are invited to attend the day if they have 1.5 years of experience and have shown strong growth and dedication to their instruments throughout the year. This year five students from McGinnis Woods dedicated their Saturday on February 26th to Bandtastic. Participants were: Christopher Lee, Christina Lee, Jeremy Criden, Molly Hamann and Max Herdegen (Alex Beckman was unable to attend due to illness).

The following description was written by second time Bandtastic participant, Molly Hamann:

"Bandtastic Day was so much fun! We learned how to play new songs and then have a concert all in one day! First you go in and check in. Then you get your shirt and name tag. Next you grab your instrument and you go into your room and sit down. My teacher's name was Mr. Wolfe. He was nice because if someone played a wrong note he wouldn't get mad. He would just help you fix it. One of the songs my group played was The March of the King's Highway. Also when you go to the concert you get to hear the Strings and the Advanced Band. Bandtastic Day was so fun, people who play instruments at McGinnis Woods should practice so they can experience this fun day!"



McGinnis Woods Presents Disney's Aladdin Jr.



McGinnis Woods is proud to announce the performance of Disney's Aladdin Jr. The show will run Saturday, May 4th through Sunday May 5th at the Laughing Goat Theatre. We will have two shows on Saturday at 10am and 1pm and one show on Sunday at 1pm.

All of your favorite characters will appear in the stage adaptation of Disney's Aladdin Jr. The performance will be filled with magic, mayhem, flying carpet rides and award-winning songs including "A Whole New World" and "A Friend Like Me".

Ms. Xylina is directing the show and is very excited to see her drama program continue to grow

and flourish from year to year. She is thrilled that this show will have more elaborate costuming and staging than our last amazing show, Jungle Book Jr. This is a show you will not want to miss. Tickets will go on sale at McGinnis Woods in April, so be sure to save the date!

Family Math and Science Night

The McGinnis Woods annual Family Math and Science Night was held on the evening of February 26th. The Parent Association offered an amazing homemade Italian dinner before the math and science activities began, and it was delicious! Following dinner, students and families spread out throughout all of the classrooms to explore the many unique learning activities, and to view the students' projects that were on display. Activities included our 5 senses and probability in the Kindergarten room, along with making snow and ice cream in the 3rd and 4th grade classrooms-they were a big hit! Many parents met their match with some difficult brain teasers geared just for them!

While the math and science events were going on, the judging of the Science Fair Projects was taking place in the library. The 4th-8th grade students were eligible to participate in this new aspect of the night. The winners by grade level were:

4th grade: Kaitlin Marro: 1st place

MJ Yassine: 2nd place

5th grade: Jeremy Criden: 1st place

Emma Tepper: 2nd place

6th-8th grade: Teema Yassine: 1st place

Courtney Stuart: 2nd place

Thanks to the staff and PA for taking the time to coordinate the evening, as it takes many volunteers hours to create such a meaningful event for our school community.



Yearbook Title Page Contest

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 title page of the book. We opened the contest to all the students from 3rd to 8th grade. We asked that each student design his or her page with either our McGinnis Woods tree or our McGinnis Woods Wildcat. Included on the page had to be our school name, the school year, a dedication to the staff and students and our mission statement, "Inspiring Students With the Passion to Excel". We received 15 different entries that can be seen pictured in the yearbook when it arrives. The tough part for all of our staff was voting for just one winner. The teachers all loved different things about each entry. Finally, the votes were tallied and it was Maret Black's design that won the contest. Her artwork will be pictured on the first page of the yearbook and she will be featured on the Yearbook Contest page later in the book. Congratulations Maret!

Preschool Corner

Many of you have been receiving our weekly emails and know just how busy we have been lately! We have enjoyed your children and their endless energy so much as we said goodbye to winter and ushered in some warmer weather of SPRING! Two wonderful Atlanta-based performers visited the children recently: Betty Ann Wylie and Wendy Bennett. Most recently, Ms. Bennett enthralled the children with her combination of familiar stories, singing, and audience participation!



We recently concluded another Scholastic Book Fair in our Preschool. Did you know that in the past two years, you have helped raise over \$3283 for books in your children's classrooms? That's right—profits from the Scholastic Book Fair have placed approximately 600 books into the hands of our students, and all because of the books parents have purchased! Our children spend time with books several times daily, and their favorites often wear out quickly. Because of Scholastic dollars, we are able to replace those books promptly and order special or theme-related books with regularity. Thank you all so much for your participation and support!

Thank you all so much for your participation in Read Across America, class parties, and all of the other day to day activities that make up your child's school day. The children are all blessed to have such a strong bridge between school and home.

Staff Feature: Ms. Elise



Elise Aronson has been a part of the McGinnis Woods team since 2011. She has a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Georgia State University, and she has taught Art for nineteen years in various schools. Miss Elise enjoys integrating Art with academics, and some student art projects reflect this connection. Students are given the opportunity to work with a wide variety of art media. Miss Elise emphasizes observation, memory, and imagination to develop creative skills. Students are exposed to artists throughout history and learn about artwork from other cultures. All of Miss Elise's lessons incorporate the widely recognized National Standards in Visual Arts. Her goal is to inspire all of her students with a passion for art.

Miss Elise is proud of her two grown children. Her daughter is a graphic designer in New York City and her son is at University of Georgia, majoring in horticulture. Her daughter designed Miss Elise's website which can be found at www.artbyelise.com. One of her hobbies is creating beautiful artwork displayed there. As a believer in recycling, many of

Miss Elise's sculptures are made from vintage clock parts, computer elements, antique jewelry and other recyclables.

In her spare time, Miss Elise enjoys creating sculptures from found objects, hiking, reading and spending time with family and friends.

Grade Level Feature: First Grade



The First Grade teaching team at McGinnis Woods does an excellent job of providing the students with amazing hands on learning opportunities based on and extending beyond the standards to secure a wonderful foundation on which to build their students' academic futures. The teachers on the team have varied backgrounds and talents helping to make this goal a reality.

The First Grade Cats teachers are Ms. Wendy Hamann and Ms. Tricia Haugaard. This is Wendy's 6th year of teaching at McGinnis Woods. Overall, she has 16 years of teaching experience with elementary and pre-school students. She has two children (Molly and Benny) who both attend McGinnis Woods. She has been married for 11 years to her wonderful husband, Mike. She is originally from Virginia, and graduated from Virginia Tech (go Hokies!) and University of Richmond, where she earned her Masters in Education. Wendy loves to garden, scrapbook and have fun with her family!

Ms. Tricia has 9 years of teaching experience, which includes teaching abroad and at other private schools here in Atlanta. This is her second year at McGinnis Woods! She and her husband, Thomas, have 3 children: Jakob (10 years old), Nicholas (8 years old) and Christina (5 years old). She is originally from Massachusetts, and she graduated from the University of Massachusetts with a B.A in Psychology and Education. She spends a lot of time going to all of her children's sporting events like baseball, football and gymnastics.

The First Grade Crabs are led by Mr. Josh Reiter and Ms. Abby Willis. Mr. Josh has been enjoying teaching at McGinnis Woods nearly 11 years. He loves it. He has had the privilege of teaching Kindergarten, First Grade and Second Grade throughout his tenure at the school. Josh moved from Buffalo, New York back in 2002 and began working here at McGinnis Woods. He furthered his education at Mercer University. He not only received his Master's Degree at Mercer, he also met his wife Jill, who is also a teacher. They now have two tremendous children: Violet (PreK4 Ducks) and Ben (a proud attendant of our Preschool). In his spare time, Mr. Josh has a wide variety of interests including spending time with his amazing family, making music, traveling and watching football.

Ms. Abby has taught at McGinnis Woods for two years. She loved her Kindergarten class so much last year that she followed them to the first grade! She is a graduate of Kennesaw State University where she earned her teaching certificate. Ms. Abby is married to her husband, Nathan, of 4 years. They have two children, Natalie and Nolan. Ms. Abby has little free time since Nolan's birth, but she enjoys spending time with her family, reading, attending live music performances and watching her favorite television shows.

PA Updates

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK WRAP UP

Teacher Appreciation Week was a week long celebration thanking our teachers for all they do. Our children spend a large part of their life at the school and with these amazing teachers. We are so glad that they are a part of our McGinnis Woods community. We had many parent volunteers on hand to help in different ways: fdecorating the front hallway, cooking for the teacher breakfast, delivering treats and setting up the luncheon that wrapped up the week-your help is much appreciated! Thank you!

One of the big events for Teacher Appreciation Week was the Teacher Raffle. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets. All proceeds from the ticket raffle purchased these fabulous gift cards. Below you will find this years raffle winners.

Ms. Kristen Craig: AMC Movie Tickets
Ms. Katie Steele: AMC Movie Tickets
Ms. Nicole Seltzer: \$25 Carrabba's Italian Grill
Ms. Ruth Lambert: \$25 iTunes
Ms. Kayla Graham: \$25 Cracker Barrel
Ms. Sam Beckman: \$25 Starbucks
Mr. Adam Branson: \$25 Starbucks
Ms. Wendy Hamann: \$25 IHOP
Ms. Lisa Aber: \$25 Barnes & Noble
Ms. Stacy Jahanafar: \$25 Olive Garden
Ms. Kristen Spradlin: \$50 Macy's
Ms. Pam Charlton: \$50 Kohls
Ms. Kim Kershaw: \$50 Shell Gas
Mr. Josh Reiter: \$50 PF Changs
Ms. Sonia Walker: \$50 Target
Ms. Tanya Smith: \$50 Bed, Bath & Beyond
Ms. Valorie Williams: \$50 BP Gas Card
Ms. Xylina Nuckles: \$50 Target
Ms. Cece Walls: \$50 Honeybaked Ham
Ms. Hiral Patel: \$100 Rays on the River
Ms. Kelli Arnold: \$100 Ruth Chris
Ms. Cece Walls: \$100 QT Gas Card (Donated by Ben Goldman's Family)
Ms. Abby Willis: GRAND PRIZE overnight to The Ridges Resort

SQUARE ONE ART

We are currently running our Square One Art fundraising program. Your child's artwork has come home with a personalized catalogue. Please take some time to look for keepsakes, Mother's Day, Father's Day or Grandparent's Day gifts. The kids worked really hard on their artwork and would love to show it off. You may order through the catalogue, online or by phone at (888) 332-3294. If you need the access code for your child's artwork, please contact us at pa@mcginniswoods.org with your child's name and class.

We have paired with Square One Art for many different reasons. Fundraising is important to our school, but we also look to filling a need at the same time. Many parents have let us know that this is their "favorite" fundraising opportunity, especially around Mother's Day & Father's Day. All the artwork will be back around April 15th, which is well in time for the holidays. The children love creating the art knowing that parents will have an opportunity to purchase something that will display it. Square One Art is a local company, based in Norcross, who hires locally and fulfills all our orders in house. Supporting our local community is very important; a great way to do this is to support our fundraising efforts and have a quality keepsake or gift.

Fulton County Superior Court

The Fourth Graders have been studying The Declaration of Independence. For our March field trip, Fourth Grade went to the Fulton County Superior Court to see how Georgia's government works. We spoke with attorneys, bailiffs, court reporters, case managers, probation officers and Judge Woodson. We toured an actual courtroom and were able to visit the judge's chambers. Our tour ended when we went into the jury selection room and spoke to another judge about how the jury process works. After lunch, we headed off to the Georgia Capitol building to see the paintings in the Rotunda, walk past the offices of Governor Nathan Deal and Secretary of State Brian P. Kemp. Finally, we saw the statue of Lady Liberty and found out some great information about her.



Sawnee Women's Club Art Contest Finalists

Each year McGinnis Woods partners with the Sawnee Women's Club for their Annual Art Contest. This year's theme is *"My Favorite Thing To Do Is"*. Students in grades Kindergarten-Fifth attending both private and public schools throughout the area, created wonderful art based on the theme.

We are pleased to announce our McGinnis Woods's grade level winners and honorable mentions. The winners' art will be sent on to the next round of judging in April. The winning finalists will be announced during the reception on April 18th from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at the Barnes and Noble located at the Avenues. All of the winning entries will be on display, please stop by to see the abundant color and creativity. Our school winners by grade level are:

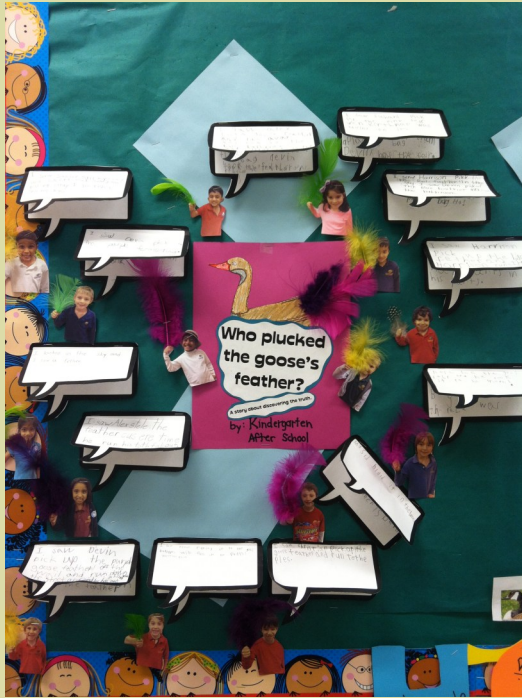


K: Ryan Rawlins
1: Bridget Gallivan
2: Helen Kang
3: Shriya Polaku
4: Ashley Collins
5: Mari Davis

Honorable Mentions:
Addison Aniszewski
Nina Thakur (2nd)
Akshitha Surapaneni (4th)

Congratulations to all of our amazing artists!

A story about honesty: Who plucked the goose feather?



This month during After School we have been extending our learning about the Common Core Value 'word of the month'. In tribute to the word of the month, the After School Kindergarten class performed a writing activity to discover and deepen our understanding of the true meaning of Honesty. Ms. Ruth and Ms. Monica, the After School Kindergarten teachers, had the students in their class close their eyes while they passed out different colored feathers. One student received an actual goose feather. With feathers stuffed inside of their pockets, the students were given caption boxes and asked to write and predict who they thought had the goose feather and what had happened to it. Alex Capell wrote, "I saw Roni running into the girl's bathroom with ants in her pants! Roni took the feather!" The students began to realize that what they were writing was not actually the *real* truth. The students were then instructed to pull their feathers out of their pockets, only to discover that Devin Harris had the actual goose feather! The teachers passed out an additional speech box so that students could write what really happened, and many students wrote, "Honestly, I got my feather from a plastic bag, and Devin had the real goose feather."

To find out more about who plucked the goose feather, stop by the After School bulletin board, which is located outside of the cafeteria! The kids' speech bubbles and photos are displayed with an array of colored feathers.

Kindergarten Goes to Fernbank!



Recently, Kindergarten went to the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. The students explored exhibits about the different habitats in Georgia, including marine wildlife. Fernbank nurtured the kids' interest of habitats through large, life-sized models of dinosaurs and fish. Some of these models soared well above their heads and caused their imaginations to soar as well! The kids watched a video on the formation of the Earth, and they learned the importance of the moon relating to weather, how lava moves, and how tectonic plates moved to form continents. After eating lunch, the kids went to *Nature Quest*. There they saw alligators and turtles located in small aquariums, and they were excited to learn that the floor moved with simulated water ripples! In *Nature Quest*, the children acted like geologists as they dug through sand and discovered different replicas of dinosaur teeth and bones. It was a wonderful day filled with discovery and application of content they had learned at school.

Afterschool Artists!

Our After School program provides students with time to complete homework, play outside, socialize, and do fun art projects!



Summer Spectacular

Have you made summer plans for your child yet? We have! *Summer Spectacular* at McGinnis Woods will be a wonderful time of exploration, fun and learning. You and your child will not want to miss it! In addition to our weekly themed sessions, we will be offering these ever popular Specialty and Academic Camp options:

Summer Camp 2013: Specialty Camps and Academic Camps

Specialty Camps are from 9:30 – 11:00 am

(*Swimming 12:30-1:30 PM)

Robotics Feature Camp is 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

*Fees are in addition to Summer Camp Registration Fees

Swimming Instruction at Alpharetta Dynamo Swim Club

Karate and Jujitsu brought to you by Mr. T

Cooking at Camp!

Tennis featured by Ankle Biters

Drawing & Painting 101

Golf at Laurel Springs

Sports Sampler

Robotics Feature Camp

Typing Feature Camp



Discovery Clubs

The last session of Discovery Clubs for this year started the first week of March. This session will last until the week of April 19. This session we will offer Cheerleading, Chess, Cooking, Dance, Drama, Jr. Robotics, Kickball, Monet's Mini Masterpieces and Science with Mr. Adam and Ms. Wendy.

Young Elite Etiquette with Mrs. Clark from the Cotillion Group is featured here. In the photo, the students were practicing how to introduce themselves to an adult which they recently learned to do. They are to stand, smile, shake hands, and make eye contact. Sameera was introducing herself to the three 'adults' who were dressed in scarves and ties!



3rd Grade Market Day

This year's Market Day was a huge success! Third grade students created, produced, marketed and sold some amazing items. The classrooms were transformed into busy market places as the students sold to each other, and then, on Friday, they sold their items to parents and others in the lunchroom. Homemade items included: pencil holders, decorative pencils, bracelets, bookmarks, pet rocks, soap and candles. Items were priced from .25 to 1.00. Students were required to track their sales. Many of the students sold all of their items. The final piece of the project will be to create a profit and loss statement, which will be completed after Spring Break. This hands-on activity was the culmination of their unit on Economics which focuses on Market Economy.

