



Shepherd Elementary School

THE MUSTANG

Home of the Shepherd Mustangs

Friday, October 24, 2008

Upcoming Events

10/28-29: DC BAS TESTING (1)

10/27-29: DC Spelling Bee

10/28: Girls Basketball Tryouts

10/31: Early Dismissal 12:15 pm

10/31: Shepherd Park Neighborhood 5th Annual Halloween Parade – Gather in costume at 5:30 pm on the Lower Field; parade at 6:00 pm.

11/2: Daylight Savings Time ends

11/4: Election Day – School OPEN

11/10: Math Night – 6:30-8:30 pm, Auditorium

11/11: Veterans Day Holiday – School Closed

11/19: PTA Meeting – 6:45 pm, Auditorium

11/24: Readers Digest Order Distribution

A Word from Ms. Miles!

Dear Parents,

I have truly enjoyed my first two weeks at Shepherd. It has been a pleasure meeting and talking with each of you. I have learned so much about you, the Shepherd community, our students and teachers. I am excited about our working together and I know together we will continue to achieve great things.

Assessments

Today is the last day of the first advisory. Can you believe we have been in school for 9 weeks? The second DC BAS will be administered to students in grades 3-6 on October 28-29. Please make sure our students are well rested, have a nutritious breakfast, and arrive at school on time. Students in grades K-3 are still being assessed using DIBELS (*Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills*). *The data collected and analyzed from both assessments will allow us to make informed instructional decisions.*

Staffing Update

Please join me in welcoming our new Pre-K aide, Ms. Mariama Conte. She joined our staff on Monday and will be working in Ms. LaPenna's classroom. We are delighted to have her as a member of our Shepherd family.

As you know, we lost Sra. Martha Lynch, our Spanish teacher. Her last day was Friday, October 17th. She will be greatly missed by all.

Javier Varela, our new Spanish teacher, arrived Tuesday at DCA! His tentative start date is Monday, October 27th. He is currently completing his paperwork and looking for a place to live.

(continued on page 2)

Meet Our New Principal

Ms. Jamie Miles, Shepherd Elementary School's new principal, has been with D.C. Public Schools for one year. She had been working as a school improvement specialist and principal coach until her assignment to Shepherd on October 10.

Prior to that, she had spent nine years in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg County (North Carolina) school system as a teacher in kindergarten through sixth grade; a technology facilitator in pre-K through sixth grade; an instructional facilitator; a trainer; and a curriculum developer for the North Carolina Teachers Academy, motivating students in poverty and boosting student achievement.

Ms. Miles has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in instructional systems technology (meaning "design"). She is also certified in curriculum supervision and school administration.

We welcome Ms. Miles as Shepherd's new principal. We know that our students' success has a direct bearing on her success, so let's help our students succeed with excellence.

I'd Like to be a Lighthouse by Rachel Lyman Field

I'd like to be a lighthouse
All scrubbed and painted white.
I'd like to be a lighthouse
And stay awake all night
To keep my eye on everything
That sails my patch of sea;
I'd like to be a lighthouse
With the ships all watching me.



(continued from page 1)

I am currently reviewing resumes and interviewing for our Special Education teacher vacancy. It is my desire to have this position filled by November 3.

Construction Update (Routine Change)

Our window project is almost complete. The crew is busy putting the final touches on our beautiful windows. Beginning Monday, November 3, we will go back to the former drop-off routine of having students assemble on the playground.

Good Morning Mustangs

Students are needed to fill *Good Morning Mustangs* news crew positions. The selection will be based on a first come basis. There will be a different news crew each week. Students must be able to report to the Front Office by 8:35 am on each day of their assigned week. Announcements will start promptly at 8:45 am each morning. Students who are interested in joining the crew should pick up an application from their classroom teacher.

A Friendly Reminder

The instructional day begins promptly at 8:45 am. It is imperative that students arrive on time (between 8:25-8:35). Beginning Monday, November 3, students who arrive after 8:45 am will have to report to the office to pick up a late slip. Students will not be permitted to class without a slip from the office. Our instructional time is precious! Every second counts! When students are late they miss out!

Keep Your Eyes Open

In upcoming issues the Teachers' Corner and recognition of students will return. We will also be including an IB and Language Corner.

Thank you again for all you to do to help ensure the success of our brilliant students!

Warmest regards,
Jamie Miles, Principal



Community Tutoring

This is a community partnership that provides Shepherd students with volunteers (students and parents) to help with mathematics, reading and comprehension homework.

This program is open to everyone and is highly recommended to all students who would like to perform at the eighty-two percent correct on the end-of-year DC-CAS. Please seriously consider making this commitment, it may very well pay off in the long run. Contact Mrs. Confer for more information.

Making Demands - of Ourselves!

Over this past week, the Shepherd Elementary School community showed tremendous energy, creativity and passion in responding to a D.C. Public Schools decision-making process that many found to be threatening to our school's well-being.

We stood up, voiced our positions, demanded due attention to deeply felt community concerns, and DCPS responded.

To build on that effort, we now need to match that energy, creativity and passion in making demands of ourselves. We now need to step up to the challenge of helping Shepherd acquire and utilize the resources that it needs - beyond those that DCPS provides - to become a public school that is a center of academic excellence.

To meet that challenge, we request that:

- Every family in the school pay the \$50 membership fee and join the PTA.
- All families that are able to do so - and there are many of those in this community - pay the \$500 Family Enrichment Fee, beginning and completing your payments as soon as possible. (Use of all funds received by the PTA is governed by the annual budget, which is approved by the full PTA membership, and is reported on monthly by the PTA Treasurer.)
- Every parent, teacher, community member contribute their time and talent to volunteer as PTA committee members, classroom parents, and/or helpers with such events as the very successful Fall Fest we sponsored October 4.

In addition to making demands on those outside our school community, let's be equally demanding of ourselves. Let's stand up and shout when that is the most effective strategy, but let's also sit down and write checks and show up to work as volunteers, as they are critical supporting strategies to everything we do.

Thank you very much.

Earl Yates
President, Parent Teacher Association
Shepherd Elementary School

PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Chancellor Visits Shepherd as Parents Voice Concerns

D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee spoke before a group of about 200 parents and teachers October 16 at Shepherd Elementary as the community was still voicing emotions ranging from shock to anger over the firing of Principal Galeet BenZion the previous week.

Rhee had agreed to meet with a larger group of parents after previously agreeing to meet with elected parent representatives to the PTA and the Local School Restructuring Team.

"I know the tremendous turnaround in leadership over the past couple of years is disheartening," Rhee conceded.

In her job as chancellor, Rhee said she must balance minimizing such disruption against "the best needs of the school." She also said she would take responsibility "for the things we did wrong and where we fell short."

"I want to take ownership of that. I want to take responsibility for that," Rhee said. "I know it's not a lot of consolation for you, but we're going to learn a lot from this."

In her opening remarks, Rhee said she thought Shepherd has "tremendous potential," and referenced efforts made by the community when "resources are lacking from the central office," citing the summer 2007 Saturday school cleanup efforts spearheaded by parents.

She called Shepherd "a very unique community and it needs a very unique leader" because the community is "incredibly invested" in the school. The school needs a principal who is a "very, very strong" communicator, a community leader and one who can build consensus, she said.

To that end, Rhee praised the new principal, Ms. Jamie Miles, saying Miles has "the characteristics necessary to be an effective leader." She added that Miles was "an incredibly strong instructional leader" who would be able to involve community and business leaders, and tap into DCPS resources.

"[Miles] has networks into the central office that very few principals have," Rhee said. "I will make sure she has everything she needs."

PTA president Earl Yates and several parents questioned Rhee on specific teaching jobs that have gone unfilled at Shepherd, as well as DCPS' commitment to Shepherd's dual-language program and its International Baccalaureate application.

Rhee said there was "an articulated timeline" to fill a full-time music teacher position, a full-time physical education teacher job, a full-time art teacher slot, a full-time nurse, and a second special-education teacher.

While the school's budget had paid for language teachers in prior years, this year's language teacher costs are being picked up by the DCPS central office. After one parent asked if the school would have to make annual request for these teachers, Rhee replied that such specialized education "has happened hodgepodge" throughout the District, and said she aims to put in place by 2009-10 a process that is "fair, clear and transparent" to address those educational needs.

The meeting was attended not only by parents and teachers, but by news reporters and two members of the D.C. Council. At-large Councilman Phil Mendelsohn, whose children attend D.C. Public Schools, commented at the end of the meeting about the disruption his school felt when the principal was replaced - and that was in July, not during the school year.

"We need stability in the leadership of the school and have parents who feel they're respected," he said.

Ward 4 Councilwoman Muriel Bowser said she was glad to hear that Rhee acknowledged the disruption caused by the firing of Galeet BenZion. "Parents cannot deal with abrupt disruption," Bowser said. As for the pledged improvements, she added, "we are watching."

~ Mark Pattison

Do You Do Windows? Shepherd Does Windows!

Some of the best news longtime parents at Shepherd have heard is that the window replacement is virtually complete.

Frank Borris, chairman of the PTA's Building and Grounds Committee, reported during the Oct. 15 PTA meeting that all the school's new windows had been installed and only a bit of "punch out" and trim work remained. With cleanup and other work, such as replacing grass damaged by trailers and construction equipment, the project could be complete by Saturday, October 25.

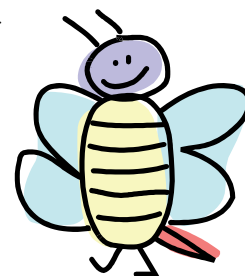
~ Mark Pattison

The Bee All, End All for Spellers

The D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation will hold a Spelling Bee 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. October 27 through 29 at the Takoma Community Center, 300 Van Buren St. NW. The competition is open to ages 11 through 14, if the student has not reached his/her 14th birthday on or before September 1, 2008.

For more information, call 202-576-7068 or visit www.dpr.dc.gov.

~ Paula Brooks

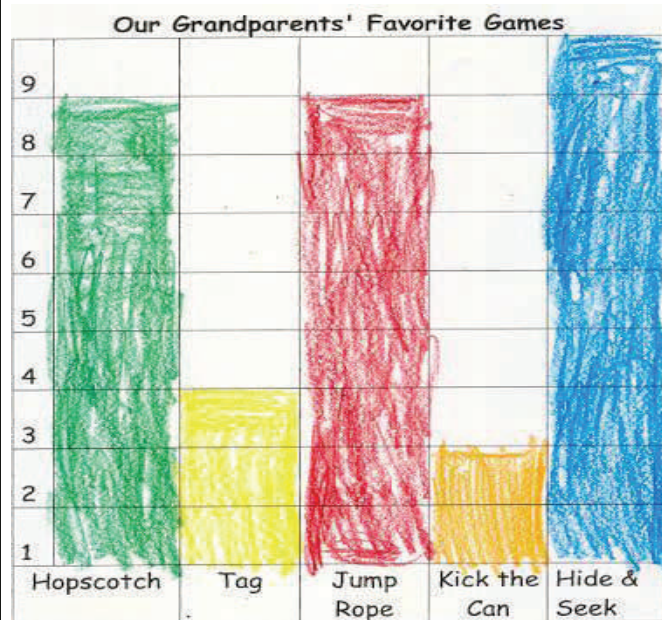


Activity of the Week

Primary Problem

Use the graph below to answer the following questions:

- Which game do grandparents like the least?
- How many grandparents like that game?
- How do you know the game was the least favorite?



Intermediate Problem

The chart below shows how much money Chris earned each day last week raking leaves. Chris earns \$6 per hour for raking leaves. How many hours did he rake leaves on Saturday?

Day of Week	Money Earned
Monday	\$12.00
Tuesday	\$9.00
Wednesday	\$6.00
Thursday	\$15.00
Friday	\$6.00
Saturday	\$24.00
Sunday	\$18.00

Welcome to Our New Newsletter!

On Tuesday of last week, we issued the last edition of the *Tuesday Scoop*, which has served for the past two years as our weekly source of school news. As of today, we will continue publishing the Shepherd Elementary School Newsletter, the first edition of which was published on October 10.

This new vehicle is intended to build on the achievements of the *Tuesday Scoop* to include the broadest possible range of participants, and to reach the broadest possible audience in disseminating the school's weekly news.

Thank you very much to those who contributed so much to the school's life through the publication of the *Tuesday Scoop*.

~ Earl Yates, PTA President

Newsletter Volunteers Needed

With a new, bigger school newsletter, we need help in copying, collating, stapling, counting, and distributing the newsletter – more than ever before. And a *Friday* newsletter loses its luster if it's not seen until *Monday*.

If you've been sufficiently caffeinated at the Friday PTA coffees at "Patio 14," we urge you to take that new-found edge on life straight into the main office, where the newsletter will be ready for copying, collating, etc. By doing so, we think we can get newsletters to each teacher's classroom before the lunch period begins, giving sufficient time for it to reach each student's backpack.



And for the caffeine-free among us, please consider heading to the office once you've dropped off your child to apply some much-needed elbow grease to this very important task.

Contact Mark Pattison at 202-829-9289, if you'd like to know more.

Girls, Get Ready for Basketball!

Shepherd Elementary School will hold basketball tryouts 4 :00 - 6:00 pm on Tuesday, October 28 for girls in Grades 4 through 6. Tryouts will be held in the school gymnasium.

Girls should bring basketball sneakers and their best game.





Shepherd's Literacy Corner

“How Can Parents Help with Reading at Home?”

Establish a routine at home for reading: It could be before bed, on a Sunday night or whenever suits you and your child. For smaller children, read to them daily. This is one of the best ways for developing a lifelong positive attitude toward reading.

Explore Different Forms of Reading Material: Students should be reading fiction and nonfiction material. Check out works in both their book forms and books on tape, CD, or digital recording forms. By having your student read along in the book while listening to the same book on tape, you are providing excellent reading benefits. Allow your child to choose books that are of interest to him/her.

Strategies for Reading Comprehension

Strategy #1: Predict - Make a smart guess about what's going to happen next

Prediction Phrases: I'm guessing this will be about...; Since _____ happened, I think _____ will happen; The title, heading, and picture make me think...; Although the author hasn't told me this, I think...

Making Predictions Practice

Directions: Use information you already know and what the author is telling you to make a prediction.

1. Jessie and Freddie put on their snow suits. They got their hats, boots, and scarves. They went outside and began to roll the snow in three large balls. They put the largest ball on the bottom and stacked the snow balls on top of each other. They went to look for two sticks.

MAKE A PREDICTION:

2. Sara and her Mother drove to the computer store. Sara had her money she had received for Christmas and the money she had saved. She waited a long time for this day. Finally, she would be able to look up all the things she needed for school on a computer and email her friends.

MAKE A PREDICTION:

3. The storm began suddenly. The lightning lit up the sky and the thunder roared loudly. The electricity was blinking on and off quickly.

MAKE A PREDICTION:

These are just a few tips and strategies to encourage reading at home. For additional reading strategies and tips, please contact Shepherd Elementary School's Literacy Professional Developer, Crystal Moorefield at 202-576-6140.

Box Tops Collection Update

We collected over \$130 in Box Tops in our October Collection Contest. Each student who contributed received a small prize. There were two classes that virtually tied in the number of Box Tops submitted — only FIVE box tops separated the two classes. As such, BOTH classes will enjoy a special treat! Congratulations to both Ms. Johnson's second grade class and Ms. Kuawogai's kindergarten class for being TOPS in Box Tops!

Meanwhile, you may still drop your box tops off into the collection box in the Main Office any time. As long as your child's name/teacher are included with the box tops, they will "count" for your child's class tally in our next contest. Our next contest will be announced soon.



"Trick or Treat for UNICEF!"



Students: Are you interested in doing something different for Halloween? Educators: Are you looking for a way to instill a spirit of service to your pupils? Parents: Do you want to make sure that your children are as interested in giving as they are in receiving?

Trick or Treat for UNICEF has helped the U.S. Fund for UNICEF collect more than \$140 million, including \$4 million-plus last year -- just from the simple act of collecting money rather than treats at Halloween. It's amazing how responsive grown-ups are when they hear a kid on Halloween say at their door, "Trick or Treat for UNICEF!" The money goes to programs that help fight childhood diseases in undeveloped countries.

To arrange for collection boxes for your child's class, contact Mark Pattison at mpattison@catholicnews.com, or call him at 829-9289. Even if every Shepherd student gets one, Mark still has extra boxes -- so think about your making them available through youth groups, your church, or your child's after-school activities. Mark also has boxes available for immediate pickup on his front porch at 1221 Floral St. NW, so you don't even have to ring his doorbell (at least until Halloween!).



PTA Passes Resolution on SES' Specialized Programs

The Shepherd Elementary School PTA passed a resolution on support for the school's specialized programs during its October 15 meeting. The resolution passed 24-8, with one voter abstaining. The complete text of the approved resolution follows:

"Provide support for the specialized programs of Shepherd Elementary School whereas, disruptions in leadership have delayed the school's IB [International Baccalaureate] accreditation and budgetary constraints have threatened foreign language instruction, therefore, it is hereby resolved that the Shepherd PTA supports the following actions:

1. Immediately, Chancellor Rhee provides French and Spanish teachers for the remainder of the 2008-09 school year
2. The principal defines measurable goals and timelines for IB accreditation and student fluency in French and Spanish. The principal collaborates with the LSRT [Local School Restructuring Team], teachers, parents, and DCPS [District of Columbia Public Schools] support offices to define goals by December 2008.
3. Chancellor Rhee provides all reasonably requested resources to achieve these goals."

To vote, adults had to write their names on the outside of their folded ballot so that it could be checked against the PTA membership list. Three ballots were not counted because the voter was not a member; one ballot was not counted because the person voted twice; another ballot had no name on the outside; and one ballot had a name on the outside but no vote on the inside. Interest in voting, though, resulted in 12 new memberships the night of the meeting alone.

~ Mark Pattison

A Big Java Thank You

We thank the Starbucks on Colesville Road near the Four Corners area of Silver Spring for donating the coffee consumed by caffeine-deprived parents (and staff!) on Friday mornings. It's a very generous gesture on their part.

We also thank the PTA's Hospitality Committee Chair Jameelah Abdulmateen for arranging the donation.

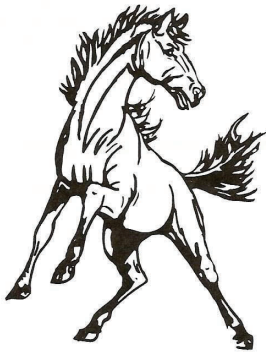


Family Math Night is Coming!



When: Monday, Nov. 10
Time: 6:30-8:30 pm
Where: SES Auditorium

Look for more information regarding this fun family event in upcoming issues of *The Mustang*.



Winner Is Chosen in Our Name The Newsletter Contest!

That's right! You saw it on the front page. Our newsletter is now known as *The Mustang*, the same name as Shepherd Elementary's sports teams. You see the mustang on the school marquee every morning, you've seen the mustang on the front page of the school's newsletters every week, and he even put in an appearance the new school folders. So now we celebrate the mustang's presence by naming our newsletter after this spirited horse.

Our thanks to Mr. German Velez, the teacher's aide in Ms. Tia Holt's pre-K class, who submitted the name in our contest. We got 15 different entries from parents, staff and students — which shows how much they care about reading our weekly school newsletter!

Now, if you want to contribute news or comment for the newsletter, go to this new e-mail address: SESmustang@gmail.com. Our current deadline is now 10 am on Tuesday for the Friday newsletter. You can submit items later than that, but we can't guarantee that we'll be able to include them.

Dear Shepherd Parent:

The Shepherd/TI Tutoring Program is starting its eleventh year. In this program, adult and teenage members of the local synagogue and surrounding community provide free weekly tutoring to Shepherd Elementary School students. Tutors and students are paired up for the year, and spend one hour each week reading, practicing math skills, or completing homework assignments. One-on-one tutoring motivates students, improves their skills, and offers children an opportunity to learn from someone other than a teacher or parent.

Participants in the program meet almost every Sunday afternoon from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Tifereth Israel Synagogue, 7701 16th Street, at the corner of 16th and Juniper Streets, just two blocks from Shepherd School. This year's program began on Sunday, October 19, 2008.

After the school year begins, classroom teachers and Principal Miles will recommend that some students receive tutoring to strengthen skills and performance. In addition, many parents choose to enroll their children in the program for the additional enrichment it provides. We accept all interested students in second through sixth grade, and will welcome your child's participation, provided that you agree to the following:

- your child will reliably attend every week that tutoring is in session;
- if you need to cancel for any week, you will notify your child's tutor well in advance;
- each week your child will bring homework or an example of current schoolwork, so the tutor knows what to work on; and
- you will greet your child's tutor each week, either before or after the tutoring session.

If you would like to discuss the program, please call me. My home phone number is 202-726-7177, and my cell phone is 202-746-2680.

Yours,
Daniel Nathan
TI Tutoring Program

Community Corner

Lowell School Annual Fall Bazaar

October 25, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm
1640 Kalmia Road NW
Carnival games for the kids, various local vendors, and lots of food.

Lafayette Elem. School Halloween Block Party

October 25, 3:00 - 5:30 pm
Featuring Haunted House, Obstacle Course, Trick or Treat Bag Decorating, Monster Moon Bounce, Cake-walk, Face Painting, Games, Costume Contest and Pumpkin/Mum & Pottery Sales

Deal Night at Alice Deal Middle School

Thursday, Nov. 6 from 6:30 - 8:00 pm
3815 Fort Drive NW
Thinking about sending your child to Deal? Come and meet Alice Deal administrators, staff, and students to gain better insight on academic programs, extracurricular activities for students, and Deal's "team teaching" approach. For more information, contact the school at 202-282-0100.

Trivia Corner — Just for Fun!

Each week students will be asked a trivia question. Students should place their name and the answer to the trivia question in the trivia box located outside the cafeteria door. On Tuesdays, one lucky winner will be selected to receive a special treat.

Answer this week's trivia question by Tuesday.

Question:

President Bush has a cat named India. If she could read, what would be her favorite book?



Clue: If you need help visit
White House Kids at
www.whitehouse.gov/kids/

Get Ready to Turn Back the Hands of Time

Daylight Saving Time (DST) ends on the first Sunday in November. Remember to change your clocks **BACK** one hour on



November 2, 2008

Halloween Activities Focus on Neighborhood

There's a lot happening this Halloween and a lot to remember so that parents and children can all enjoy a happy and safe day - and evening.

First, remember that school is dismissed for the day at 12:15 pm on Oct. 31 and that there is no after-care, so please make any arrangements you need to make.

Also, the crowning event of Halloween is the annual Halloween Parade, sponsored by the Shepherd Park Citizens Association, on the lower field. The parade starts at 6 p.m. sharp, but participants can gather on the field anytime after 5:30 p.m. Children - probably in costume - will walk one lap around the track and get a head start on trick-or-treating. In past years, the neighborhood group has also handed out glow sticks to the 100 earliest arrivals.

Grown-ups who are walking with their children can get a copy of the neighborhood's annual trick-or-treat list. Last year's list had more than 100 addresses in Shepherd Park. If you're going to be a stay-at-home parent on Halloween, there's still time to get your address on the list. Call Mark Pattison at 829-9289 or e-mail pattison_mark@hotmail.com.

If you want to hand out treats, leave your porch light on; when you're done, turn your porch light off. (The same goes for pumpkin candles.)

The citizens association is also sponsoring its annual house and pumpkin decorating contest. Judges will inspect the houses that have been entered late Sunday afternoon, just as the streetlights are coming on. If you want to enter the contest, call or e-mail Mark.

One more thing: More children walk around at night during Halloween than probably any other day of the year. Please walk SAFELY by crossing only at intersections. And please drive VERY SAFELY by giving children the right of way. It will be good training for the following Sunday, November 2, when the clocks go back an hour to Standard Time and the sun sets an hour earlier.

~ Mark Pattison

Shepherd Elementary School

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The Mustang Newsletter Editors: Kimberly Brandon, Fred Lewis, Mark Pattison, and Matt Sullivan

Send your submissions for the next issue of The Mustang to: SESmustang@gmail.com. Deadline is Tuesday at 10:00 am for inclusion in the newsletter issued that Friday.