



Tuesday Scoop

Shepherd Elementary School, Washington, DC

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

Editor: Celeste Moneme

January 23, 2008

From the Interim Principal

I hope that all of you had a good Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. Dr. King, through his words and deeds, shared his dream for America. We work with the children of Shepherd every day to help them realize their dreams, to grow as learners and as people. We, and you, are called to be models of cooperation and hard work.

Parent involvement is central to making our school work. We need to work together toward the common goal of helping each child reach his/her potential. We ask you to support the school program, to raise your concerns, to share your resources, and to be present for the teachers and children to enrich the curriculum where your expertise indicates and opportunities arise.

~Dr. John Sparrow

Note: We are trying very hard to get a long term substitute in Ms. Kinsler's first grade class for the French periods. If you know of anyone who has a degree, speaks fluent French, and is willing to come in the afternoons to teach French as a DCPS substitute, let me know. If you have any French materials to share with these enthusiastic learners, please bring them in to Room 103. Thank you!

>> MARK YOUR CALENDAR <<

January 25	Early Dismissal
January 29	Volunteer Registration, 9:30 a.m.-noon
February 13	World Music Program
February 18	President's Day (No school)
February 29	Parent Conference Day (No School)

From the PTA

PTA Listserv Membership is Growing

In a previous issue of the Scoop, we explained the various ways to join the PTA Listserv. Our online membership has grown significantly over the past several weeks which has increased the volume of communications that are being posted there. Don't miss out! The Tuesday Scoop brings you important weekly notices, but the Listserv provides a forum for important Q&A and open discussion of various topics well before the next Scoop can be published.

If you need instructions on how to join, read the 12/18/07 Scoop or send a blank email message to Shepherd_Elementary_PTA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. If you are already a member, don't forget there are three ways to receive messages: *Individual Emails* (every posted message comes to you as a separate email), *Daily Digest* (receive one email per day that contains all the messages posted), or *No Email* (no messages are sent to you, but you can read them at any time on the group webpage at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/shepherd_elementary_pta/).

If you need to edit how you receive Listserv updates, just go to your Yahoo "Groups" page, open the Shepherd Elementary PTA Listserv, and click "Edit Membership" at the very top. If you have any questions, please call Alexandra Kincannon at 202-541-9440.

More From the PTA

PTA Membership Tops 100!

The Shepherd Elementary PTA now has 101 dues-paying members. And 54 of those families have contributed to the Family Enrichment Fee. You can always join the PTA, regardless of when it is during the school year. Go to the school office for an application.

Auction Effort Kicks Off

If you haven't been to one of Shepherd Elementary's annual auctions, you don't want to miss this one. Even if you've been to all of them, this year's auction is going to be something to remember. Save the date: **Friday, May 16 at 7 p.m., at Howard University's Blackburn Center.** Your hosts will be the husband-and-wife local-media-mogul team of Allison Seymour, co-host of the "Fox 5 Morning News" on WTTG (Channel 5), and Marc Clarke, host-ringleader of the "Marc Clarke and the Big Phat Morning Show" on WERQ, 92.3 FM. Stay tuned for more details.

Volunteering at Shepherd Requires Application

In an effort to safeguard our children, DCPS now requires anyone who wishes to interact with students—whether it is to read a story, help during recess, or assist in the classroom—must now fill out a Volunteer Application form. The application process includes providing references, getting a TB test, and getting fingerprinted by DCPS for a criminal background check. Parents can download the application from the DCPS website at: <http://www.k12.dc.us/offices/ospp/volunteers.htm> or they can get one from Mrs. Brooks in the main office. Since all parents are expected to visit or assist in the classroom one or more times during the school year, we encourage all parents to complete a form.

~Alex Kincannon

Please Note: A DCPS representative is scheduled to visit Shepherd to register and fingerprint volunteers on **Tuesday, Jan. 29 from 9:30 a.m. until noon in the auditorium.**

LSRT Initiatives

Can You Hear Me Now?

Look for Shepherd Elementary teachers to be outfitted with walkie-talkies. It's an initiative from the Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT) in an effort to put a damper on classroom disruption.

Awards Season to Start Soon!

We're not talking Grammy's or Oscar's. We're talking about awards for good grades and good citizenship for students in grades 4-6. Students who get all 4's on their report card will be placed in a category that is tentatively being called the Principal's Club. Students who receive all 3's and 4's on their report card will be placed on the Honor Roll. And pupils getting all 1's (not 1's) will receive a Citizenship Award. Look for more details soon.

The Green and Gold Is Going Green

The LSRT is making arrangements to get recycling canisters for placement in strategic areas around the school. "What we can recycle, we will recycle," said LSRT chair Rhonda Davis Smith at the January 16 PTA meeting where the effort was announced. It will be our next step to reduce waste and be a little gentler to the planet.

~Mark Pattison

As True as Truant Can Be

Parents and guardians: Your child is truant if s/he is absent from school without an excuse. Five days of unexcused absences will warrant a parent conference. Ten days of unexcused absences will warrant immediate referral to D.C.'s Child and Family Services -- yes, even for elementary school students. Fifteen days or more of unexcused absences during any school year will warrant a truancy court referral -- something no parent would want. Please make sure that your child attends school. And be glad your kids go to Shepherd -- one of the best grade schools east of the park, not to mention the whole District!

You Are What You Eat, Part II

As mentioned in an earlier issue of the Scoop, I would like parents to pay closer attention to the quality of food that goes into our children's mouths. An unfortunate trend exists of children eating increasing amounts of processed foods. Though processed foods can be seen as convenient for assembling quick meals, they have conclusively been linked to a dramatic increase in childhood obesity, high blood pressure, and other illnesses. Processed foods should be limited, if not completely omitted, from our children's diets.

For many of us, school meals are a significant component of our children's daily diet. I urge all parents to visit the school cafeteria and sample the meals that are being provided there. Ask yourself: Is this food I could eat everyday? Some schools (like Hyde Elementary for example) have redirected school funds and chosen vendors that provide healthier meals. **Would you like to know more about the possibilities for Shepherd? Would you like to see:**

- **Meals with fewer additives and processed foods?**
- **More nutritional information about the foods that are served?**
- **More fruits, vegetables, and whole grains as well as Spring Water (instead of high sugar content Fruit Flavored Drinks) served?**

If you share my concerns and would like to get involved in improving nutrition in our school and supporting a school environment that fosters a healthier lifestyle that helps, not hinders, growth of our children's brains and bodies, please contact me at your earliest convenience:

COMMUNITY CORNER

Shake the winter blues away with tunes from the 70's and 80's! Join **Neighbor's Inc.** for the Shepherd Park Dance on **Saturday February 2, 2008 from 8:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m.** The dance will take place at the Tifereth Israel Synagogue at 16th and Juniper. There will be music, refreshments, raffle prizes and great company!!!! Tickets are \$25 per person or \$40 per couple. Babysitting for the evening is available for an additional \$10—reservations are required from ginaaw@yahoo.com

New Box Tops for Education Contest Starts

A new Box Tops for Education contest has kicked off. You might have seen pink papers decorated with hearts in your child's backpack last week. You can affix Box Tops on the sheets and turn them in to the office. Make sure you include your child's name and the teacher's name on the sheet. Without too much trying, we're already at \$382 -- more than 75 percent of our goal for the year of \$500.

~Mark Pattison

Congratulations to Our January Terrific Kids

Prekindergarten

Chanelle Haynes, Kennedy Lynch

Kindergarten

Gretchen Hoff, Yaire Garcia

First Grade

Jamal Deane, John Pollock

Second Grade

Tyler Reynolds, Justice Page

Third Grade

Geoffrey Haggray, Faith Prince-Sydnor



Chanelle Haynes receives her Terrific Kid certificate on January 15. Photo courtesy of Madame Blay.

Our TAP9 -Winning Teacher for January!

Each month, Shepherd Elementary's Local School Restructuring Team will TAP a teacher through its Teacher Appreciation Program. All you have to do is write a letter nominating your child's teacher for his or her great work and dedication. The LSRT will review all letters and choose one teacher to be honored at that month's PTA meeting. January's winner was second-grade teacher **Ms. Beverly Johnson**. Here is the letter from highly pleased parents Ky and Caroline Vaughn-Cooke:

A great teacher is someone who is knowledgeable, offers guidance, helps in the processes of learning, can educate and pass information onto others. This sums up Ms Johnson, 2nd grade teacher. Ms Johnson has not only guided and educated the 2nd graders but she has also guided and educated the 2nd grade parents. She provides a monthly newsletter discussing the topics to be taught that month with examples and projects the children will be working on. This is very valuable to us as parents as it helps us to work along side Ms. Johnson with our daughter in helping her to understand what she's learning. She is patient with the children, works at a pace that suits the entire class and stretches their imagination with their spelling words, reading, writing, and math. Our daughter is new to Shepherd Elementary and has made tremendous progress in all subjects especially in math, thanks to the work and dedication that Ms Johnson provides.

Ms. Johnson brings her Caribbean flare to the classroom with a great big smile. She is always very pleasant and courteous, yet can discipline our children in a way that is fun and does not take away from them learning. She brings a lot of joy to the classroom and we're extremely pleased about the progress our daughter has made under her guidance. She's a wonderful teacher!!

In our daughter, Jasmine's, own words: "She's nice, she helps us when we're stuck and she gives us treats when we're good. She has a happy face, but when someone is not being good, then she looks at them and they get a tally mark. She's a helpful teacher."

Thank you to the Vaughn-Cooke family for their submission. We appreciate their time in recognizing one of our fantastic teachers.

*The next Tuesday Scoop is scheduled for January 29. The editor will be **Kimberly Brandon**. Submissions should be emailed by 3:30 pm on Friday, January 25 to brandonsdc@hotmail.com, or placed in the Tuesday Scoop mail box in the Parents' lounge across from the main office.*