



McGinnis Woods Buzz

October/November 2017 Volume 12, Issue 3



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz . . .

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DATES TO REMEMBER

11/2 and 3	Field Trips to Stone Mountain Pow Wow
11/4	Rescheduled Fall Festival
11/6	No School/ After School only
11/7-10	Scholastic Book Fair Spirit Week
11/7	Project Showcase and Technology Fair Projects
11/8	New Student Open House 9:30-10:30 am
11/14-11/17	Thanksgiving Feast Days
11/17	5th-8th High Museum
11/20-11/24	No School/ After School only on 11/20-11/22
11/23	Happy Thanksgiving!
11/28	Art Show
11/29	2nd grade Field trip to Legoland

A Message From Ms. Mary

McGinnis Woods is a wonderful community filled with unique families of diverse backgrounds and interests, yet we have come together to create a warm and caring learning environment which is like a home away from home, unlike any other. If you are new to McGinnis Woods, you are in for a real treat as we head into November, because during this month we will host one of our favorite McGinnis Woods traditions, The Thanksgiving Feasts. Mark your calendars now to join us for either Service and Sweets or one of the feasts which will be held from the 14th to the 17th depending on your student's grade level. Our students have been perfecting songs, poems and skits which they have prepared for your entertainment on those days. Please be sure to respond to the Sign-up Genius invitations which have been sent out so that we know how many family members to expect and what you will bring to share at your feasts.



We will also showcase our student's artwork during our annual Art Show scheduled for November 28. Mr. Dan and his students have created beautiful art featuring famous landmarks and animals that live around the world for the show. I can hardly wait to see the many colorful framed works that the children have brought to life for our viewing pleasure.

Our Parent Association continues to do an amazing job planning activities and fundraisers to help us provide many extras for our students and staff at McGinnis Woods. It costs so much to run a school and provide tools and educational excellence each day. Please do your part to support these programs and to volunteer some of your time to our community. I do not know of a better way to get to know other families and show your gratitude for our special school community.

Please enjoy this issue of the McGinnis Woods Buzz. It is jam packed with many interesting articles and items which will keep you informed and excited about the school.

As a reminder, our Fall Festival is tomorrow so join us for the fun! There is no school on Monday, as our teachers will be attending the Georgia Independent School Association's annual conference and hear cutting edge Keynote Speakers, Sir Kenneth Robinson and Murray Banks, and attend interesting breakout sessions which will inspire and inform.

See you at the Fall Festival,

Ms. Mary

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.

Parent Association Update



October was a wonderful and busy month for the McGinnis Woods family and this November looks to be a great one!

Thanks to all who supported our Square One Art fundraiser. The PA Board would like to extend a very special thanks to Jessica Marro for once again coordinating it all! A lot of adorable ornaments, sketch books, tote bags, and mugs featuring some precious artwork will be going home later this month! We hope you and your loved ones enjoy your little artists' masterpieces! The money raised by this fundraiser will be used towards improving our elementary school playground and creating a dedicated outdoor social space for our middle graders. Please know that your purchases and support made a big difference!

We would also like to thank those families that participated in our Tanner Photography event! Not only do you get a beautiful, family portrait but 100% of your sitting fee comes back to the school! Please share your photos with us at Jaclyn.a.anderson@gmail.com. The PA Board would LOVE to see them!

Our Room Representatives planned some SPOOKTACULAR class parties to celebrate Halloween and the kids had a blast! Thanks to all of the families who volunteered to assist in some way.

Whew! We told you October was busy and we are not slowing down for November! November brings with it the kick-off to our beloved Annual Holiday Shoppe! Our PA Board elves have partnered with Hallmark this year to bring you and your children a fabulous holiday shopping experience on Thursday, November 30th and Friday, December 1st. For those of you that are new to the school, the Holiday Shoppe is a "store" set up for the students to purchase items on their own for family, friends, teachers and even themselves. Younger shoppers will have the guidance of a parent volunteer while they shop. The items purchased will be gift-wrapped for the children. The majority of the items in the shop are priced between \$5 and \$20. You will be able to guide your child's shopping by completing a shopping form indicating their budget and gift recipients. Each class will be assigned a time to shop during the school day. Parents are welcome to join us on our special preview night Wednesday, November 29th or may stop by during school hours on Thursday, November 30th and Friday, December 1st. The Shoppe is both a fun and educational experience for the students, whether they observe a gift-giving December holiday or not and the McGinnis Woods PA will receive 25% of the sales proceeds.

As you can imagine, the Holiday Shoppe requires A LOT of volunteers to make it a success! We are looking for parents to assist with student shopping and gift wrapping. Keep your eyes out in your e-mail in the coming weeks for a Sign-Up Genius link and please consider giving an hour or two of your time towards helping out. We really can't do it without you!

Speaking of volunteer opportunities, our Teacher Appreciation Week is one of our most exciting and special events of the year and although it is still several months away, this week-long event takes quite a bit of planning and assistance from our McGinnis parents. Teacher Appreciation Week is a week in March set aside annually to honor our amazing teachers and staff at McGinnis Woods who give of themselves to inspire and encourage our students every day. Each year we select a theme for the week and keep it under tight wraps until the teachers arrive to find the school completely decorated to the nines on the kick-off Monday. We have selected a fantastic theme for the year and if you want in on the secret, please consider joining us for our first planning meeting later this month! We'd love your help and input as we plan how to make the most of our opportunity to show *our* fabulous McGinnis Woods teachers and staff how much we appreciate all that they do for our children. Details for this planning meeting will come home with your students later this month so please keep an eye out for it!

You can always reach us through our website www.mcginiswoodspa.org. In fact, our Teacher Appreciation theme this year was inspired by a suggestion from a parent who dropped us a note! Keep the fabulous ideas coming and have a wonderful Thanksgiving season!

Preschool Corner



It's that time of year when the weather and leaves start changing and all the fun fall activities begin. Here in the preschool we have taken full advantage of this with taking nature walks in order to collect leaves and pinecones for our science center and making "homemade mud".

Our babies made the cutest Footprint Frankensteins to celebrate Halloween. Many of our classes made beautiful art projects in honor of Diwali, too.

We enjoyed learning all about Community Helpers, including firemen and veterinarians, in our classrooms. The children loved learning about all the wonderful things these people do for us and our community. McGinnis Woods children were in awe on our Community Helper Appreciation Day. We were visited by the firemen, ambulance, policeman, tactical truck and the military. From our toddlers to our Middle School kids they were all a hit. We thank them so much for volunteering their time.

What better way than to end the month with our Halloween Parties and Parades on Tuesday, October 31st. We are thrilled that the holiday season is officially upon us!



Community Helper Appreciation Day



On Friday, October 27th toddlers through 2nd graders took part in a visit from a great group of community helpers during our first ever Community Helper Appreciation Day. Some of our visitors included EMT's, Firefighters, Truck drivers, an Army Biochemical Warfare Engineer, and several police officers including a hostage negotiator.

Our children traveled from person to person and learned a little bit about how they helped our community and what they did in their chosen careers. The visitors were presented with cards, posters and cookies prepared by the children as a thank you for all that they do to help us each day.



Wildcat Chat



We have just wrapped up a very successful fall sports season with our cross country, soccer and volleyball teams. Each team did a great job overcoming the odds to improve personal best times and big games leading to trophies and winning seasons.

Now we are heading into our winter season which features boys and girls basketball. Many of our middle school students have signed on to our teams, so we have had a great turnout for practices as we prepare for the season.

Our coaches this year are Jim and Thea Stuart for the girls team and Mr. Chason for the boys. They are busily strategizing how we will get our young players ready to take the courts. Practices are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 in the gym.



Please be sure to check out the school calendar for game days and plan to join us for our home games to cheer on our players and enjoy the fun!



Go Wildcats!!!!

Parent Night Out on Friday, November 10

Another fabulous Parents Night Out has been planned by Ms. Wendy and Ms. Jen for Friday, November 10 from 5:45-9:30pm. The movies being shown this month include Despicable ME 3 and Cars 3. A tasty dinner will be served and the night will include fun games, creative crafts and lots of surprises. Attendees are welcome to wear their pajamas and bring pillows for the movie viewing at the end of the evening. Sign up today!



Nurse Angie and Operation Gratitude



Are you still finding Halloween Candy in your cupboard at Christmas? Do you wish there was a way to get rid of some of that candy without having to throw it away?

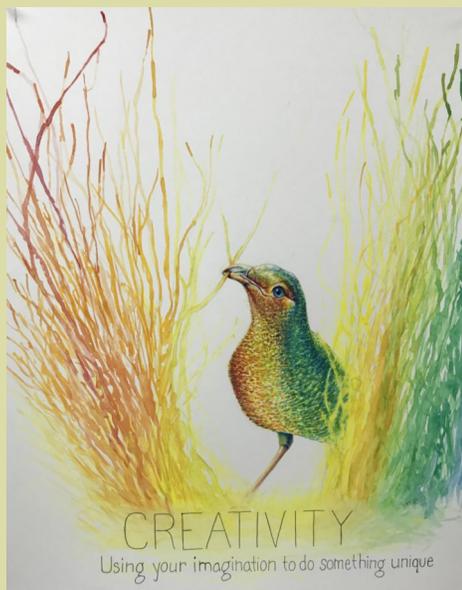
Don't wait until Christmas! McGinnis Woods is hosting an Operation Gratitude Halloween Candy Give Back Event. Operation Gratitude is collecting candy to send to Deployed Troops and First Responders. McGinnis Woods will be collecting candy November 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 6th during school hours. Candy drop off will be located at both the Preschool and Elementary entrances.

In addition, Operation Gratitude asks that you consider writing a letter or drawing a picture to be included in the care packages to show appreciation for our military members' service.

Thank you for giving back!



"Creativity" was October's Word of the Month



The Word of the Month for October is Creativity. Our students learned that Creativity is defined as using your imagination to do something unique. Students learned the importance of creativity throughout the month during morning announcements and in class. Teachers identified exceptional students who showed their creativity throughout the month. These special students were recognized and rewarded with special Chick-fil-A coupons on morning announcements. One exceptional student who has worked hard to master these character traits will be chosen as the Student of the Month and will get to go out for a special lunch at Cheeseburger Bobby's. November's Word of the Month is Gratitude. The definition that will be taught during the month of November is letting others know that you see how they've helped you

A Message from our Student Council Officers



We had a great red ribbon week last week! We encouraged all of the kids to join us by dressing up as different themes each day. Our favorite theme was dressing as a superhero because we are all going to have a super future by staying drug free.

On Wednesday we had a very fun pep-rally, where every class created different songs or skits about being drug free. While we were there we had everyone sign a poster that they pledge to be drug free.

We also had quizzes for each class that lead to a treasure chest. Some of the treasure was pencils, color changing cups, and ear buds! This week was awesome, we all got to learn about what drugs can do to your body and how to say no to them. We also got to have a very fun week, we can't wait for next year!

Didgeridoo Down Under



The students of MWCDS had an in-house field trip on Friday, October 27 where they were immersed in the world of Australia and the unique instruments that originate from there. Didgeridoo Down Under came to teach the children about all things Australian, including its history, people, animals, music and conservation efforts embraced by the people today. This in-house field trip tied in perfectly with the second grade curriculum.

The first people to inhabit Australia, the Aborigines, believed in using all that nature provided them with in order to live and thrive. They wasted nothing. A small percent of Aborigines still live in Australia today.

The facilitator taught the students about the animals that are indigenous to Australia. The audience learned that the kangaroo, crocodile, Tasmanian devil, koala, and duck-bill platypus still roam the lands of Australia. More amazing than that, was learning

about the didgeridoo.

The didgeridoo is a hollowed out tree branch that when played by using your lips and mouth can create a dynamic range of otherworldly sounds and tones. The basic vibrating sound, known as droning, is made by loosely buzzing the lips inside the mouthpiece. Musicians know they are droning by the tingling sensation they feel in their lips and mouth when playing the instruments properly. Besides being played solo the didgeridoo is also used to accompany singing, dancing, chanting, drumming and other forms of music.

Students had a wonderful time getting to play a didgeridoo, and dance along with the unique sounds they make. We look forward to when Didgeridoo Down Under will return to share more of the enchanting music with us!



Kindergartners Love Kinsey Farms



The Kindergarten classes had an outstanding October field trip to Kinsey Farms on October 19th! The weather was beautiful and the temperature finally felt like fall.

Upon arrival, the students began rotating through several stations set up around the farm. They fed goats and cows, learned about seeds and the different parts of a plant, planted a magnolia tree, listened to a funny pumpkin story, and took a hayride. The hayride stopped at the farm pond where the students were able to feed the huge catfish and ducks that lived there!

The last stop of the day was to enjoy a picnic lunch! Each class came home with a big pumpkin that was used for their Pumpkin Day fun on Halloween. All in all, it was a trip enjoyed by everyone and filled with many first time events!



Ms. Tabi Joins the Team



Ms. Tabi Torres joined the 1st grade team to work with Mr. Josh in the First Grade Falcons' Room this year and leads the First Grade after school class. Ms. Tabi loves every minute of each day and has enjoyed getting to know the students and staff at the school.

At the beginning of October, she married her husband Kevin. They have a daughter named Adeline who just turned one on October 25th. Ms. Tabi's hobbies include playing guitar, theater, and making up silly songs. Ms. Tabi's family lives in Gainesville, but both she and her husband work in Alpharetta. It's a bit of a commute, but it's completely worth it to be a part of the McGinnis Woods family.

Ms. Tabi is excited to be a part of the students' lives and to watch the children learn and grow as this year and the years to come pass!

Spooky Science Fun!



Mad Scientist's Ms. Wendy and Ms. Sammi concocted weird and wonderful experiments for Pre-K through 3rd graders to complete this Halloween season during their special event, Spooky Science.

Scientists in training created "exploding" cauldrons to learn about chemical reactions, spooky Shadow puppets to learn about light and shadows, and gruesome monster slime! The students had so much fun mixing, mashing, stirring, and decorating items while learning all about different elements of Science. It was a spooky good time!



Elachee 's My Side of the Mountain Program



The middle schoolers had a wonderful time at the Elachee Nature Center where they learned all about survival in the wild based on Jean Craighead George's famous novel, *My Side of the Mountain*.

The tour guide briefly told the students all about the main character, Sam, from the book *My Side of the Mountain* and how he survived in the wilderness after he ran away from home.



The students brainstormed and discussed all the supplies and skills they would need to acquire in order to survive in the woods! The students and teachers also took a hike through the Chicopee forest with the knowledgeable tour guide who helped them identify different types of plants and their uses for food or medicinal purposes.

The students loved examining a river, and then discussing the many ways it could be useful to help one survive. Farther along the trail, they even built their own shelter made out of a fallen tree and branches they collected on their hike.

The students capped off their adventure by learning how to properly start a fire for warmth, proving that they too could survive in the wild for at least a few hours!



Ms. Brittany, 4th Grade Assistant Teacher



Ms. Brittany is from Morrisville, North Carolina and recently moved here to Georgia in March of 2017. She has her Associates Degree in Elementary Education and plans to become a Certified Speech Pathologist in the future. Before becoming an assistant teacher at McGinnis Woods, Ms. Brittany was a math and reading tutor at a Kumon learning center in North Carolina for six years.

Ms. Brittany enjoys working with the 4th grade Dolphins and Peacocks. She is thrilled to have this opportunity to learn and grow with her students and other faculty members.

Ms. Brittany enjoys reading thriller novels, going to the beach, baking, and painting in her spare time. Be sure to stop by the 4th grade classes and welcome her to McGinnis Woods.

Meet the Second Grade Team



Ms. Kim grew up outside of Rochester, NY and graduated with her undergraduate degree in Elementary Education and Sociology from SUNY Brockport. She married her hubby of 18 years, Brad, a police officer, and moved to Atlanta. She completed her Masters in Early Childhood Education at Georgia State while working here at McGinnis Woods. This will be her 19th year here at the school. She has taught everything from Pre-K up to 6th grade. She is very at home teaching second grade as this will be her thirteenth year at this grade level. She has two precious girls, Tori who graduated from here last year and is a freshman at River Ridge High School and Julie Belle who is in the 6th Grade here at McGinnis Woods. Outside of school she loves to travel with her girls, attend concerts, movies and sporting events and scrapbook with her girlfriends.

Ms. Laura teaches the 2nd Grade Penguins. This is Ms. Laura's 4th year at McGinnis Woods. She previously worked for three years as the assistant teacher in the 1st Grade Falcons. She is so excited to now be a full-time teacher at the school. Ms. Laura has a BS in Early Childhood Education and holds both a Georgia and New York teaching certificate. She has taught pre-k and substituted in grades K-8th in Forsyth County for many years before joining McGinnis Woods. Ms. Laura is originally from Long Island, New York and now lives in Suwanee with her husband and two of her three children and their dog, Pancho. This is an exciting year for Ms. Laura. Besides her new teaching position, she is preparing for her oldest son's wedding this summer. Ms. Laura is thrilled to be part of the second grade team at McGinnis Woods.

Ms. Gina is new to McGinnis Woods this year. She is Mrs. Kim's assistant teacher in the 2nd Grade Fish. Ms. Gina graduated from the University of West Georgia and holds a Bachelor of Science in Education with a concentration in Speech-language pathology. She has experience both in early childhood education as well as speech therapy. Ms. Gina was born in Augusta, Georgia but moved to Atlanta in 2001. Some of Ms. Gina's favorite things are traveling, reading, dogs, watching Family Feud, and trying new restaurants. Ms. Gina is beyond excited to be in Ms. Kim's second grade class this year, and to be a part of the McGinnis Woods family.

After Schoolers Have Fun During Holiday Breaks at the Woods!



If you're staying in town over Thanksgiving break and the upcoming holidays, plan to spend the holidays at McGinnis Woods! Come enjoy fun activities, exciting adventures and time with good friends.

On Wednesday, November 22 the after schoolers will be going to Aurora Cineplex to see Disney/Pixar COCO. We are still in the midst of planning exciting field trips for the December holiday break and we would love to have your child join us for the fun.



McGinnis Woods and all of its programs will be closed November 23rd, November 24th, December 25th, December 26th, January 1st and January 2nd this holiday season.

Technology Fair Comes to McGinnis Woods!

Next week, on November 7th, at 1:00pm we will be hosting our first Technology Fair and are very excited to provide our students with this opportunity. The middle school students have been working extremely hard during Computer Lab class and on their own to create projects and are eager to show off their amazing work to you.

The technology fair was designed for 5th-8th grade students and has replaced Project Showcase. The students are still showcasing their varied interests, but through technology. Students had 11 categories from which to chose including: 3D Modeling, Animation, Audio Production, Digital Photo Production, Graphic Design, Internet Applications, Multimedia Applications, Productivity Design, Project Programming, Robotics, Video Production. Their projects will be judged based on a rubric and on display for parents and friends to view.

Please join us to see the vast array of projects and the 1st, 2nd place winners along with our honorable mentions. The winners will advance to the Forsyth County Technology Fair which is scheduled for December 2 at Whitlow Elementary.

Fall Festival Tomorrow!



Join us tomorrow, November 4, from 1:00pm-4:00pm for our annual Fall Festival. The festival will feature games, crafts, prizes, pony rides, a Spooky Lab, Haunted House, festival food, and the ever popular, Spider Bungee Jump.

Admission wristbands have been sent home, but additional entry bands will be available at the gate for \$10 per person. Raffle tickets for our McGinnis the Turkey raffle will also be available if you have not picked yours up yet.

Each of the two turkeys being raffled have over \$300 in cash on them, so some lucky winner will be glad that they bought \$1 raffle tickets!

You do not want to miss this great event. We look forward to seeing you tomorrow for all of the fun!

Pictures from Around the School

