



# THE OWL POST

## FROM OUR EDITORS

BY IAN F. AND DYLAN M-J.

Hello students, parents, and all readers of The Owl Post! We're thrilled to bring you our very first publication of the year, with plenty more to come. This is a momentous occasion for us as we embark on our first full year of writing newspapers for you. This is also a year of firsts for the whole school. The first year with a student council, new schedules, new teachers, and most importantly new friends.

Our ever-growing team has worked zealously to make this our best issue yet! This issue includes sports season wrap-ups, holiday happenings, interviews, fun activities, and much more! On behalf of the entire newspaper staff, we wish you and your families a happy, joyful, and safe Halloween. We hope you enjoy!

## A BOARD MEMBER FOR OTHERS

BY DYLAN M-J.

The Woods Board is a diverse group of individuals that volunteer their time to assist the administration of the school in running the Woods Academy. They help to plan future development at the school, decide on projects to maintain the school and assist in raising money to pay for these projects. Everytime you step into our new library you see how the hard work of the Board helps to improve our school. Another recent achievement was the hiring of our principal, Dr. Paladino.

The first board member that I had the opportunity to interview was Mr. John Glennon. He is the headmaster at Georgetown Preparatory School, a Jesuit high school in our area. Mr. Glennon was born and raised just outside of Boston, Massachusetts and did his early education there before he moved to our area to do his undergraduate studies at Georgetown University. After completing a masters degree at Georgetown he completed additional post graduate studies at Harvard University.

Mr Glennon was invited to the board by Mr. Powers to serve as an external advisor and an unbiased opinion into our school. He mentioned during our interview that he was very excited to get the invite to join the board because a lot of great students have come from the Woods to Prep. He felt as though he also wanted to give back.

Mr. Glennon brings his experience from Prep to the Woods Board. One of his contributions was assisting in the hiring of the new principal. He will continue to change our school for the better. He pointed out that the role of the Board is to ensure that the school has the resources needed to succeed and grow. Another role of the Board is to provide assistance in the form of an advisory council to Dr. Paladino. He stated that, as the headmaster of a high school, I can bring a perspective on what skills a student needs to learn at Woods to succeed at the next level.

One of his major roles at Prep is recruiting new teachers to the school. When asked about his major accomplishments he responded, "I am very proud of the different people I have brought on to the faculty here at Prep." A strong faculty is one of the most important things that a school can have to create an excellent learning environment.

One of the things that struck me while interviewing Mr. Glennon was his emphasis on the culture of love and support that exists at the Woods, how this culture allows us to weather any changes as a community. In addition, when I asked Mr. Glennon about the strengths of the school he cited academics, dedicated educators and supporting families that reinforce the mission of the school.

As I reflected on my time speaking with Mr. Glennon, a few points I took away from our interview is that we are very fortunate to have the benefit of a dedicated and experienced leader contributing to our school.

## STUDENT COUNCIL RETURNS TO THE WOODS

Exciting news! The Woods Academy has brought back Student Council this year, offering students a valuable opportunity to make a difference in our school community. Through Student Council, students will develop leadership skills, collaborate on new ideas, and work to create positive changes in our school environment. We are excited for our student leaders to take on roles and responsibilities, learn to represent their peers, and contribute meaningfully to our community's growth. According to the Student Council advisor, Mrs. Shoemaker, they meet every Tuesday during Middle School lunch. They have created the following committees to focus on the tasks and activities they want to accomplish this year:

Dance Committee  
Uniform/ Woods Swag Committee  
Green & White Committee  
Tag Day Fundraising Committee  
Duck Day Committee  
Lost and Found Committee

The representatives for each class are listed below.

PRESIDENT: Dylan M-J.  
VICE PRESIDENT: Tess M. H.  
SECRETARY: Riaan A.  
TREASURER: Mollie W.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES:  
EIGHTH: Lilly K. and Darren M.  
SEVENTH: McCanna F. and Owen O.  
SIXTH: Kylie R. and Max S.  
FIFTH: Maggie B. and Andrew R.  
FOURTH: Jack C. and Ryan M.  
THIRD: David L. and Connor O.

**"THIS IS GREAT  
PRACTICE FOR BEING  
AN ACTIVE  
PARTICIPANT IN  
DEMOCRACY."**

~MRS. SHOEMAKER



# MIDDLE SCHOOL OVERNIGHTS

## Fifth Grade

The fifth-grade students enjoyed an exciting overnight camping adventure at Bretton Woods this fall! They spent the night under the stars, learning valuable outdoor skills, engaging in team-building activities, and bonding with classmates in a beautiful natural setting. The evening was filled with a sunset hike, campfire stories, and s'mores, giving everyone a memorable experience in the great outdoors. This trip was a fantastic opportunity for students to build friendships, practice independence, and connect with nature!



## Sixth Grade

BY BROOKS C.

On October 3rd, the sixth grade class went on its annual overnight trip to Philadelphia, PA. The students and four teacher chaperones visited The Franklin Institute, Reading Terminal Market, and Independence National Historical Park. They stayed overnight at the Hilton Garden Inn Philadelphia Center City Hotel.

At the Franklin Institute, the students explored different exhibits, while working on a packet similar to a scavenger hunt. A popular exhibit was the Sportszone where students got to test their skill in pitching, surfing, and jumping.

"My favorite part of the trip was the sports exhibit," said 6th grader Max. "I liked the running part and learning more about gravity."

Later, students paired off in the Reading Terminal Market and together performed a mapping activity to learn skills used in the real world. For dinner, the students went to the Hard Rock Café in downtown Philadelphia.

The next morning they visited Independence National Historical Park to see the Liberty Bell, Visitor's Center, and President's House site.



## Seventh Grade

BY DAISY K.

This past September the seventh grade went on a three-day overnight trip into the past. They started their trip by going to Jamestown and learning about the first permanent English settlement in North America and how it molded the future of our country. Students and faculty chaperones visited museums and were able to tour ships from that time period. Next, they went to Colonial Williamsburg and learned about daily life in Colonial times. During the trip to Colonial Williamsburg, the students enjoyed a ghost walk, a scavenger hunt, and food from Shields Tavern which was served to them the same way the food would be served to people in Colonial times. Lastly, they went to Yorktown and learned about the surrender of Lord Cornwallis to George Washington at the Battle of Yorktown, the last major land battle of the Revolutionary War.



## Eighth Grade

BY JD D.

The eighth-grade class recently concluded an exciting field trip to Gettysburg, starting with a visit to the Antietam Battlefield in Sharpsburg. This initial stop allowed the students to see first-hand the Civil War history they've been studying for the past month. The main event took place in Gettysburg, where they engaged in ghost tours, explored historic battlefields, learned about civilian life during the Civil War, and most importantly, ate good food!



# NEW FACES AT WOODS

BY EMMA H. AND DAISY K.

The Woods Academy welcomed two new faculty members this year. First, we have a new school nurse, Mrs. Healy and secondly, a new French teacher, Ms. Meadows.

Mrs. Healy grew up in Long Island NY, and moved to Virginia in highschool. She has been a nurse for 16 years. Before coming to the Woods, she worked at Dilworth Elementary in Charlotte, NC and a school called Kadena in Japan. She loves it here at the Woods and thinks that all of the students are polite and well spoken. She also thinks that the staff are all friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable. She thinks this school is quaint, welcoming, marvelous, and like a family. Her favorite color is blue, her favorite foods are sushi and barbecue pulled pork. Her favorite fast-food restaurant is Chick-fil-a and she has four kids and a dog.

Ms. Meadows grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas, and taught there for nine years. She taught at an all-boys Catholic high school. The Woods is different from the school she used to teach at because she used to only teach high school boys and now she teaches boys and girls in lower school. She thinks that the faculty are positive, encouraging, and everyone is kind. She got to visit The Woods last year and knew instantly when she first walked in that she wanted to teach here. Her favorite color is blue, her favorite type of food is Mexican, and she wants to get a golden retriever. She enjoys teaching French to little kids because French is something they can actually use when they grow up. She started learning French in tenth grade and became fluent in it by the age of twenty. She also studied abroad in France for one semester which was the thing that taught her the most French.



# TRATTORIA SORRENTO RESTAURANT REVIEW

BY HUNTER "CHEF ME GUSTA" M-J.

Trattoria Sorrento is a family run Italian restaurant in Bethesda. They opened in 1991 and they have been serving fresh food ever since.

When you walk into the restaurant it feels like Italy. There are bright colored paintings on the walls. The smell of fresh pasta makes you hungry. The servers greet you with a friendly smile. On the menu there are lots of different types of Italian food like pasta, pizza, meat, fish and vegetable dishes.

I started my meal with garlic bread. It was very delicious and fresh with melted cheese on top. This was followed by a ceasar salad that had just the right amount of salt in the dressing. My pasta with Italian sausage was cooked just right. The pasta was freshly made in the restaurant.

I got to talk to the owner, John Giovanni DeSimone. He is also the chef. He cooks with his father Carlo, his mother Maria, his sisters and sometimes his sons. He told me when you run a restaurant, "You take a big risk and hope everyone loves your food." Their most popular dish is a fish and shrimp sauce served over pasta. Branzino fish is also a favorite, but Chef DeSimone prefers the gnocchi.

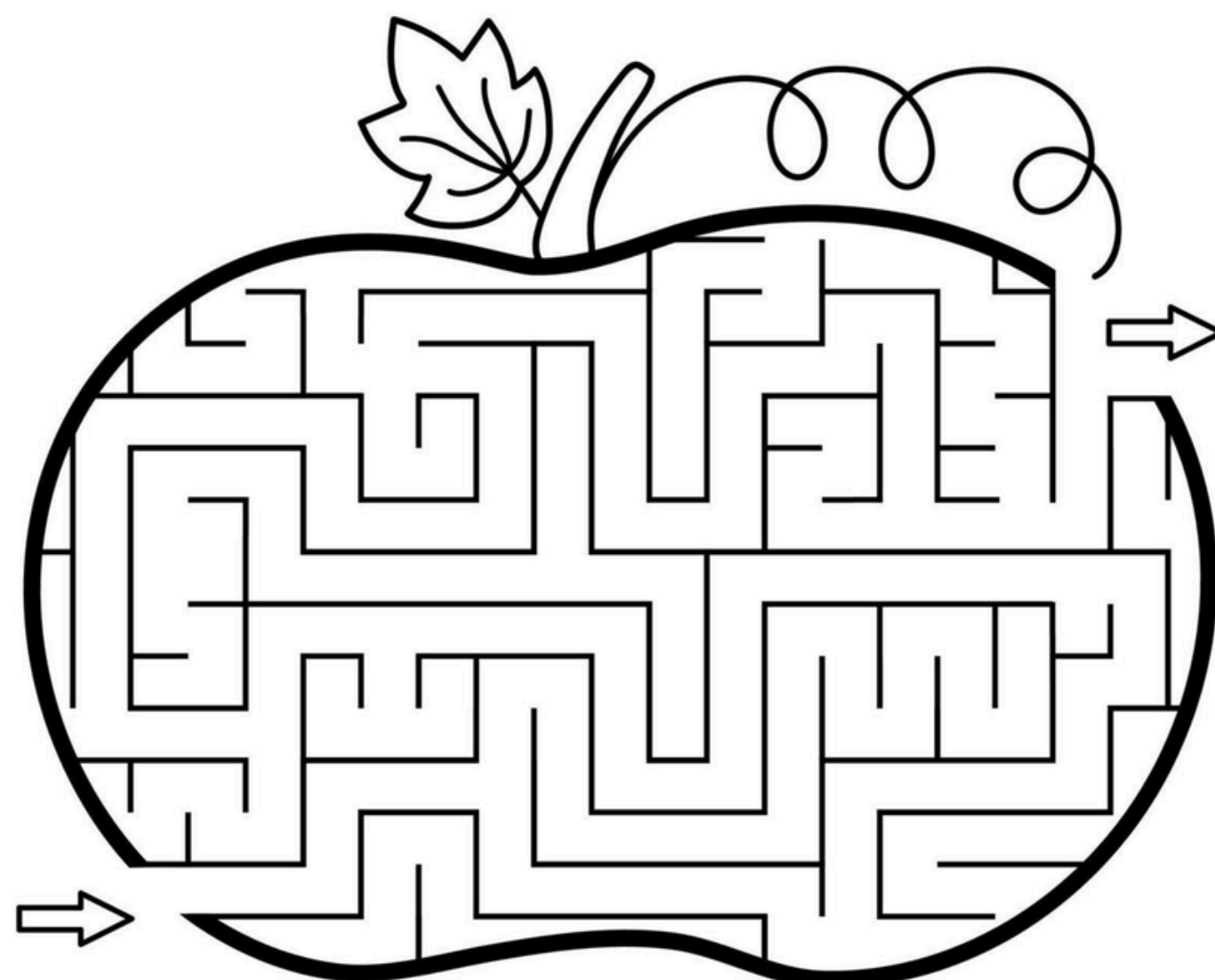
I got to see the kitchen. The chef told me that the thing most people don't know when they come to a restaurant is how much work it is and what hard work goes into making a meal.

Sorrento is a favorite restaurant for my family and me. We always feel like we are part of their family. I would rate it 5 out of 5 owls! Go and try it with your family too.



# HALLOWEEN FUN

Find 10 differences.



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# FALL SPORTS

BY MASON C. AND JT. TUCKER

With the fall sports season wrapping up, we are here to let you know how our Woods sports teams did so far this season. As your sports writers, we have been going to soccer games and volleyball matches and following up with coaches. Below are some statistics and standout players for our fall sports teams.

JV Boys A soccer record: 2 wins, 4 losses; standout player: Bobby K.

JV Boys B soccer record: 3 wins, 1 loss, 1 tie; standout player: Riley A.

Girls soccer (5th - 8th) record: 4 wins, 2 losses; standout player: Cali B.

Varsity Boys A soccer record: 4 wins, 3 losses; standout player: Augustine D. C.

Varsity Boys B soccer record: 1 win, 4 losses; standout player: Rohan P.

Girls A volleyball record: 5 wins, 1 loss; standout player: Emma W.

Girls B volleyball record: 4 wins and 0 losses with their standout player being Gabby Y.

Woods Cross Country: Morgan and Wills B., Henry D., and Emma W. have all had consistent top 10 finishes, and the boys team took third place at the Norwood Invitational last week.

The most exciting game by far was the co-ed JV soccer game vs Lab School. Several students came out to support our Woods team including Brooks C., Bobby K., Constantine P., Jett B., Morgan B. and Mason C. The standout player of the game was Cali B. with 2 goals and 1 assist. With that she helped Woods to a 3 to 2 victory.

We are looking forward to the winter sports season starting soon!

# GRANDPARENT'S DAY

BY AUSTIN F.

Grandparents' Day at The Woods Academy is a very special day when students celebrate the presence of grandparents. This year, Grandparents' Day was full of joy as the grandparents received warmth. The students also took them through various activities that showed how vibrant the learning environment is at the Woods. From classroom visits, where grandparents participated in activities with their grandchildren, to music and song, the day was planned to give a peek into daily students' lives.

The highlight of the day was the performance in the auditorium where the grandparents heard songs and saw dances. Photos were taken at the end of the day with the grandparents to capture memorable moments that they will always remember in life. At The Woods Academy, Grandparents' Day is a very fun day at school that plays an important part in students' lives by celebrating their grandparents and giving respect to them.



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# TERROR-IFIC TRADITIONS

BY ADELEINE K.

Halloween is a yearly celebration that takes place on the 31st of October. It was originally called All Hallows Eve. The old tradition started with the Celtic festival of Samhain. People would make bonfires and wear costumes to scare off the ghosts. In the 1800s, Pope Gregory III made November 1 as a time to celebrate and honor the saints. Soon, All Saints Day added some traditions of Samhain. The night before it was All Hallows Eve, soon it was known as Halloween. Across the years, Halloween developed into a celebration of trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, having parties, wearing costumes, eating sweets, and so much more.

At the Woods, we celebrate Halloween in a few different ways like the annual Halloween Parade. Ms. B, who has been here for — years shared, "As a whole school we would gather in the gym for the first round of our parade where we would see what all of the grades were wearing. Our advisors would encourage us to wear group costumes in Middle School - I remember one year where my advisory all wore 80s themed costumes! We would then take the whole parade outside to the blacktop where family and special friends would cheer and celebrate with us."

Mrs. Shoemaker, who has been here for 23 years remarks, "Halloween is a wonderful tradition at The Woods. Every year we host a school-wide parade. Students in all grades draw up in costumes and parade around the campus while parents and other visitors look on. WAPTO serves warm apple cider to all the guests before the parade. Another fun event that takes place during Halloween at The Woods is Third Grade's Itchy Witchy Poetry Recitation. It is a fun morning of rhyming, singing, scaring, and dancing. One more thing that everyone looks forward to are the creative teacher costumes."

An additional tradition is Treats for Troops. This is where grades bring in candy for troops located overseas and send it to them. Grades compete to see who can bring in the most candy.

Traditions at the Woods have continued for many years and created memorable Halloweens.

# WOODS HERITAGE NIGHT

BY RIAAN A.

Heritage Night at The Woods on October 28, 2024 was a blast! It was the inaugural event at the Woods and it was an amazing experience. Booths from countries like Spain, Italy, India, Greece, and Cameroon filled the area, each offering cool information about their cultures. Visitors enjoyed colorful tri-folds that explained the history and traditions of each country. Ambassadors from each country also gave out traditional dishes, candy, tattoos, and even drinks! One of the best moments was when a family performed an Italian song, Fratelli D'Italia or Inno Mameli (the Italian national anthem) making everyone smile and clap along. "It was great to see so many different cultures in one place," said Pushpita Kotikalapudi, one of the event coordinators. "We want everyone to learn and appreciate each other's backgrounds."



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# CLUE, LIVE ON STAGE AT THE KENNEDY CENTER: A REVIEW OF THE PLAY AND THE 1985 FILM

BY BRIDGET B.

Most people know and have played the classic game Clue, a murder mystery board game for up to six players. Each player in the game takes on the role of a specific character, Mr. Green, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Miss Scarlet, Mrs. Peacock or Colonel Mustard. The objective of the game is for the players to figure out who amongst them killed a fictional character named Mr. Boddy, as well as where Mr. Boddy was killed, and what weapon he was killed with. A movie based on the game was made in 1985 and it was also called Clue. Recently, a stage version of Clue was playing at The Kennedy Center. I have watched the movie and attended the play at The Kennedy Center. In this article, I will compare and contrast the movie and the play and state my thoughts on both things.

Clue, the Movie:

The 1985 movie Clue was a murder mystery film with some of the same general setup as the board game. The same characters from the board game, Mr. Green, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Miss Scarlet, Mrs. Peacock and Colonel Mustard, are invited to a dinner party at a mansion. The dinner party is happening on a dark and stormy night. When their host, Mr. Boddy, ends up dead, the guests have to figure out who killed him. There are six weapons and the guests have to deduce which was used as the murder weapon.

Clue, Live on Stage at The Kennedy Center:

In 1995, the stage version of the film Clue was performed for the first time in Baltimore, Maryland, at the New Boston Street Dinner Theatre. There were a number of different stage versions of Clue over the years. Which brings me to the national tour of Clue that just came to the Kennedy Center and I was lucky enough to see.

In the Kennedy Center production, the stage is set up as the main foyer of the mansion with sides of the stage revealing additional rooms of the mansion. The set included walls that would spin to reveal other rooms, as well as chandeliers that had the ability to dramatically crash down.

The play generally follows the film's plot and script, almost word for word, but without feeling like it is just a copy of the film. The stage version manages to do this by keeping the plot and original vision of the film intact, but playing a bit more into the comedy side of the film. Though there were a lot of jokes in the film originally, it was also a murder mystery and kept suspense and tension throughout the story, making things feel more serious. The Kennedy Center production does the opposite, with the dramatic aspect of this version of the murder mystery taking a back seat to the comedy, which has more of a focus.

One scene that shows this perfectly is the ending. The movie plays into the aspect of the game having completely different endings each time you play, with there being three different endings to the movie, with three different murderers. The different endings of the movie version are shown in quick succession and broken up by title cards. Obviously, because it's a live stage performance, the play could not do this the same way. Instead, the play has the characters go around accusing each other. When the killer is "found", they say "This is how it really happened!" Then we see the next scenario of that character being the killer. The twists and turns at the end of the stage version were more humorous in my opinion.

One difference with the Kennedy Center production I liked is how the costume design fully went with the color theming with each character just like in the original game. Even Mr. Green, who didn't have his outfit very clearly themed off his name like everyone else, still had the little detail of green socks added in. One other thing I liked was how the play leaned into slapstick for a lot of the jokes, which was executed perfectly and also fit with the time period the film is set in.

All in all, Clue, the movie, made the jump from board game to film flawlessly and created a plot that remained connected to the original board game that typically lasts around thirty minutes, while spanning across an hour and a half run time without feeling like it was dragging or going too fast. Meanwhile, Clue, Live on Stage, manages to bring the film to life on stage without feeling too derivative of the source material and provides its spin on the story while maintaining the same plot. Both productions create an engaging murder mystery, with comedy and suspense, as all murder mysteries should, even if they are based on a board game from the 1940s.

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## FINDING NEMO JR. COMING TO THE WOODS SPRING '25

Get ready to dive under the sea! The Woods Academy's seventh and eighth graders will bring *Finding Nemo Jr.* to life on stage. Join us this spring for a journey with Marlin, Dory, and Nemo as they encounter colorful characters and unforgettable adventures in the ocean. Students will dive into every aspect of production, from learning lines and songs to building sets. In fact, they are already hard at work preparing for what promises to be a heartwarming, exciting performance full of music, laughter, and fun.

Seventh-grader Maeve M. said, "Practicing singing and acting with my friends is always so fun and exciting."

Classmate Tess Hugo added, "Being with my friends and teachers has been such a great experience, and I can't wait to have some more fun!"

