

# the Maury Messenger

Monthly Newsletter of the Parent / Teacher Association

Home of the Cougars



March 2016

## WHAT'S INSIDE

### Celebrating the Year of the Monkey at Maury Elementary

By Mrs. Q. Wang, Chinese Language Instructor and Mrs. L. Marks, Library Media Specialist

A banner draped above the office window told us it was the Year of the Monkey. The school hall was lined with colorful Chinese lanterns that the students made, while families, friends, and visitors were greeted in the lobby by the beautiful red silk lanterns from China.

Students practiced their songs and dances with Ms. Wang for months, anticipating this celebration. Yet nothing prepared us for the beauty and color of the afternoon's performance!



Fan Dance, grades 4 and 5



Red Ribbon Dance, grades 2 and 3

Maury certainly has talented students!

Then there was the sound of the taiko drums, welcoming the Chinese dragons to greet the New Year. In China, the dragon is the symbol of good luck. Good luck, indeed, as Maury Elementary was named the Confucius Class and received a plaque from George Mason University Confucius Institute.

Xin Nian Kuai Le!

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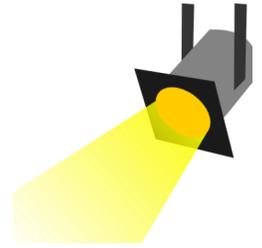


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# Spotlight on Instruction



## Reading Fluency Matters!

By MaryEllen Macek, Reading Teacher

This year, our school has been focusing on reading fluency; in fact, it's one of our goals with Chancellor Henderson! Teachers in 2nd through 5th grades have been monitoring students' oral reading to measure the rates at which readers read with accuracy, intonation, and meaningful phrasing. Fluency matters because it measures students' abilities to recognize words automatically. When students are reading slowly, it compromises their accuracy, fluency, and comprehension; this may indicate that students are reading books that are too challenging. If students are reading fluently, they can focus their brain power on understanding what the story means and advance to more challenging texts.

Teachers are assessing students' oral reading in words per minute. Here are the end of the year expectations for 2nd through 5th grade:

Grade	End Of Year Words Per Minute Range
2	75 - 110 wpm
3	90 - 140 wpm
4	110 - 150 wpm
5	130 - 165 wpm

At Maury, we are so fortunate to have teachers that share the mentality that the students belong to all of us. Our very talented Specials Team are collaborating with me and classroom teachers to support students in increasing their oral reading rates. Students have opportunities to read with our Specials Team one-on-one where they model fluent reading and receive immediate feedback on their efforts. Both parties are developing close relationships outside of instructional time and students enjoy having another adult on their team. We are seeing such improvement among students as they are growing into more confident and fluent readers!

What can you do to support your child's fluency at home? There are SO many easy and quick supports you can put in place:

- Model fluent reading for your child by reading orally before bedtime. Be sure to read with expression. Make it fun by changing voices for different characters! Have your child join!
- Practice fluent reading with books that are easy to read. Your child should not struggle to read; if he/she has errors with more than 3-5 words on the page, the book is too hard!
- Re-read books that your child is familiar with! Start with you reading one page, then your child. Gradually release more reading to your child on future reads.
- Pair your child's book with an audio-recording. He/she benefits from listening to fluent reading while following along in his/her own text.



## Maury Cheerleaders Take First Place

By Ericka Busey

The Maury Cheerleaders have done it again! The courageous COUGARS won first place at the Flowers High School Invitational on February 19, and again at the Bowie Cheerstarz Cheerleading Competition on March 5.

On the next competition date, we will need all of our fellow Cougars to show support! It will be held at Coolidge High School at 11am on March 12. This is the DCIAA Championship and is the most important competition of the year.

Please come out and show your support!



## The Cougars are the Fastest Things on Two Skis!

By Lauren Bomba

Add the 2016 Ski Team to the list of exceptional athletes roaming the halls of Maury Elementary this school year. On Friday March 4, our dynamic competition ski team, made up of eight 4th and 5th grade students who demonstrated the best in academics, athletics and character, took home the DCIAA Elementary Division Championship for the third year in a row. The competition was held at Liberty Mountain Resort in Fairfield, Pennsylvania.



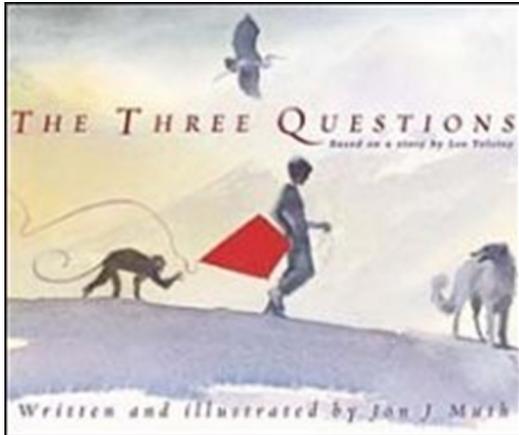
What began as a robust Maury ski club comprised of approximately 40 student participants was later whittled down to a 20 person semi-finalist team, and then narrowed further to comprise a team of 8 elite, championship skiers. Maury Elementary took first place this year with gold medals in beginner, intermediate, and novice categories. In addition, many others placed finishes that contributed to our overall score.

Mrs. Cooper and Ms. Bomba beamed with pride as many Maury Alum assisted our pals at Stuart Hobson with earning a first place finish for Middle School. School without Walls took home the High School Championship.

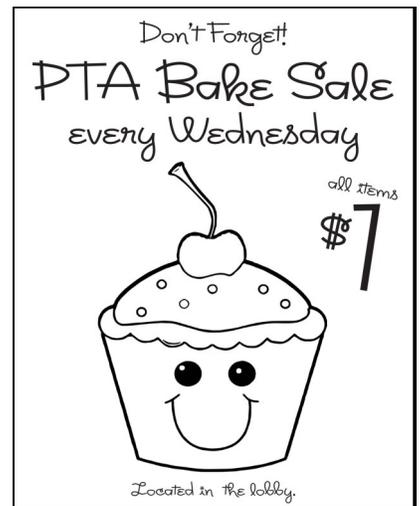
Ms. Bomba and Mrs. Cooper would like to thank our fantastic parents, teachers, and principal for their constant support in ensuring that this Maury tradition lives on each year. Congratulate the following students next time you see them for completing a fantastic ski season: Malia Weedon, Hazel Wartchow, Bryce Griffin, Owen Stamper, Daniel McFarlane, Aiden Herron, Max Genderson, and Josh Simpson!

## Principal's Book of the Month

What is the best time to do things? Who is the most important one? What is the right thing to do? Nikolai knows that he wants to be the best person he can be, but often he is unsure if he is doing the right thing.



So he goes to ask Leo, the wise turtle. When he arrives, the turtle is struggling to dig in his garden, and Nikolai rushes to help him. As he finishes work, a violent storm rolls in. Nikolai runs for Leo's cottage, but on his way, he hears cries for help from an injured panda. Nikolai brings her in from the cold, and then rushes back outside to rescue her baby too.



## Upcoming Events

### March

- 12 DCIAA Cheerleading Championship, Coolidge High School, 11am
- 13 Maury Rock N Roar, Red Rocks, 10:30am
- 17 PTA meeting, 6pm
- 18-25 Maury Spring Book Fair
- 19 Maury at the Market, 7:00-10:00pm
- 23 Whole School Morning Meeting, 9:30am
- 24 Mathademics, 6:00pm
- 28-31 Spring break, no school for students and teacher. Polite Piggy's available.

### April

- 1 Spring break, no school for students and teacher. Polite Piggy's available.
- 8 End of term, early dismissal at 12:15pm. Polite Piggy's available.

### SAVE THE DATE!

### June

- 14 5th Grade Promotion, 9:30am
- 15 Kindergarten Celebration, 10:00am

