

Fuquay-Varina Independent (NC)

Gingerbread LittleVersity students attend a tea party

LIFE IN FUQUAY

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On May 11, **Gingerbread LittleVersity** in Fuquay-Varina, N. C. hosted its first **Gingerbread Tea Party and Etiquette Class** in the Soiree Room at The Shoppes on Main. Kelli Ketner, executive director of **Gingerbread LittleVersity** and Judy Montague, marketing director for The Shoppes on Main, hosted the event. The **Gingerbread Tea Party and Etiquette Class** was planned to introduce children to the educational and social benefits gained by taking part in etiquette education. Forty-one rising kindergarteners participated in the morning of education, tea sandwiches and activities. All participants at the tea party were between the ages of 4 and 5 years old. Ketner began the tea by welcoming the guests to the event before Libby Crumpton, owner and founder of **Gingerbread LittleVersity**, taught the children the timeless rules of etiquette at a tea party. Crumpton, known as Izzy to the children, started with the "rules" of the table. Napkins remain on your lap and always use "The Magic Words", please and thank you, are the first points the children went over. If there is a tea treat presented and you don't want one, it is well-mannered to say "No thank you. I don't care for any", not "I don't like that." Look first, and then place only one of each item on your plate. If you touch, you take. And last of all, there are NO slurping sounds at a tea! "It's remarkable how well behaved children will act when at a tea table when they have been taught and know what is anticipated of them." Crumpton said. After only a few minutes of manners, the young participants returned to the tea party enthusiastic to show lessons learned in proper table etiquette. The children also played etiquette trivia game conducted by Shannon Page, general manager of **Gingerbread LittleVersity**. The afternoon concluded with each apprentice receiving an etiquette lesson certificate of completion. "Practicing social etiquette, manners and grace is essential in embracing self-confidence and communication skills that promote social and academic accomplishments throughout their life time." Ketner said. At the conclusion of the tea and class, Ms. Ketner announced plans to organize an annual spring tea party for the pre-K children at **Gingerbread LittleVersity** to get their first formal experiences in etiquette education.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO Miss Jennifer Abernathy, daughter of Jim and Rhonda Abernathy of Fuquay-Varina, watches as Izzy Crumpton pours her a cup of tea.

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