

McGinnis Woods Buzz



August 2018 Volume 13, Issue 1



McGINNIS WOODS
Country Day School

*Inspiring Students with
the Passion to Excel*

The latest buzz . . .

PA Update.....2	Treetop Quest.....6	Patrols.....9
Preschool Corner3	Middle School News.....6	Word of the Month.....9
Summer Camp Wrap Up.....3	Discovery Club News.....7	Our PreK Team.....10
Wildcat Chat.....4	A Trip to INK.....7	Did You Hear the News?.....10
Accelerated Reader.....5	Did You Know.....8	Mr. Dan and Art11
Science Olympiad.....5	Student Council Updates.....8	Save the Date.....11
		Pictures Around the School....12

DATES TO REMEMBER

9-3	Labor Day McGinnis Woods Closed
9-5	Student Council Officer Applications Due
9-7	Pre K Field Trip to Children's Museum
9-13	3rd Field Trip to Consolidated Gold Mine
9-14	1st Field Trip to Elachee Nature Center PA Square 1 Art Orders Sent Home
9-17	5th-8th Field Trip to Millennium Gate
9-20	Kindergarten Field Trip to The Art Barn
9-21	4th Field Trip to Lake Lanier
9-25	International Night 6:00pm-7:30pm
9-27 to 9-28	2nd Overnight to Desoto Caverns
Full Volley Ball and Soccer Game schedule this month. See school calendar.	

A Message From Ms. Mary

We have had a wonderful start to the 2018-2019 school year. The Back to School Picnic was well attended and helped to kick off the year in style. The students came in ready to learn on August 6 and have been learning ever since. Each day there is an exciting hum throughout the school as the students work to learn new material, collaborate with others and solve problems.



Last week we hosted our annual Curriculum Nights. More than 80% of our families attended the evenings to learn about the plans for the year, specific aspects of the grade level, information about field trips, overnight trips and activities which each grade level are know for.

This year our School Improvement Team decided to move some of our annual overnight trips to the beginning of the year, so our second and third graders and their parents will be heading to Desoto Caverns or the Tennessee Aquarium for their amazing trips that will surely create lifelong memories during the next few weeks.

Speech Screenings, the first Parents Night Out, yearbook fall pictures, and August field trips are already in the books. Discovery Clubs are underway and will enrich the children's learning during after school. We are very excited to have Ms. Xylina and Artist 360 back on campus as our drama students start to prepare for the McGinnis Woods production of Disney's Little Mermaid, Jr. We are also glad to have Mr. Chason working with our basketball club players again.

Be sure to read this issue of the McGinnis Woods Buzz because it covers so many of the important happenings going on here at school. It will also aid you as you plan for the upcoming events which are planned for September and beyond.

Each day at McGinnis Woods is filled with little joys and surprises. Recently while visiting the playground I found this sweet chalk drawing created by one of our 5th graders and her friends. I hope it makes you smile as much as it did me. What a wonderful thing it is to cherish childhood and let our students create in a caring community of learners!

Ms. Mary

McGinnis Woods

Mission Statement

*Our mission is to provide
superior academics
through hands-on
approaches, which foster
self confidence and self es-
teem that inspire a lifelong
love of learning.*

Parent Association Update

Welcome back McGinnis Woods Families! We hope you're excited as we are about the start of a new school year! In case you weren't able to visit with us during Curriculum Night, we wanted to share some information on the Parent Association (PA).

Our core mission is to enhance the McGinnis Woods experience. We do that a number of ways including community social events, fundraisers and more. The daily operations, planning and strategy of the PA are managed by the PA Board. Every parent of a student at McGinnis Woods is automatically a member of the Parent Association so we encourage you to get involved and offer your talents, feedback and ideas!

There are also countless opportunities to volunteer throughout the year. Volunteering at school is a great way to give back and show our students the importance of parental involvement. We understand everyone has busy lives so we have volunteer opportunities that take as little as 30 minutes. There's no way we could achieve all that we do in a school year without the help of great parents just like you. So, if you can help, please visit our website and click the Sign Up button under the volunteer section on the main homepage.

Lastly, we'll be sure to include upcoming events, important announcements, and fundraising updates with you in every newsletter. You can find the updates for this month below!

Upcoming Events and Fundraisers

PA Coffee - Friday, September 7 @ 8-8:30am

The PA coffee is a great opportunity to stop by and meet some members of the PA Board. You can also share any ideas or feedback you may have. And, of course, grab yourself a cup of coffee!



Square One Art - Order forms come home mid-September

This wonderful fundraiser is a fantastic way to cherish your child's artwork. The students have created a special masterpiece that will be available on a variety of products. Be sure to pass along ordering information to your friends and family so everyone can enjoy your child's art!

Spirit Wear Fundraiser Update

Thank you to all of the families that participated in our Spirit Wear fundraiser! These items are a fantastic way to show off your McGinnis Woods

Wildcat pride both on and off campus. The orders have been turned in and everything should arrive at school by September 12. Don't forget that, if you purchased spirit wear, you are free to wear it on the first and third Monday of every month!



We'll have a final tally soon on the amount raised but, in the meantime, we're very excited to see all the Wildcat pride around the school!

Meet your 2018-2019 PA Board

We've got a great team of people serving on your PA Board this year! Are you interested in becoming a part of the PA Board? We'd love to hear from you! Feel free to reach out to any of the Board members listed below to learn more.

Jason Harper - President
Jaclyn Anderson - Vice President
Wendy Haye - Treasurer
Kelly Rawlins - Secretary
Dena Newberg - Volunteer Outreach
Jill Reiter - Volunteer Outreach
Lisa Varshine - Family Outreach and Communications
Lakshmi Nagamohan - Family Outreach and Communications
Jacki Freeman - Room Rep Coordinator
Elysia Gallivan - Trusted Advisor
Mary Johnson - Principal
Tonia Usher - Preschool Director

Get In Touch

You can get in touch with the PA Board through our website at www.mcginiswoodspa.org or via email at pa@mcginiswoods.org

Preschool Corner



We had an amazing Summer with plenty of extra special activities for our friends such as the ice cream truck, waterpark and the petting zoo. It is amazing that it's already the end of August and we are heading into Fall. Time sure does fly when we're having fun!

With school now back in session we are in full swing and looking forward to a great year. This month the themes were focused on learning all about the children, their families and being healthy. It was wonderful reading the "All About Me" posters and seeing the family photos proudly displayed in the classrooms. The children learned what they need to do to keep themselves healthy by eating well, exercising and getting plenty of rest! They used their 5 senses to explore new tastes, sounds and smells. It was great to see their reactions to the sweet and then the sour!

On the last day of the month our 3-year-old classes planted their Fall garden. The Spring garden was a huge success and the children are eagerly awaiting their miniature pumpkins, broccoli, squash, green beans, cucumbers and wildflowers to start growing.



We hope everyone took advantage and purchased their spirit wear. We also hope everyone enjoys their Fall pictures. There will be plenty more fun and exciting activities to come like our upcoming visit from The Children's Museum who will be doing a STEM project called "Goopy Goo".

Summer Camp Wrap Up



Our Sunsational Summer Camp at McGinnis Woods was a ton of fun! We spent the summer learning about intriguing themes, doing daily Theme Activities that went along with the weekly themes, traveled to unique field trips, hosted guest speakers, participated in weekly STEM and Art classes and cooled off in our waterpark. We even had an ice cream truck that visited us every week with some yummy treats!

Throughout the summer, we had many special guests visit us and we enjoyed talent shows and surprises along the way. We offered a wide variety of Specialty and Academic Camps to help sharpen our campers' skills and to expand their minds. Some of these camps included swimming, Cooking, STEM, Jr. and Sr. Robotics, Shark Week and Digging for Dinosaurs.

Campers also enjoyed weekly field trips to many interesting places. Our campers ventured out to Zoo Atlanta, Art Barn, CNN Center, Stars and Strikes and Cumming Aquatic Center. Some of the incredible guest speakers that came to visit our campers were Cricket's Petting Zoo, magician Ken Scott, and Sam's Path Petting Zoo brought exotic animals for our campers to enjoy.

Our Sunsational Summer Camp at McGinnis Woods is the highlight of each year, and we are so thankful to have been able to spend our summer days with your special campers this year!



Wildcat Chat

We are excited to have Morgan Williams join our staff as the new Athletic Director and Physical Education/Health teacher at McGinnis Woods. She is excited to be a part of our school community and eager for the soccer and volleyball season play to get underway.

Morgan comes to McGinnis Woods with experience coaching and teaching students at many different levels both in Kansas and here in Georgia. She is an avid soccer player and loves developing leadership, sportsmanship, knowledge, and skills in her students.

Fall sports are underway. This year our Soccer and Girls Volleyball teams will be competing against other schools in the MAAC League which is comprised of teams from other private schools.

Soccer's first game is scheduled for September 4 at 4:15, being played at Atlanta Academy. This year the teams are playing 7V7. The team has been working extremely hard at practice and we are excited to watch them gell and learn more about the game throughout the season. We are fortunate to have Coach Andrew's leadership to help mold and motivate the team this season.

Volleyball's first match is today at 3:45 at Atlanta Academy. The players have been working hard under the able leadership of three coaches this year: Coach Jenn, Coach Kim and Coach Alyssa. All of the girls have been working extremely hard at practices and are ready for their first match!

Practices are held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, directly after school and ending at 4:30. Volleyball is in the gym and soccer is on the turf, by the playgrounds.

Parent volunteers are always needed to help out with the concession stand and as line judges for the 3 home volleyball matches we will be hosting. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Coach Morgan at mwilliams@mcginniswoods.org. We appreciate your help and encouragement as our Wildcat teams take on the competition.



Go Wildcats!

The Accelerated Reader Program at McGinnis Woods

At McGinnis Woods, we believe reading is one of the most important and fundamental skills students need to succeed. Reading is considered as one of the best practices to stimulate intellectual development for students (Reading by Phonics, 2018). McGinnis Woods students are encouraged to read and are given access to books they want to read and the ability to select books on their own. To inspire our students to achieve reading success, our school uses the Accelerated Reader (AR) program.

Accelerated Reader or AR for short is a curriculum-based assessment tool, which delivers a summary and analysis of results to allow teachers to monitor reading practice skills of students.

The process begins with a student selecting and reading a book and after reading, taking a quick computerized test. Books are assigned a point value and students are awarded points based on their results. The point value is determined by the number of words, the reading difficulty, the number of syllables in words and sentence complexity.

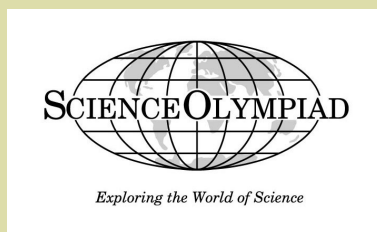
Students in 2nd-8th grades are required to read 25 books each school year. Students will select books that fall within their Accelerated Reader (AR) range to read. Any type of book may be read including Graphic Novels, Picture Books, E-books, Chapter Books, and Non-Fiction Books. Students may check the AR level of their book by visiting the site www.arbookfind.com. This site details the reading and interest level as well as a brief synopsis of the book.

Students in Pre-K-1st grades are encouraged to read for at least twenty minutes each night. Introducing reading at the early stages is a perfect foundation to build upon as students reading interests and levels grow.

If you are looking for a great series to start or a book to read at night with your child, please visit Ms. Jacki in our school library. She will certainly help you find the book that is just right for your child. For more resources, for Accelerated Reader you may visit <https://www.renaissance.com/services/parent-resources/>.



Science Olympiad Club About to Start



The McGinnis Woods Science Olympiad team led by Ms. Anne, the middle school science instructor, will be forming in the next few weeks. We will once again have a team consisting of 3rd through 6th graders who are interested in STEM. They will be researching and learning about a wide variety of science topics, including astronomy, chemistry, physics, and oceanography. There are also events that allow students to practice their math and engineering talents. Our weekly meetings will be held on a weekday morning (TBD) from 7:25-8:25. Par-

ents are encouraged to volunteer as Event Coaches, as we have noticed that the most successful teams have a number of parent volunteers. For more information and a list of the current events, go to the Georgia Science Olympiad website: <http://www.gascioly.org/elementary.html>

Middle Schoolers Challenge Themselves at Treetop Quest



Our 5th through 8th grade students went on their first field trip of the year on Monday, August 13 to Treetop Quest at the Gwinnet Environmental and Heritage Center. All of our students were harnessed up and given training for the rope courses and zip lines. The students were able to explore the treetops! Students traversed obstacles, swings, and zip lines in a range of difficulties. They helped one another with equipment and encouraged each other on difficult obstacles, too. Students had a lot of fun, but also learned the importance of trust, communication, listening, and encouragement. We trust that the students will apply these important skills here at school, as well as in their activities outside of school. What a wonderful way for our students to learn these important life skills which will serve them both today and in the future.



Middle School Social Committee Chosen



At the start of the school year many of our middle school students volunteered to head up the first semester of our middle school social committee. This committee, led by Ms. Nicole, plans social events catering to ONLY our upperclassmen! The students on the committee help with planning when these events will take place, as well as, setting up and running the events.

To kick off this school year the students in 5th -8th grade enjoyed an ice cream social. Past social events have included pizza parties, gym and electronic games, "Just Dance" parties, contests and an annual campfire.

These events allow our middle school students to spend time with classmates, hang-out and just have FUN with their peers!

Congratulations to our first semester committee members: Lexi, Octavia, Anthony, Ben, Bailee, Pranish, JJ, Jeemin, Violet, Kristen and Lola.



Discovery Club News



Our first session of Discovery Clubs is underway and the students are having a wonderful time learning new skills and developing new talents. Discovery Clubs run four times each year and feature teacher led experiences that focus on many of the students' interests.

Currently we are offering many unique clubs designed with the students in mind. This session's offerings include: Jr. Robotics with Mrs. Wendy, Basketball coached by Mr. Chason, Drama with Ms. Xylina and her crew, Football with Mr. Josh, Stem with Mr. Alex, Band Practice Club with Ms. Brittany, and Cooking with Ms. Valorie.

This session will run from August 27th through October 12th. If you would like for your child to participate in one of the many after school activities we offer, it's not too late to sign up. We can't wait to see what our busy students will learn and create in the coming months!



A Trip to INK



The kindergarten Cats had their first field trip adventure of the school year on August 23rd. They travelled to Gainesville to visit INK, the Interactive Neighborhood for Kids. Ink is a unique, one of a kind destination where children can role play and learn through practical experiences. INK is an annual destination for McGinnis Woods students because research shows that play is important to healthy brain development and allows children to develop their imaginations, dexterity and cognitive skills while developing emotional grit.

While at INK, students enjoyed exploring the many rooms set up to replicate an airline, a playhouse, a medical clinic, a radiology clinic, a salon and much, much more. They had fun pretending to be doctors, actors, dentists, police officers, farmers, and many more!

This trip was so popular with the students and aligns well with our current unit about Community Helpers. When asked which job was their favorite, several students replied "being a police officer" and "being an actor." A great time was had by all!



Did You Know?

McGinnis Woods offers many opportunities for our students to develop leadership skills. Students in the middle school especially benefit from these nationally recognized clubs which include:



Jr. Beta Club is a national organization that focuses on leadership and service. It is open to our fifth through eighth graders who achieve all A's or all A's and one B. These students volunteer to help our community here at school through beautification projects and peer tutoring with our younger students. In addition, they work with outside nonprofit organizations to help those in our community at large. In the past, students have visited with residents at assisted living facilities, collected food for local foodbanks, worked at animal shelters, and provided funding for a 12 X 12 foot house to be built in Guatemala.



Student Council is an in school opportunity open to students in grades Kindergarten through Eighth grade. Student Council officers will be elected in September from a pool of students in grades five through eight that choose to run for office. Additionally, each class will choose two punctual, responsible students to serve as their class representatives. These students are chosen in many ways including voting, essay writing, or teacher discretion. The officers will plan events like Red Ribbon Week, Order in Days, and the Staff vs. Student kickball game. Representatives will assist officers with tasks and attend monthly meetings.



Safety Patrol is open to students in grades four through eight. Students need to fill out the application for consideration. Once students are chosen to be a patrol, they must consistently complete their assignments and maintain exemplary behavior to participate. Some of the patrol assignments students are given include walking PK students to their class, raising and lowering the flag, and opening car doors during carpool. Be on the lookout for the application and more information.

Student Council Updates



Student Council will be holding elections for officers mid-September with officer applications going home on Friday, August 31st. We are looking for amazing candidates to put their hats in the ring to become one of our four officers. We can't wait to get a new board in place and begin planning our fall activities like Red Ribbon Week and our first Order-in Day of the year. After elections, each class will also choose two representatives to be a part of Student Council. In addition, Student Council runs our school store. It is open most Fridays from 8:00-8:30 with many fun school supply

type items. Be on the lookout for more information about the election and class representatives coming soon.



Patrols Help In Many Ways

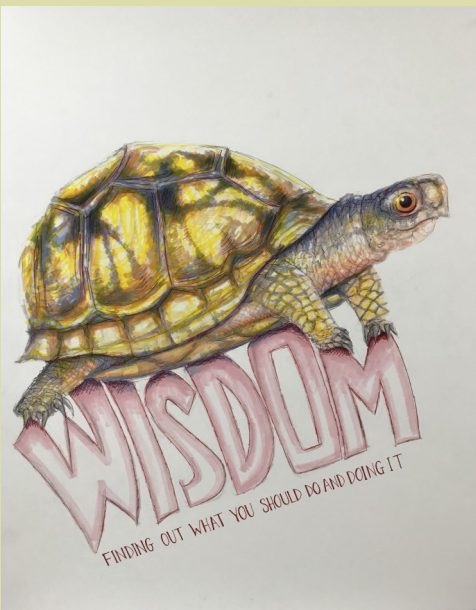


Our safety patrol students are leading the way here at McGinnis Woods. We have twenty-five students in grades 4 through 8 who are volunteering their time to help our school each morning and afternoon throughout the school.

Their responsibilities include raising and lowering the flag, assisting the PK students with getting to class, and assisting with the management of carpool. They take their jobs very seriously and are helping to maintain a positive and safe school environment for all. They are getting rave reviews, so if you have the chance, stop them to say hello.



Word of the Month: Wisdom



The Word of the Month for August was Wisdom. Wisdom was defined as finding out what you should do and doing it. Each morning during our daily announcements, we share a thought for the day regarding our Word of the Month. This provides an opportunity for the students and teachers to discuss these important character traits. Mr. Dan also illustrates each word for us to display on the *Word of the Month* bulletin board.

Throughout each month, we look for students who are working hard to demonstrate the highlighted character trait in their daily behavior. Some of the students who work to master each character trait will be recognized on the morning announcements and will receive a Chick-fil-A coupon to celebrate their achievements.

Each of the classes in our Kindergarten through 8th grade also honor a student who exhibits great citizenship and positive behavior as the Citizen of the Month each month. These students get to enjoy a lunch off campus at a local restaurant. Parents are invited to join their Citizen of the Month for their festivities!

Pre-K Feature Teachers



Who has patience galore, loves answering endless questions, and loves teaching four and five year olds? Our fabulous Pre-K 4 & 5 teachers!!! We are lucky enough to have five of them here at McGinnis Woods!!!!

Ms. Abby and Ms. Jackie are both teachers in PreK4-A. Ms. Abby is a Georgia native. She grew up in East Cobb and went to Pope High School. She graduated from Georgia Highlands College with a degree in Education. She worked at McGinnis Woods in 2015-2016 then got married and moved to Chicago. She is happy that her husband's job brought them back to Georgia and to McGinnis Woods! She loves spending time with her husband Mike, her dog Kenna, and her cat Casper. Ms. Jackie is originally from Kansas City, Missouri. She attended

Kansas State University where she received a degree in Family Studies and Human Services. She has been an early education teacher for seven years. This is her first year at McGinnis Woods. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters Trinity (6) and Teal (3). Her favorite thing to do with her family is watching movies!

Ms. Robyn and Ms. Valorie are both teachers in PreK4-B. Ms. Robyn is originally from Savannah, GA. She has been in Atlanta since 1985. Ms. Robyn has degrees in Early Childhood Education from Ashworth College and Grand Canyon University. She has taught Pre-K for many years. This is MS. Robyn's eleventh year at McGinnis Woods. Her hobbies include reading, bowling, and sports "Go Falcons". She enjoys spending time with her husband Curtis and has two children Amber, and Zeffery. Ms. Valorie is from Woodstock. She has three children: our very own Ms. Amy (our fearless afterschool/summer camp director) Chris, and Zachary. Ms. Valorie received her CDA in 2011. She has been with McGinnis Woods for nine years. Her hobbies include reading and anything outdoors. Ms. Valorie loves to spend time with her husband Ryan and family going on different vacations. In her spare time she is outside playing with her three Chihuahuas.

Ms. Lisa is the teacher in PreK-5. Ms. Lisa is originally from Port Charlotte, Florida. She attended Florida State University and received a degree in International Affairs. Ms. Lisa has been with McGinnis Woods since May of 1999. This is her sixteenth year teaching in the elementary school. Her hobbies include reading, and cooking. She enjoys spending time with her husband Chris and her children Madison (15), Emerson (13), Bryson (4) and Allison (3).

Did You Hear the News?



The 2017-18 Teacher of the Year from the Elementary and Middle School was Ms. Nicole Seltzer. Ms. Nicole joined the McGinnis Woods staff in August of 2000. During her 18 years of teaching at McGinnis Woods, she has taught a variety of grade levels, with middle school Social Studies being her favorite.

Nicole's passion for middle schoolers, coupled with her love of the curriculum provides our 5-8th graders with a strong and creative academic foundation. She brings history and the world to life each day through the use of primary sources, best practices and engaging hands on lessons. She has also enjoyed accompanying our students on their 8th grade trip to Washington, DC. Ms. Nicole's desire to make a difference in the life of her students is one of the reasons she is a perennial favorite with the middle schoolers at McGinnis Woods!

Ms. Nicole also enjoys participating in anything that brings out her creative side, including baking, being a Den Leader, a gymnastics mom, sewing, and costume design. For many years, Nicole has created fantastic costumes for our annual musicals including our recent productions of Lion King, The Wizard of Oz and Peter Pan.

Ms. Nicole's enthusiasm for life and learning is contagious and we are fortunate to have her on the McGinnis Woods team.

Art With Mr. Dan



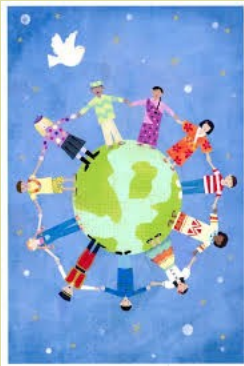
We've been mixing up some extraordinarily colorful artwork in the art room. This work has been translated into some wonderful keepsake items by the Square 1 Art fundraiser. The students worked in a variety of different art medias that ranged from watercolors, tempera paint to markers and colored pencils. The younger grades, PreK4-2nd grade, experimented with using their handprints and fingerprints to make images and textures. Our third through eighth graders created artwork that included images of animals, lighthouses, sandcastles, abstract inspirational trees, and sugar skulls. The students showed incredible craftsmanship by using bright colors, mechanical skills, all the while having fun.

The Art Show will be our next big event so stayed tuned, and be on the lookout for save the date information. I look forward to seeing



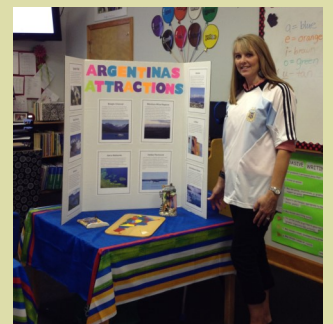
what each student will develop and how the artwork will be turned into a framed masterpiece!

Save the Date



International Night is back! On September 25 from 6:00pm to 7:30 pm grade level clusters will be featuring the foods, culture, and customs of four countries. This is a wonderful event when we celebrate the rich diversity of our school community and world.

We are also looking for unique dancers, singers or performers to join us that night to share their talents. In the past we have enjoyed Russian Dancers, Korean Drummers, Soloists from other countries, and Bollywood Dancers perform. If you know of a group of internationals who would like to share with us, please have them contact us at elementaryschool@mcginniswoods.org.



Pictures from Around the School

