

MACS NEWSLETTER

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4th grade students sing at the 2011 Winter Concert at CCAC Auditorium, Thursday December 7th. The concert was directed by music teacher, Mrs. Sarah Rodack. It featured performances from Kindergarten through Fifth grades.

WELCOME FROM MR. SCOUMIS

Hi everybody!

It's hard to believe, but we are almost half way through the school year.

A lot of great things have happened since the year began – a visit from WPXI chief meteorologist Stephen Cropper to learn about the weather, a school supply giveaway with The Education Partnership, a (slightly soggy) visit to the pumpkin patch, and even a chance to practice our blocking and throws with the Pittsburgh Passion and our very own football star Ms. Burress. Our students are off to a great start and I can't wait to see what they do in the coming months.

There is one important correction I'd like to make. In this year's A+ Schools 2011 Report to the Community, MACS was incorrectly listed as having 10 disciplinary incidents per 100 students. In reality, MACS has 0 disciplinary incidents per 100 students. In fact, we have never had any disciplinary incidents in our entire time in existence.

Just a couple of reminders:

- The beginning of the new year means PSSAs are around the corner, so get ready to take on the test!
- The school dress code is mandatory. Let's make sure we all stick to the rules. If you have questions about the dress code, look at the student handbook or ask a teacher or any member of staff.

Have a great holiday, and as always...**GO PITT!**

FEATURE STORY:

GIRLS FIELD TRIP TO PITT WOMEN'S BASKETBALL GAME



On November 18, 2011, MACS 3rd through 8th grade girls attended a University of Pittsburgh women's basketball game at the Peterson Event Center. It was an activity that the girls will always remember, and the excitement on their faces was priceless.

Tayja Williams, a young lady in the 7th grade, summed up the experience and all the excitement of the trip.

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This is our weather helper A'rejah Dixon in front of the fall tree we adopted outside of our classroom for our science unit on the seasons.



Students receive free school supplies as part of The Education Partnership's school-wide giveaway at MACS.



Kindergarten and 1st grade classes visit to the pumpkin patch at Reilly's Summer Seat Farm & Garden.

KHAN ACADEMY HELPS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS PRACTICE THEIR MATH SKILLS

This year, some MACS elementary school classrooms are getting a leg-up in math with help from a popular online educational tool called Khan Academy – a free, non-profit website that offers video lessons and practice problems in everything from math to physics to finance.

Using Khan Academy, our students can work at their own pace as they master increasingly difficult math skills. In the 3rd grade, we use it every day in small groups for math, so kids can work on the skills that are on their level, not just the ones I am teaching in class that day. And, because it is online, our students can log in at home and continue the work they do at school.

Another great thing about Khan Academy is that it's teacher-monitored, meaning teachers can log in and see how often their students are using the site, which skills they are working on, and how many attempts they needed to master each skill – making it easier to give kids help where they need it most.

Khan Academy is available free to anyone – even adults!
Go check it out today at www.khanacademy.org

By **Samantha Honea**, 3rd Grade Teacher

MACS PARENT MAKES FALL BOOK FAIR POSSIBLE



MACS parent Alicia Martin had never run a book fair before, but when her daughters, Morgan (4th grade) and Madison (2nd grade), told her that MACS wouldn't be holding its Book Fair this fall because the school hadn't yet hired a new librarian, she didn't think twice about volunteering to run it. "It's a great opportunity for the kids to get books and I was happy to do it," she said during a recent conversation. "It was a lot of fun, too!"

Thanks to Mrs. Martin's hard work, the Book Fair was a huge success, running from October 31st to November 4th. She even had a great new idea – to let students use their MACS Bucks to buy books at the book fair.

"Having parents like Mrs. Martin is what makes MACS special," said Mr. Scoumis. "They go the extra mile to help out and create opportunities for our kids. We are very grateful for her help on the book fair and her great ideas for improving it."

By **Jocelyn Horner**

FIFTH GRADE EXPERIMENTS WITH WEATHER

In 5th grade science class we have been experimenting with weather quite a bit. We've completed lab reports on weather conditions including:

- Air pressure, using zip-loc bags to demonstrate inflation;
- Evaporation, by filling a test tube before Thanksgiving break then observing the water loss after break;
- Humidity, by sealing a jar with a piece of sponge in it;
- Rain, by spraying wax paper to make and observe rain-drops.

We have also done a lot with weather temperature and conditions.

By **Kevin Boden**, 5th Grade TA

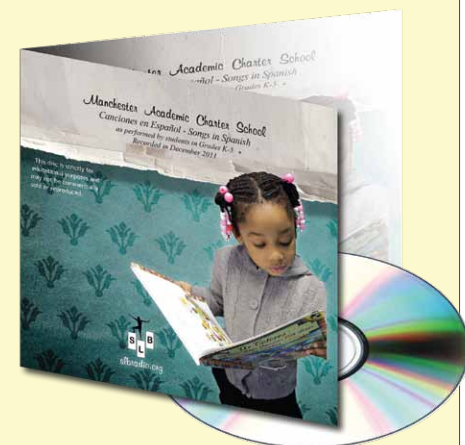
UPCOMING FAMILY NIGHTS

Don't forget – Family Night is the third Thursday of every month, 6:00pm - 7:30pm.

Jan. 19	Science Night
Feb. 16	PSSA Night
Mar. 15	TBA
Apr. 19	Social Studies Night
May 17	What I Learned Night



SPANISH CLASS CD



Big news for Spanish K-5! Our CD *Canciones en Español* was released on December 21st. Each grade performed a Spanish song which was recorded and arranged by the Saturday Light Brigade. The cost for the CD is \$5.00. For more information please email Señorita Castillo: acastillo@macsk8.org.

¡Gracias!

MACS STUDENTS GIVE BACK: ELEMENTARY STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT THE WEATHER & COLLECT DONATIONS

On November 30th, WPXI Chief Meteorologist Stephen Cropper visited MACS to do a free presentation on weather to students in grades K-5 as a reward for a successful food drive for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The presentation included information about what it's like to be a meteorologist and the importance and influence of the weather on daily life. Afterwards students had a chance to ask more questions about what it is like to predict the weather and be on TV.

Representatives from the Food Bank were on hand to thank the students and collect the food. All students were given a WPXI water bottle as a thank you for donating the food.

The visit was even aired on WPXI's evening news!

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONORS SOCIETY HELPS OUT AT THE HUMANE SOCIETY

MACS National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) began their annual service project this month by volunteering at the Western Pennsylvania Humane Society. Students walked dogs, served afternoon meals, washed dirty dogs bowls and toys, gave clean blankets and play toys, and made treats out of peanut butter for the animals. The students were also able to socialize with the animals, making it an experience that not only filled a community need but also was fun.

NJHS will continue their service once a month throughout the school year. This year's NJHS students are: **London Greer, Richard Jones, Shane Jones, Daesiah Latimer, and Jaylyn Hammond and Aujanæ Washington.** Keep up the good work!



FEATURE STORY: GIRLS FIELD TRIP TO PITT WOMEN'S BASKETBALL GAME

(Continued from Page 1)

"Our school field trip to the Pitt women's basketball game was amazing. I had so much fun at the game and I'm sure everyone else did as well. To be able to go to a Pitt game was an indescribable feeling to me. I play basketball at my school here at Manchester Academic Charter School. To see the Pitt players play at the game kind of motivated me to want to do better. When I saw them play I was just thinking in my head "Wow, I would like to play basketball in college, especially for a great school like the University of Pittsburgh."

"There was not a favorite part of the game for me because all of it was my favorite. But the part that really caught my attention was when the players were on the big screen talking about how school is important and how anyone can accomplish anything if they work hard. The reason why I knew it just wasn't all

talk is because I looked where they are now and also other basketball players and they have all made it by working hard in school to be where they are now."



By Patria Davenport,
Girls' Basketball Coach

LIBRARY UPDATE AND WINTER READING

Hello everyone! I've had a whirlwind first month as the MACS librarian! Since I started at the end of October, we've had a Book Fair and a RIF book giveaway, I participated in my first Family Night, and I got the library up and running in its new home in the basement. The students are finally checking out books this week, and I'm hoping that by the time Winter Break rolls around, I'll know everyone's names and maybe even a little about their reading likes and dislikes.

While kids have different reading interests, there are some surefire hits that I'm planning to add to the school library and that you might consider adding to your holiday shopping list:

■ **Picture Books:**

The Red Sled by Lita Judge

If You Give a Dog a Donut by Laura Numeroff,
Illustrated by Felicia Bond

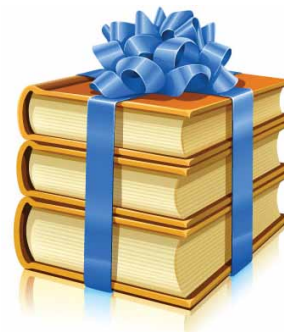
■ **Chapter Books:**

Diary of a Wimpy Kid 6: Cabin Fever by Jeffrey Kinney

The Sun of Neptune by Rick Riordan

Happy Reading!

By Bethany Stout, Librarian



GET CONNECTED

Visit us at the MACS website: www.macsk8.org

Or on Facebook: www.facebook.com – search for **MACS Pittsburgh**

Or YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/MACSCharterSchool



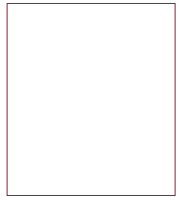
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OUR MISSION:

We foster the dreams of all children by providing an outstanding and dynamic education in a nurturing environment.

OUR VISION:

We will continue to be an educational center of excellence and become a community pillar of support where students excel, families are engaged, teachers are empowered, and alumni flourish.

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