# McGinnis Woods Buzz

September 2015 Volume 10, Issue 2



#### McGINNIS WOODS

Country Day School

Inspiring Students with the Passion to Excel

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Week	

#### **McGinnis Woods** Mission Statement

of

10/26

**Red Ribbon Week** 

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

The season has changed and fall is officially here. Our students have settled in to a productive routine and are changing right before our eyes! We are so pleased with the progress that is being made by each of the students. Their focus and discipline makes working to meet academic goals both exciting and rewarding.



It is fall Parent/Teacher Conference time here at McGinnis Woods. If you have not scheduled your conference yet, be sure to do so. Conferences are the perfect time to address any questions you may have regarding classroom procedures, expectations, or questions specific to your student's growth and needs. This is also a great time to schedule a conference with Specials Teachers, our School Counselor, Ms. Jenn, and our Academic Learning Specialist, Ms. Kristen. It takes many teachers, support staff and administrators partnering with parents and students to create the amazing learning environment at McGinnis Woods. A K-8 Early Release Day is scheduled for Friday, October 9 at 1:15 to create additional time for conferencing. First quarter Report Cards will be sent home on Friday, October 16.

Thanks to our many parents, students and friends who are supporting the Parent Association fundraisers which we are currently running. You can read all about the efforts on page 2 of this newsletter. We hope you join us tonight at the Kendra Scott Gives Back event at the store located at the Avalon from 6:00-9:00pm. Please see more information about the event on the final page of this newsletter. Our Innisbrook order forms are due back to school on October 7. The One in a Minion theme has excited the students.

Plan to join us at the Fall Festival on Saturday, October 24 from 1:00-4:00pm. This event is a longstanding tradition at McGinnis Woods which you will not want to miss!

Enjoy this beautiful season,

Ms. Mary

# Parent Association Update



Your PA Board has been busy since we last caught you up. We're working hard to build community, raise funds and make McGinnis the incredible place it is for all of our children...

Innisbrook Wrap is almost a wrap. We are off and running with this first fundraising event for the year. The products are great and the ability to shop online and via an order form really makes sales easier. We are not done yet and we really need each family to help us make a difference. Help us make McGinnis Woods One

in a Minion! Remember, our online link works throughout the year and the school continues to earn revenue. So when you are looking for a unique gift or new paper to wrap it, shop online at Innisbrook Wrap! We have much money to raise for the bleachers in the gym and the turf at the preschool.

October brings us the opportunity to mark Family Photos off our list of to-do items. Tanner Photography is partnering again with McGinnis Woods to offer a portrait seating for \$20 and a free 16x20 portrait to each family that participates. The best part of this fundraiser is that 100% of the money comes right back to the school. Sign up information will be coming to your inbox soon!

We know that everyone is looking forward to the Fall Festival. We've planned for some incredible baskets this year—please help us make them a reality. Shop your assigned basket theme, or donate funds and let us shop for you. The assigned theme baskets for each grade are: Pre-K 4 and Pre-K 5, Hot Wheels and Disney Darlings; Kindergarten - 1st grade, Falcons Game Day and American Girl; 2nd and 3rd grades, Star Wars; 4th and 5th grades, Falcons Game Day and Glitz & Glam; 6-8th grades, Shop 'till you drop and the Preschool has the Fabulous Money Turkey. The Fall Festival is a favorite McGinnis tradition, as are the baskets to raffle. We look forward to sharing them with you. We'll be sure to announce the lucky winners post raffle. Good luck!

Thank you to all who joined us on our Volunteer Interest Day this month as well. We had a great turn out and welcomed several new families to our Friends of the PA team. It is not too late to share with us your interest to give back—even an hour can make a big difference! Drop us a line and let us know how you would be willing to volunteer your time and talents to our great school!

We look forward to jumping into October with you. We've got more great events on the horizon for the coming months, too.

Have ideas or questions? Please do not forget to drop us a note. We love hearing from you and look forward to feedback to make McGinnis Woods even better!



#### Preschool Corner



The preschoolers have enjoyed learning about many unique themes during September. Their Spotlight author was Jane Yolen, author of the "How Do Dinosaurs..." series. The children had a great time learning about those ancient beasts through hands on activities, which were lots of fun. They made Dino stomps and reenacted how the dinosaurs may have acted, too.

Community Helpers Week was a real hit as we explored the different fields and jobs community helpers are in and how important they are to keeping our community safe and working. We also enjoyed dressing in our favorite sports gear for "Back to Football Friday" as we rang in the new season and supported our favorite teams!

During *We Dig Dinosaurs* week we learned more about dinosaurs. We delved into the world of Paleontologists and learned all about fossils. We did experiments where we watched dinosaurs melt out of ice. We also had a visit from Lee Bryant the Puppet Guy, who did a wonderful puppet show entitled "Dr. Dinosaurs".

We welcomed Autumn with our *Falling into Fall* week during which we talked about the four seasons and their characteristics and then embraced the beautiful

change of the weather and leaves which arrives with fall. Nature walks were taken and leaf rubbings were made.

During the last week of September we focused on another author, Melinda Long, who wrote the "How I Became a Pirate" series. The children had so much fun learning about imaginary pirates, pirate ships, treasure and treasure maps. They made gold coin necklaces, their very own treasure maps, and pirate jewels. We can hardly wait to see what October will bring!

Our first Parents' Night Out is this Friday, October 2 from 6:30-9:30. This will be a great opportunity for parents to run some errands or enjoy a date night without worrying about their little ones. We hope that you will take advantage of this fun evening and support the Kendra Scott Gives Back fundraiser at the Avalon, too.

Innisbrook Fundraising order forms are due on Wednesday, October 7, so please keep selling and help us raise money for some preschool playground turf.





#### Wildcat Chat



The fall season has flown by! Our volleyball team has proven themselves and are feared by others in our league! We have also improved tremendously this season, so next year we will be unstoppable. Our girls have stepped up to the challenges before them and are real competitors.

Our record this season is six wins and three losses. We have one more game and then the end of the season tournament begins. The tournament will be held October 14th at Faith Lutheran School.

We are looking forward to a fun and competitive time

Our fall soccer team has been fortunate enough to have an enthusiastic and passionate coach. Roger Gallivan has given of his time and energies to teach our athletes a great deal about soccer. We are a very young team and have been playing against more seasoned teams, so our record is not the best, however, we are only going to get better for next season. Even though we may have fallen short on goals, we have not let that break our spirits and we have played hard each and every game, never giving up. We leave the field with smiles on our faces knowing we have given it our very best. Our final regular season game will be October 7th against The Howard School.





**Our Cross Country** 

runners are Madison Aber, Emerson Aber, Bryn Milder and Olesja Vasina. Madison Aber has led our girls. She has been very competitive with other schools finishing in the top of the pack most races. Emerson Aber is not far behind her sister running one of her best races at Wesleyan this year. All the girls have improved every meet! We still have three races left before our Championship Meet October 15th at Jim Miller Park in Marietta. Go get them girls!

Please come out and support our teams.

#### Go Wildcats!

#### Parents Night Out on October 2nd



Parents' Night Out is back this Friday, October 2 from 5:45—9:30 p.m. The theme for PreK –5th grade students is Hotel Transylvania. Plan to join Ms. Sam and Ms. Wendy for an evening packed with silly fun and excitement. Students will enjoy a spaghetti dinner, movie and fun crafts and activities. Students may come in their pajamas and bring a sleeping bag to snuggle in when the movie is shown.

The Preschool is also hosting a Parents Night Out. They will be serving pizza and showing Monsters Inc. to their little ones. The children may wear their pajamas so that they are ready for bed when mommy and daddy pick them up for the night.

If you have not signed up for this evening, please visit mcginniswoods.org and download the necessary forms today or call the school to make a reservation.



# Welcome Ms. Sandra, Spanish Teacher

Señora Sandra León-Cone is teaching Spanish at McGinnis Woods this year. She moved to Suwanee from Treasure Island, FL in December 2014. She and her family love the area and they feel at home in the southeast. She has been married for 25 years. Her daughter, Skye, is in college and her son, Morgan, is a Senior in high school.

Although this is her first year at McGinnis Woods Country Day School, she has been a Spanish teacher for 14 years. She has taught at three other independent schools. She received her BA in Spanish: Language and Civilization and International Affairs from Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA. She has her Foreign Language Education certification through the University of South Florida and the State of Florida. She enjoys teaching students about Spanish and the many lands where Spanish speakers live.

Sra. Sandra also lives with her dog and two cats: PeeWee (a chihuahua), Ziggy (a flame point Siamese) and a 13 week old buff, tabby kitten name Lola. She promised her husband that she would not get anymore pets for the time being.



#### Media Center News



We're falling into our third month of school and our Media Center is checking out lots and lots of books. Books of every kind are in high demand. Many McGinnis Woods students are huge fans of the Diary of a Wimpy Kid series, Ready Freddy books, Dork Diaries, Star Wars, princess-themed books, and our ever popular graphic novel collection. The wildcats are voracious readers!

In case you didn't know our school media center has NOOKs available for check-out. Students in fourth thru eighth grades may check out NOOKs for two weeks after returning their signed permission slip. NOOKs are an exciting way to read. There is a varied selection of books from all genres for reading.

> In addition to reading, many classes have been rotating between library centers that coincide with the subjects they are studying in class. First graders participated in a Paper Airplane Scientific

Method Lab while our Third grade students explored Rocks and Minerals using magnifying glasses.

Students had a wonderful time at our Birthday Book Club celebration. Participating Pre-K, Elementary and Middle school students enjoyed a delicious treat and chose a book from picture, fiction and nonfiction books. If you would like to honor your child's birthday it's not too late to participate. If you're inter ested, just email Ms. Jacki at JFreeman@mcginniswoods.org.



# After School Fun



Afterschool is off to a fantastic start. Our students spend time each afternoon in age-appropriate classrooms and follow a daily schedule throughout the afternoons and have scheduled homework time. Our students also enjoy weekly Art class with Mr. Dan, Computer Lab time and may sign-up for and attend McGinnis Woods Discovery Clubs.

This week, Forsyth County Schools are out on a Fall Break and we have had an exciting week planned for those students. We attended field trips to Lunar Golf,

Cheeseburger Bobby's for lunch and Regal

Cinemas to see Hotel Transylvania 2.

McGinnis Woods, Fulton County and Forsyth County schools are each having Early Release/Teacher Workdays in October. We have planned an exciting field trip to Buford Corn Maze on October 12th where After Schoolers will enjoy a corn maze, hay rides, a petting zoo, and bounce house to celebrate fall.



#### STEM Activities Abound in the Second Grades

Each week the 2nd Grade Leopards and Fish have been participating in STEM activities. These activities have helped to bring their robust science curriculum to life.

Students have made moons out of paper plates, paint, and bubbles while exploring

and learning about constellations. They also engineered towers out of colorful pipe cleaners, made boats out of aluminum foil, and erected bridges out of popsicle sticks. Teams simulated how shadows change throughout the day with a fun flashlight project.

Please check out the pictures on display in the second grade hallway of the students in action. They are sure to impress and make you smile!



# Meet the Kindergarten Teachers

The Kindergarten Team at McGinnis Woods is comprised of two lead teachers, Ms. Kammy and Ms. Christy as well as an assistant teacher, Mr. Marcus.

Kammy Overacre is the lead teacher in the Kindergarten Tigers room. She has been teaching at McGinnis Woods since 2004. Kammy earned her undergraduate degree from LSU. Geaux Tigers! In 2008, she graduated from Mercer with her Masters in Early Childhood Education. Kammy is the co-chair of the curriculum team and the tennis coach at McGinnis Woods. She has been happily married for 7 years and has two beautiful daughters! Ms. Kammy was the McGinnis Woods Teacher of the year for the 2014-2015 school year.

Marcus Harrell is the Tigers' assistant teacher. This is Marcus's first year at McGinnis Woods. Marcus graduated from Kennesaw State University with a Bachelor's in Sports Management and concentration in Marketing. Marcus has worked as a Camp Counselor and at many different Parks and Recreation Departments. He is enjoying working with the kindergartners.

Christy VanderWeele is the lead teacher in the Kindergarten Pandas room. This is Christy's second year teaching at McGinnis Woods. Christy grew up in Louisiana and is a graduate of LSU with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Elementary Education. She has 10 years of experience teaching in both public and private schools. Christy has been married to her husband Doug for 18 years, and they have two children. Christy enjoys spending time traveling with her family. She is a huge college football fan and loves cheering on her favorite team the LSU Tigers!



#### Middle School Students Visit Fernbank

The Middle School students enjoyed their recent field trip to Fernbank where they viewed the new IMAX film, ROBOTS. Students and teachers alike were absolutely amazed to see the evolution of today's robots, so much so that we had a very hard time remembering they were even robots, not humans! RoboThespian, a third generation humanoid robot, took us on a lively tour of the world to meet a dozen of the most remarkable robots in Europe, Japan and the United States. From Robonaut, the first space robot handyman, to robot butlers and home-helper humanoids to eerily human-looking androids, to search-and-rescue robots, the film showcased the latest cutting-edge efforts — as well as the challenges — driving roboticists, engineers and scientists around the globe to new breakthroughs. We all gave a "two-thumbs up!" when the film ended.



After the movie, students and teachers visited Fernbank's signature exhibition, A Walk Through Time in Georgia, which tells the story of Georgia's natural history and the development of our planet. The students went on a scavenger hunt through the exhibit's fifteen galleries to find the answers that would explain our complex and fascinating history.

The trip ended at the World of Shells exhibit. This exhibition explains how shell material is formed, the numerous ways animals use their shells, and the life processes of shelled animals. The shells were absolutely stunning in color, texture and shape.



The trip was a great learning experience, one we will not soon forget!

#### Jr. Beta Club Sponsors Dením Day for Cure



On Wednesday, September 9th, the McGinnis Woods community joined together with our Jr. Beta Club to raise funds for CURE and cancer research. CURE dedicates nearly \$2.5 million annually to specific research projects aimed at solving cancers which affect children. This opportunity provided our school community an avenue to honor all of the brave children battling pediatric cancer.

Students, teachers and staff each contributed a donation of \$5 and wore their favorite denim jeans to school. Our school raised a total of \$780.00. The collected funds will help support childhood cancer research at the Aflac Cancer Center at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and other special programs for children dealing with the disease.

We are so proud of our McGinnis Woods students, teachers and staff for supporting a worthwhile cause and children in need. Kudos to everyone!

For more information about CURE please visit www.curechildhoodcancer.org



# Discovery Clubs Develop New Skills and Interests



Our first Discovery Club session is under way and will end in October. The Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday clubs will end the week of October 20. Jr. Robotics and Drama will end the last week of October due to the Early Release and Columbus Day holiday.

This session offered Jr. Robotics with Ms. Wendy, Cooking with Ms. Tanya, Cheerleading with Ms. Stacey, Morning Band with Mr. Dean, STEM with Ms. Kammy and Ms. Wendy, Chess with Ms. Sam and Drama club with Ms. Xylina, Mr. Brandon and Mr. Sterling.

The next 6 week session will begin in November and forms are due by October 26. Space is very limited so be sure to get your form in as soon as possible after they are sent out the week of October 19.

Here is what Ms. Wendy Hamann has shared about her Jr. Robotics club: "The Jr. Robotics Discovery Club has been having so much fun! We are using our engineering and technology skills to build and code small robots using Legos. Our Lego kits come with building instructions for 12 different types of robots, and we use a special software to "bring them to life!" We will even go on a "field trip" to watch the Robotics Team here at school to see the "big" robots in action. It is a pleasure to work with these passionate students who are eager to learn and create!"

#### International Night a Great Tradition



The International Night at McGinnis Woods celebrates cultures and traditions, not only from all around the world, but also right here at our wonderful school. We are fortunate to have families from so many diverse backgrounds and cultures.

The featured countries this year treated us to many varieties of food, games, and fun information that broadened our students knowledge of the world around them. The countries we "visited" this year were India, where guests were treated to Bindis and Henna. Belgium, where students had the amazing opportunity to build their very own Atomium, a world famous building

located in Brussels. Kindergarten represented Israel, with amazing food and an opportunity to write their own prayer and place it inside the "Wailing Wall". In Cuba, families enjoyed the tasty food that was offered and had lots of fun playing dominoes and dice. Russia was a bright, vibrant experience that offered families unique crafts such as creating a collage of the beautiful St. Basil Cathedral in Moscow and lots of fun computer trivia games that were created by the 3rd grade Dogs! The United Kingdom was full of music stemming over 50 years and treated students to some amazing facts! Did you know that the longest place name in Europe is located in Wales, UK? Students had fun trying to say this town: Llanfair-pwllgwyngyll-gogery-chwyrn-drobwll-llan-tysilio-gogogoch! The Middle school students represented Greece this year with great food and individual posters made by the students highlighting topics such as history, currency, foods and dress.

After our tour of the countries, we were treated to tinikling, a traditional Philippine dance performed by our Middle School girls and beautiful Russian songs that were performed by Russian students from the Solo School. To cap off our International Night, we had a very special pre-recorded rendition of the Star Spangled Banner that was performed by our Pre-K 4 - 8th grade students in the languages of their showcased countries.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the committed families, teachers and administrators who helped to make this very special night come to life. The food, artifacts, games and research presented made the night one we will not soon forget.









#### Student Council Update



Student Council held its annual elections this month. The campaigning was very well done and we are so proud of all of the candidates who ran. After all of the votes were counted the new board was announced. Our slate of Student Council officers for the 2015-16 school year is:

President: Madison Aber Vice President: Tate Smith Secretary: Tori Kershaw Treasurer: Tayler Evangelista

The officers have already begun planning Red Ribbon Week which is scheduled for the week of October 26. Our theme this year is Respect Yourself, Be Drug Free. A Chick fil-A Order in Day is also scheduled for October 23rd. Be on the lookout for more information to come.

Class representatives will also be chosen to join the Student Council by teachers in early October. These representatives will attend monthly meetings and assist with the execution of many student council activities



Again, a warm welcome to our new officers and a big congratulations to all who ran.

#### Save the Date for the Fall Festival

Our annual Fall Festival will be held on Saturday, October 24 from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. This entertaining event should not be missed as there will be horses to ride, the ever popular spider jump, a costume contest, games to play, crafts to make, raffle baskets to win, a cake walk, a performance by our own chorus students, cotton candy, popcorn, hotdogs, and so much more!

Be on the lookout for raffle ticket and entrance band order forms. This is a tradition you will not want to miss. We hope to see you at the festival!



# Ms. Lindsey, Technology and Computer Lab Teacher



Please be sure to introduce yourself to Ms. Lindsey Reeder, our new Technology and Computer Lab Teacher. This is her first year at McGinnis Woods, and she is excited to teach our children a variety of computer skills and tools to benefit their education and future.

She is originally from Panama, Central America, but she was raised in Alpharetta. Ms. Lindsey graduated from Kennesaw State University, earning a BS degree in Early Childhood Education. She is a certified teacher for grades PK-5, and has recently obtained her middle grades (6-8) math and science certifications.

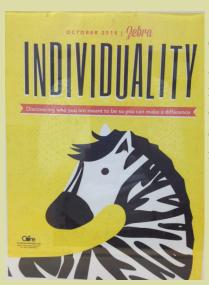
At McGinnis Woods, Ms. Lindsey teaches mouse skills, keyboard skills and how to compile research from credible sources to all classes. She also teaches Microsoft PowerPoint, MS Word and shortcuts, and MS Excel to first through eighth grade students. She looks forward to teaching how to use different Web 2.0 tools and applications such as prezi, glogster, educreations, tellagami, frolyc, flipfilmer, and ozobot programming to many different

grade levels during the year.

Ms. Lindsey is also the Lead Coach for the FLL Robotics Team. This club teaches students how to build Lego Mindstorm robots, how to program these robots to complete actions using sensors, and to identify solutions to the Trash Trek Challenge. Students also learn problem solving skills and how to work together as a team.

Ms. Lindsey lives in Forsyth County, and during her spare time, she loves watching movies, drawing, and/or playing sports with her five nieces and nephews that live in the area.

# Individuality is the Word of the Month



The Word of the Month for October is Individuality. We define individuality as, "discovering who you are meant to be so you can make a difference". This month we will be encouraging students to show their individuality through acts of kindness to others and developing their individual gifts and talents. Some of our students who work to master this character trait will be recognized on the morning announcements with a Chick-fil-A coupon.

# Health and Safety Tips

Happy Fall! It has been great to have some cooler mornings, but I am ready for the rain to stop and to have some SUNS! One thing is sure, our weather is so unpredictable during this season, so please send in a labeled sweater or light jacket with your child.

We are continuing to learn about germs and hand washing, as this is a very important practice that we reinforce throughout the year. Nutrition is also an important aspect which we discuss frequently.

ADULT FLU SHOTS will be administered by the Forsyth County Health Department on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at 8:45 am in the clinic. Cost is \$25.00. We ask that you sign up at either school's front desk. You are welcome to bring other adults.

#### FORMS NEEDED:

All students are required to have the following forms:

- -Ga 3231, immunization form
- -Ga 3300, hearing, vision, nutrition and dental form.

MEDICATION should never be sent in your child's bag. This rule is for the safely of your child and the other students. If your child needs medication, please fill out a Medication Form at the front desk and the medicine will be administered at the appropriate time/s. Medication times are 11a.m. and 3p.m.

Web Site references for health related material: USFSIS@public.govdeilvery.com Kidshealth.gov Organwiseguys.org MyPlate.gov

Have a healthy month and call or email me with questions or comments, Nurse Penny pcrews@mcginniswoods.org



#### Díd You Know?



Did you know that every 3rd grader learns to play an instrument during the 2nd semester of 3rd grade? While many schools are reducing their Music programs or eliminating them, at McGinnis Woods we want to make sure that each student is introduced to the Fine Arts, as they are a wonderful avenue for self-expression and creativity. Our 3rd graders learn to play recorders during the beginning of 3rd grade and then may choose between selected brass, woodwind or percussion instruments to play during the 2nd semester.

In the 4th grade students are given the option of continuing in Band or selecting Chorus to fulfill their Fine Arts requirement.

Each week we enjoy the sounds of music wafting through our hallways and know that our students are being encouraged to develop the skills needed to read music, be patient and persistent, and to grow in discipline. We hope to inspire a lifelong love of the Arts.

# Volleyball Champions

The middle school recently had their September social. On September 25th the students participated in a volleyball and electronic social in the gym. It was a small affair, but fun was had by all in attendance! Teams played to determine the ultimate volleyball champions. The "Spazzermans" won so congratulations to Tate, Kate, Molly, Mari, Sergejs, and George! The team received an honorary trophy and their team information on the middle school bulletin board under the "highlights" section. They also earned bragging rights until our next middle school competition in October.

On October 30th, students will show off their Halloween costumes during the Middle School costume contest. Students will compete in different categories including best costume. This contest will be sure to surprise as there are many creative middle schoolers who relish dressing up!





# Citizens of the Month Enjoy a Special Lunch

Each month a student from each of the Kindergarten through Eighth Grade classes is chosen by their teacher to be the Citizen of the Month. These citizens show exceptional character traits and great behavior throughout the month. We take each of these students, along with the Teacher of the Month, out for a special lunch.

In August and September, we took our Citizens to Cheeseburger Bobby's. Congratulations to these deserving students!



# Pictures from Around the School























#### Please Save the Date



You're invited to a
Kendra Gives Back Party
A fun shopping event benefitting
McGinnis Woods Country Day School.
Enjoy raffles, bubbles and bites while you shop
Friday, October 2nd

20% of sales will be donated to

McGinnis Woods Country Day School's

Parent Association

6-9 pm

KENDRA SCOTT – AVALON
3150 AVALON BLVD I ALPHARETTA, GA 33432