



Tuesday Scoop

Shepherd Elementary School, Washington, DC

<http://www.shepherd-elementary.org>

Editor: Kimberly Brandon

September 11, 2007

From Principal Robinson

On behalf of the Shepherd staff, I welcome each and every one of you to the Shepherd ES family. This school year we have entered our newly updated facility, welcomed many new staff members, and enlarged our student population with new faces. All of these changes were possible due to the commitment and hard work of parents, staff, and community as well as help from the Mayor, DC Council members, and DCPS officials. **Welcome! Bienvenue! Bienvenidos! Thanks! Merci! Gracias!** *Special kudos to Mr. Riddley and his team!!!*

We are recommitted to our vision of increasing excellence. As you all know, we did make AYP (Annual Yearly Progress by No Child Left Behind standards); however, our goal is to improve and raise our scores in all areas. I welcome all parents and community members to work with me and the Shepherd staff to promote academic excellence in every classroom, bringing support, resources, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude.

Teachers, administrators, and staff are collaborating to articulate growth goals in all disciplines, creating a learning environment that promotes meaningful student dialogue around literacy. All teachers are integrating content areas across the curriculum, and strategizing ways to better incorporate the arts, languages, and physical education.

Parent-Teacher conferences are key opportunities to identify and address specific student strengths and areas of needed growth. Because they are so important in planning and implementing differentiated instruction, 100% parent participation is expected for every class.

This school year is already filled with excitement and enthusiasm. A change is truly in the air! Thanks go out to our new Chancellor and new Mayor, but also to our committed staff, parents, children and community.

~Dan Robinson, Principal



Daniel Robinson, Principal



June Confer, Business Manager

From the PTA

Shepherd PTA welcomes you to the 2007-2008 school year! There were lots of great things that happened over the summer. A special thanks to everyone that helped make that happen. If you haven't already, be sure to

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NOTE: **Back to School Night** will be held Wednesday, **September 19th** from 6:45 to 8:30 p.m.

Coaches Needed for Robotics Program

For the second year, Shepherd Elementary parents are organizing teams to participate in an extra-curricular robotics program designed to stimulate children's interest in science. The **FIRST Lego League (FLL)** and the **Junior FIRST Lego League (JFLL)** are operated by the non-profit organization FIRST, "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology".

FIRST was founded by the creator of the Segway Human Transporter machine that tourists and local police use on city streets. The organization introduces children to science and technology through hands-on experiences with robotics.

The **JFLL is designed for kids 6 to 9 years old** and is based on a modification of the robotics competition FIRST operates for older children and teens. Using an open-ended LEGO building set, the children will design a model depicting an aspect of this year's "Nano Quest" Challenge, designed to explore the world of cutting-edge nanotechnology. Children will spend several months exploring, investigating,

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Shepherd's 2nd Annual Fall Fest!

Join us on the school grounds for fun, food, and much more on Saturday, **September 29th** (rain date: September 30). From 11 am to 4 pm, we will celebrate the beginning of a new school year and welcome cooler autumn weather with a moon bounce, face painting, raffles, delicious funnel cakes and other treats, along with games and crafts for all ages. It is a great time to meet other families and teachers and to support our school. **Each class will be asked to sponsor a game, craft or activity. Volunteers are needed to prepare and serve food, coordinate activities, and to sell and collect tickets.** For information and to volunteer, contact John Folger at jmf613@hotmail.com, (c) 202-321-2642, (h) 202-722-4508. *This is our first fund raiser of the year, so please help to make it a big success!*

--Alex Kincannon

>>> From the PTA, continued from page 1

check out the physical changes around Shepherd as you drop your children off or pick them up. A lot of these changes could not have happened without the donation of time, muscle, and ideas from a lot of parents and community volunteers.

For the coming year there are lots of activities and events in store. **Please join in, sign up, and take an active part in your child's education and school!** Join the PTA at www.shepherd-elementary.org and click on "Donations" to complete a membership application online. All SES families are strongly encouraged to join the PTA. For only \$50 per family, parents, teachers and students receive an incredible return on their investment. It is a wonderful way to get to know the other great families in our school community. In addition, it serves as vehicle for you to voice your opinion and vote on important issues affecting your child's learning environment.

Join us for the Back to School Night on September 19 at 6:45pm in the auditorium.

Come learn about our programs and goals for the year and activities for the students. Come meet PTA officers and other Shepherd families, and get your questions about the coming school year answered. See you there!

~Nayada Cowherd, Corresponding Secretary

New Windows

Installation of new windows throughout the school has begun. Careful checking for possible lead or asbestos contamination is being done. Windows are being removed at night and replaced the following day to lessen classroom disruption. We hope that this task will be completed by early November.

DC CAS TEST RESULTS

Parents in grades 4-6 will receive last spring's test results by mail in the next few days. Any questions concerning these results should be addressed to the new counselor, Ms. Gail Liggins, or your child's teacher.

>> MARK YOUR CALENDAR <<

- September 14 Volunteer coaches needed for FLL and JFLL robotics teams.
- September 19 Back to School Night, for Pre-K thru 6th grade families.
- September 29 Fall Fest, fair & fundraiser

Planting Party will make SES Blossom

The PTA's **Building & Grounds Committee** is currently focused on improving the landscaping around our school. Frank Borris heads the group and plans to put the recent **donation from the Shepherd Park Citizens' Association** to good use by adding some new plantings this fall.

Frank has taken pictures and measurements of the campus and visited Meadows Farms last weekend to take advantage of their free landscaping consulting. He has asked them for selections that will add some much needed color and texture, but requiring as little maintenance as possible. The committee will start planting some shrubs on September 8th with more to follow in 2 week increments.

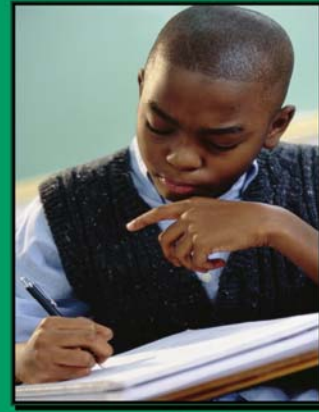
Frank says, "We will not simply stick plants in the ground. Rather, we will take our time and properly prepare the planters (removing clay and adding fertile soil) to ensure our shrubs and trees have the best opportunity to thrive. The plan is to start with the two areas on either side of the entrance to the old wing at Kalmia and 14th."

Most importantly, plots will be identified so a family, individual, or organization can adopt clearly defined area in which to plant. Adopting a plot is a commitment to maintain the planting area to include basic maintenance such as watering, aerating, weeding, mulching, trimming, and any other services appropriate.

To help with beautification efforts, send a message to Frank.Borris@dot.gov, or drop a note to Frank in the PTA mailbox in the main office. Look for more information about adopting a plot in future issues of the newsletter.

--Alex Kincannon

He's Ready to Do His Part...



Are You?

The Shepherd Elementary PTA needs **You**
Do Your Part for Him
and get involved. Your support will provide our children and teachers with the resources they need to be successful.

Do Your Part...Join Today!

UPDATE: Classroom Clean-Up & Beautification

For our returning families, you may recall in our last Scoop issue in June, we called on you to assist with all aspects of the classroom moves. Thank you to those families who brought in boxes and supplies for the teachers. Initially, the school and PTA had anticipated only three days were needed (June 16, 23, and July 11) to move the teachers into their new classroom locations. But as we looked in closets, dug around classrooms, and ventured into the basement, we quickly learned that the task was actually quite enormous and needed to be tackled immediately.

Messages were sent by word of mouth and email to enlist the help of parents and the community throughout the summer months to complete the long-overdue clean-up and make-over. This initiative ran in parallel to the professional renovations being implemented both inside and outside by vendors hired by DCPS. Several volunteers were here daily, some came every weekend, and others dropped by to lend a hand whenever they could. It was a long summer!

Now, as you walk around the school this week, we hope you'll find these changes have improved the

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>>> *Robotics Program, cont'd from page 2*

Children will spend several months exploring, investigating, designing and building a model made with LEGO bricks. In conjunction, teams create a "Show Me" poster that depicts the teams' experience during this process, through drawings and words.

JFLL introduces children to the concepts of teamwork and basic design skills, creating an initial interest and hands-on approach to science and technology through the familiarity and fun of LEGO building. The goal is to provide an experience that will begin to transform youngsters and open their eyes to the possibilities of improving the world around them through acknowledgement, thought, planning and technology.

This year, Shepherd will form one JFLL team and operate at least one **FLL team for children over the age of 9**. Both teams will do the same thing, but FLL team will use a more complex robot building kit and can attend **regional competitions** with other teams.

This year's theme is "Power Puzzle." How do our personal energy choices to heat our homes, fuel our cars, charge our cell phones, power our computers, or even download music to our iPods impact the environment, economy, and life around the globe? Which resources should we use and why? Teams will explore how energy production and consumption choices affect the planet and our quality of life today, tomorrow, and for future generations.

At the moment we have 3 coaches from last year, but we need more. If you are able to volunteer for 2-3 set hours a week until December and would be willing to attend showcases and competitions in DC or the Mid-Atlantic area in early 2008, PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO COACH!

Knowledge of science or technology is not required but is helpful. You may decide when your team will meet. We expect that teams will be able to meet at the school after class hours. We also need one parent to assist each coach.

If you are interested in coaching or assisting a coach, please email Kristin Wells at kdwells66@yahoo.com by next Friday, September 14th. Thank you very much!

>>> *Classroom Clean-Up, cont'd from page 3*

school all around. Some improvements are less obvious than others. But, the bottom line is we could not walk into our newly cleaned, organized, and brightened Shepherd Elementary School without the coordinated efforts of many, many volunteers. ***A HUGE THANKS to all of the volunteers who gave their time and energies to make SES a better place for our teachers and children!***

COMMUNITY CORNER:

DPR Fall 2007 activity guide now available

The DC Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) Fall 2007 guide features activities and events for children, teens, adults, families and seniors, as well as specialized programs for people with disabilities.

In addition to the traditional athletic and recreational fall programming, DPR is now offering some new classes this season including Clowning Around, a clown college for youth ages 13 to 16; Hand Dance Instruction for Young Men, where students will learn the techniques of hand dancing; Children's Theatre, where participants will be taught acting skills and will perform throughout the city; and Silvah Sistahs, a performing arts troupe for active seniors, ages 55 and older.

Most programs are FREE to DC residents, plus scholarships are available for all fee-based programs. To register for any program, please visit or contact your local recreation center; or go to http://dpr.dc.gov/dpr/frames.asp?doc=/dpr/lib/dpr/services/pdf/2007_fall_guide.pdf

*The next Tuesday Scoop is scheduled for September 18. The editor will be **Kimberly Brandon**. Submissions should be emailed by 3:30pm on Friday, September 14 to brandonsdc@hotmail.com, or placed in the mail drawer in the Parent's lounge across from the main office.*