

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:

Protect and Serve |
Day

Rock-n-Read-a- 2
Thon

Spotlight on Sci- 2
ence

Upcoming Events

School Re- Jan. 2
sumes

Semester Jan. 9
Ends

MLK Day Jan. 21

*Martha Gaskins Mission
Statement*

The mission of Martha Gaskins Middle School is to provide a learning environment in which students are motivated both academically and socially to become model citizens prepared to compete in a global community.

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Protect and Serve Day

By Dasia Key, Dekiya Bennett, and Connie Clarke

On Tuesday, November 13, several officers from the Birmingham Police Department made their way to Martha Gaskins Middle School to talk with the students. The topics covered ranged from discussing laws and what it means to enforce them to the importance of students getting an education in order to accomplish their goals in life. Several students spoke about their question and answer session with the officers.

“On Protect and Serve Day at Martha Gaskins Middle School, students were taught the basic rules and steps to follow in order to reach their goals,” Dasia Key stated. “The officers taught us about the importance of laws and how to follow them. It made a major impact on the student body. Understanding this will help us [the students] to do better and give us a mind to stay out of trouble.”

Dasia went on to say, “We were taught that the police are



Officers came from the Birmingham City Police Department to talk to students at Martha Gaskins.

here for our safety and nor for our harm. If there weren't police officers in our cities, communities, and states, we wouldn't be safe at all. Detective Ross also said that in order to reach any goal you would like, an education is required.”

Dekiya Bennett revealed her experience talking with

Lieutenant Blackwell. “Lieutenant Blackwell talked about peer pressure,” Dekiya expressed. “Peer pressure is when someone influences another person to do what they want to do. We learned that there are two different kinds of peer pressure: good peer pressure and bad peer pressure. I enjoyed talking to Lieutenant Blackwell about her job and what she does every day.”

Finally, Connie Clarke spoke on her experience on Protect and Serve Day. “Officer Shelton came to our classroom and was so nice to my class and me. He told us that he just wanted us to ask him questions, and he would answer them. We asked him who the youngest person he ever arrested was. He told us that he had arrested a 12-year-old boy that tried to run from him when he was being questioned. He explained to us that if the boy had just cooperated, he would not have had to be taken to the police station at all. I really enjoyed learning about the officers and what they do every day to protect us.”

Rock-n-Read-a-Thon

By Na'shayla Peebles, Alma Chimal, and Dakota Martinez



Ms. Hunter-Smith reads to a group of Martha Gaskins students for the Rock-n-Read-a-Thon

On Friday, November 16, Martha Gaskins Middle School hosted its first annual Rock-n-Read-a-Thon. This event featured four different readers placed throughout the school that “rocked” and “read” to our students. For three hours, each grade level rotated through the different reading stations and enjoyed various books from different genres. Each station featured a different theme for the students to enjoy. The sixth grade hall

had a superhero theme, seventh grade hall featured the story *Hatchet*, eighth grade hall presented different versions of the story *Cinderella* from around the world, and the PE hall highlighted different professional basketball athletes.

Na'shayla Peebles told about her experience at the Rock-n-Read-a-Thon. “The Rock-n-Read-a-Thon was a ball! We got to visit different halls and meet different people.

Those people read a book of their choice to the students. Ms.

Hunter-Smith read one of my favorite books, *Iron Man*; it was mighty funny but very interesting.”

“The Rock-n-Read-a-Thon was very fun because we got to hear all types of stories.” Alma Chimal explained. “One of my favorite books that we heard was *The Talking Eggs*. I personally thought it was interesting but at the same time, exciting!” Alma went on to say, “I thought that the Rock-n-Read-a-Thon was a great activity for students and teachers. I’m thinking we should have a second one pretty soon.”

“Our Rock-n-Read-a-Thon was great because we had a wide variety of books that were being read to us,” said Dakota Martinez. “*The Amazing Hulk* and *Hatchet* were great books! It was terrific for the students to take a break from working and have some time to read. My favorite book was the *Cinderella* book because it was odd. It was odd because Cinderella was rich, but in this other story, the Cinderella was poor and became rich from some eggs an old woman gave her.”

Talking about another book that was read, Dakota expressed, “We also had a lot of fun learning about Kobe Bryant and LeBron James. There were a lot of interesting facts about these two athletes that I didn’t know before.”

Overall, the students of Martha Gaskins Middle School seemed happy to participate in such a fun-filled event. “We need to have it again because I think other students enjoyed being read to,” Dakota declared. “I was really unhappy when we didn’t get to finish some of the more interesting books, but it is all good because that is why we have a library.”

Spotlight on Science

By Kobe Green



The Spotlight on Science is a very exciting event! During Spotlight on Science event, students take part in many different experiments. The experiments are fun, exciting, and

they teach us things we don’t know. I learned how chemicals react and many other things. Spotlight on Science is very educational and entertaining.

One experiment we did during the Spotlight on Science event was taking

a bottle of Diet Coca-Cola, Poprocks candy, and a balloon. First, we put Poprocks into a balloon. Next, we put the balloon around the rim of the Coca-Cola bottle. Lastly, we dropped the Poprocks into the Coca-Cola. When the Poprocks went into the Coca-Cola, it triggered a chemical reaction. The Coca-Cola started to bubble and create a gas. The gas eventually blew up the balloon. It was a pretty interesting experiment that a lot of the students seemed to like. I enjoyed the Spotlight on Science event, and I hope that other students were able to learn something from our demonstrations.



These students are learning how tornadoes are formed by placing two bottles together with liquid inside to show what a tornado vortex looks like.