



THE MAGNOLIA SCHOOL

MONTHLY ROUNDUP

<https://magnolia.ocps.net/>

SEASONS GREETINGS

We hope you and yours are staying nice and cozy as we enter the heart of winter in Florida! This year has been such a tremendous one, and we are so glad to have shared it with you! To our Bridges students and families exiting the program, we celebrate your time with us and wish you the best success in the future! To all of our current and former Magnolia Mustangs

and families, we wish you a warm and safe holiday season. We thank you for an amazing Fall semester, and we can't wait to see what 2024 has in store for us all! On behalf of Magnolia School, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!



UPCOMING DATES

- Students Return to School - Jan. 9
- MLKJ Holiday (No School) - Jan. 15
- Middle/High School Field Trip - Jan. 19
- Literacy Week - Jan. 22-26
- 100th Day of School Jamboree - Jan. 24
- Student Recognition Ceremony - Jan. 31

P.T.A CORRAL

Welcome to the PTA Corral! Here you can receive PTA highlights each month. You can also learn about organizations that provide services for our students that they can use either now or after leaving Magnolia School. Do you know of such organizations? If so, please send us their name, website (if applicable) and any information you have about them so that we can share it with all of our Magnolia families! We hope you find this space useful and insightful!

Steve Franzel, President
stevenfranzel@gmail.com

PTA MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Special thanks to contributing to our two Fall fund drives:

- Spooky Stroll and Roll-A-Thon earned us \$828
- Papa John's Nifty 50 Cards earned us \$740

Our PTA now has 19 members (11 parents/guardians and 8 staff), and we thank you for joining! Not a member yet? Scan the QR code and join today!



USEFUL RESOURCES

This month, we would like to share information on the following resources: Autism Dads of Greater Orlando, Edumatics Exceptional Living, and Recognizing Abilities and Inclusion of Special Employees (RAISE)!

AUTISM DADS OF GREATER ORLANDO

This is a Facebook group of ~500 Dads for camaraderie and exchanging information about problems we are encountering with our kids, how to solve them, organizations providing services, etc. They also meet at a different bar or restaurant once per month. Go to "Autism Dads of Greater Orlando" on Facebook to join the group (linked in the title)!

RAISE

RAISE is a work and social skills training program for adults with disabilities who are seeking employment and face challenges finding work.

Offered by Shalom Orlando, RAISE collaborates with 16 partnering locations and engages 1:1 volunteer job coaches to provide paid employment at each of these locations. In addition, RAISE offers guidance to help participants transition to jobs in the community. For more information, see the RAISE website (linked in the title)!

EDUMATICS

Edumatics Exceptional Living Adult Day Program for Persons with Disabilities offers:

- Daily living & self-sufficiency skills
- Age & culturally appropriate programs
- Cultivation of well-rounded individuals
- Building self-esteem while matriculating individuals to become fiscally responsible citizens in today's society

Students will learn: social and life skills training, computer training, job training and placement assistance, and soft skills training. Transportation is provided in Orange, Seminole, and Lake Counties.

Contact them at: adt@edumaticsprogram.com



TACK AND GEAR

HOLIDAY TIPS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Holidays should be fun, right? However, for some children, the holiday season can be challenging. Sometimes being off schedule can be difficult for children. The noise and activity can be overwhelming for many. For children on the autism spectrum, the holiday can be particularly confusing and over-stimulating. With a little preparation and thought the holidays can not only be a joyous time, but the season can also provide a magical opportunity for many teachable moments. These holiday tips for parents of children with special needs can help make your holidays go smoothly. This page contains affiliate links. Please visit our [disclosure page](#) for more information.

GET YOUR CHILD INVOLVED IN DECORATING

- Get your child involved in the decorations. Do an art project so that they can feel some ownership over the decorations.
- If your child is resistant to change, decorate gradually, involve your child in adding something new a day at a time.
- Be aware of your child's sensitivities: flashing lights or musical decorations may either bother them or cause them to become distracted or hyper-focused on the lights or sounds.

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE A PROBLEM OPENING GIFTS?

- If your child is likely to open the presents before it is time to exchange gifts then you can try a few things: Wait before putting them out. Make a guessing game about what is inside the gifts: Have everybody write down their guesses and put them in a nicely wrapped box. The person who can wait, and has guessed correctly the most can win a prize. Write a social story or a schedule about when to open gifts.
- Come up with your own system (tradition) for opening gifts. Maybe you draw names, take turns, pass an ornament around to show who's turn it is to open the gift. You can practice this by playing pretend gift giving with your stuffed animals. This is also an opportunity for a social skills lesson. After the holiday, have a discussion about the gifts, talk about who gave it and why. Encourage gratitude and appreciation for the gift giver. Write thank you cards.
- Before the holiday have your child come up with their own gift ideas for the important people in their lives.

TURN SHOPPING INTO A SOCIAL SKILLS ACTIVITY

- Holiday shopping can be stressful for all of us. If you decide to take your child with you, keep the shopping trip short. Write out a list or schedule of where you are going and what to expect.
- Holiday shopping is supposed to be about thinking of others. Turn this into a social skills activity; have the child think about the person that is getting the gift. What would they like? Why?

REDUCE SENSORY OVERLOAD AND PLAYTIME

- Don't expect your child to open all their gifts at once, it may be easier for them to process and enjoy if you go more slowly.
- It can be difficult to share, be sure that you discuss this prior to the holiday and come up with clear rules and expectation.
- Give your child the opportunity to have some calm down time. Take sensory breaks, allow time for solitude and quiet.

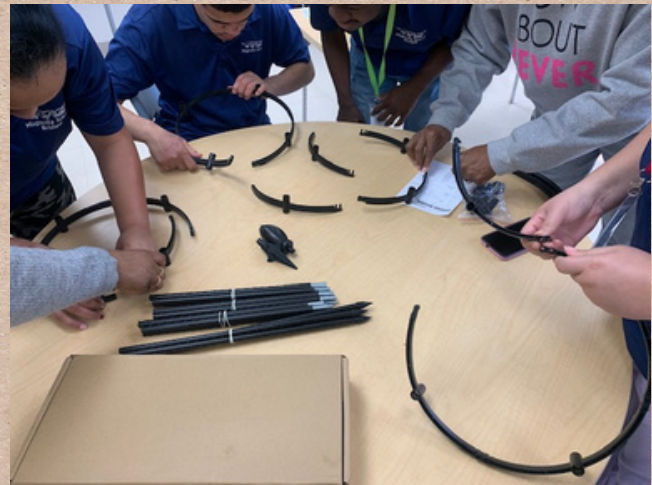
FAMILY ROUTINES

- Minimize disruptions to established routines and support positive behavior when disruptions are inevitable.
- Use behavior support strategies whenever you change the schedule. Warn the child before a change is made. Keep a visual schedule. Remind the child of what it means to be flexible. Try to keep the child's basic schedule, such as bedtime routine's, etc. Write a social story.

SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES

PROFESSIONAL DAY

We'd be remised if we didn't share our Mustangs in their dapper professional wear for Professional Day in November! Ms. Kaufman-Long's and Mr. Forgue Green's students were dressed for success!



HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Ms. Dufour's class is supporting Magnolia's Green initiatives every day. Here, the students are building a *trellis obelisk*, a structure used for vining plants.



SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES

WORKIN' AT THE CAR WASH!

Ms. Valentin's and Ms. Kaufman-Long's students were sudsing up at Magnolia's Car Wash! Several staff vehicles left the lot gleaming this day! Thank you, Mustangs, for your hard work and effort!



ALL ABOARD!

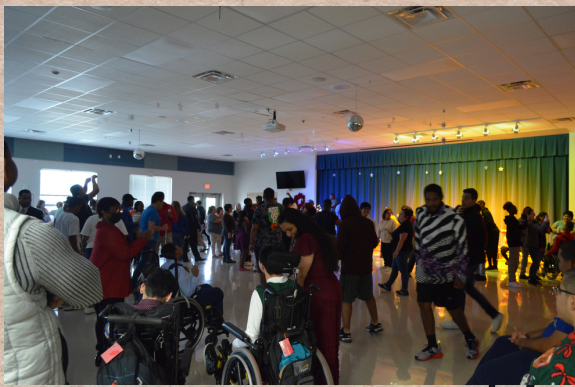
Ms. Kaufman-Long's and Ms. Wilkin's class visited the Central Florida Railroad Museum in Winter Garden! Our Mustangs are always learning and growing in new and exciting ways!



SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES

WINTER FORMAL 2023

We dreamed of a winter wonderland and amazing music! Our Mustangs partied hearty at our first Winter Formal dance! They were dressed to the nines and a holly jolly time was had by all!



SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES

MAGNOLIA SOCIAL CLUB

Magnolia Social Club will be saying goodbye to four Members: Reuben Udokwu, Jacob Young, Joshlet Alusma and Venroy Gentles. We will miss them and wish them much success!

M.S.C.



GOING, GROWING, AND GLOWING GREEN!

Our Mustangs may be few, but we are certainly mighty! Magnolia School is the TOP composting school in the Orange County School District with a rate of 17.13 lbs composted per student. Considering the second place school was at 12.16 lbs, our Mustangs are way ahead of the game! Magnolia's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability is championed by our Garden Club. Way to go, Mustangs!

SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES

THE GIFT OF GIVING

Special thanks to Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation for sponsoring a holiday gift giveaway for our Magnolia Students. Our students were able to get a little something for the holidays! Special thanks to Ms. Allen and Ms. Seabrook for coordinating and hosting this special event!



SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES

WINTER CONCERT 2023

Our students performed their hearts out at our Winter Concert! Special thanks to the staff members who supported our students and decorated the stage. Thank you, Mr. Mitchell Louis, for preparing and executing yet another smashing show!



SHOUTOUTS FROM THE STABLES



EXITING BRIDGES STUDENTS

Our Bridges students are so very near and dear to hearts. We want to congratulate the following students for completing the Bridges Program and moving on to future endeavors: Jeremy Alfano, Arian Cabrera, Venroy Gentles, Joshua Ochoa, Reuben Udokwu, and Jacob Young. Congratulations to Joshlet Alusma, who has been promoted to Post High Transitions. You all are mighty, magnificent Mustangs, and we are so proud of you!

