

## Shepherd Elementary School

# THE MUSTANG

Home of the Shepherd Mustangs

Friday, January 30, 2009



### Mark Your Calendars!

- 1/30 – Winter Fest Dance, TODAY!**
- 1/26-2/13 – Prospective Parent Building Tours**
- 2/11 – Prospective Parent Open House,**  
9:30-11:00 am
- 2/11 – Songs of Freedom dress rehearsal, 6:45 pm**
- 2/12 – Songs of Freedom public concert, 6:45 pm**
- 2/16 – Presidents Day—No School**
- 2/18 – PTA Meeting, 6:45 pm, SES Auditorium**
- 2/27 – Parent-Teacher Conferences, No School**

### More Parent Financial Support Needed for Continued PTA Assistance to School

Your children need more financial contributions from parents to enable the PTA to continue helping Shepherd provide the best education possible to our children.

Principal Miles continues to work closely with DCPS to secure support for such activities at Shepherd as the Saturday Academy, which provides additional preparation for the Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) exams, and for additional instruction in Spanish and French.

Because we certainly want to meet the commitments that the PTA membership made to the school in its approval of the 2008-2009 school year budget, the PTA Board and several other parent volunteers are carrying out planned fundraising efforts, such as ticket sales, concession-stand sales, and CD sales for the upcoming Songs of Freedom Concert; the sale of chocolates in the new few months, and the Annual Auction in the Spring.

*(See PTA, continued on page 2)*

## A Word from Mrs. Miles!

Greetings!

I hope this message finds each of you well. It has been an interesting “weather” week but we survived. Thank you for your patience and flexibility. Students in grades 3 – 6 completed their DC BAS tests and the preliminary scores are back. We did well in many areas but we also have areas for growth. Students in grades K – 3 have completed their DIBELS assessment and are now working on TRC, a reading comprehension assessment.

### Saturday Academy

Saturday Academy got off to an excellent start. The students came in with a slight frown because they were upset for having to come to Saturday school but most left with big smiles. I had several students to ask me if we could do this all the time. I am glad to see the students excited and I hope the enthusiasm continues. I want to thank the following staff members for giving up twelve weekends for our students: Mrs. Moorefield, Ms. Ulba, Mr. Leonard, Ms. Chambliss, Ms. Thomas, Madame Gadie, and Señor Valera.

### Early Dismissal

It is our desire that students not be picked up from school before the end of the instructional day. However, we also understand this is not always possible. If you have to pick your student up early please send a note to your child’s teacher. Also please note that many teachers leave the building during their lunch time and their doors are locked. It takes time to locate your student during their lunch period and locate someone to unlock the classroom door. Therefore, if you have to pick up your student, please try to do it outside of their lunch and recess time.

### Parent Meetings

Last week we held the grade 3 – 6 parent meeting. Though the attendance was low, I think the parents who attended walked away with a better understanding of what students are learning, how they are learning and what they are expected to be able to do.

*(See Principal, continued on page 2)*

Inclement Weather School Status Update Resources			
AM Radio	FM Radio	Television	Website
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WMAL (630)</li> <li>• WOL (1450)</li> <li>• Radio America, Spanish (1540)</li> <li>• WTOP (1500)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WAMU (88.5)</li> <li>• WTOP (107.7)</li> <li>• WHUR (96.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channels 4, 5, 7 and 9</li> <li>• Cable Channels 8, 16 and 28</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.k12.dc.us">www.k12.dc.us</a> on the homepage

(Principal, continued from page 1)

### Pre-K Enrollment Process for the 2009-2010 SY

Do you have a child or know a child who will be eligible to attend Shepherd's Pre-K program for the upcoming school year? If so, you must apply through the Pre-Kindergarten Enrollment Process. In cases where more students want to enter Shepherd's Pre-K than there is space, then students will be chosen at random through a lottery. Children who are in-boundary and children who are siblings of current students at that school will receive preference in the lottery. To enter these lotteries, you may apply through the DCPS website at [www.k12.dc.us/options](http://www.k12.dc.us/options) or in person at the school.

### 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment

All students who successfully complete fifth or sixth grade at Shepherd, whether they are in boundary or out-of-boundary, are guaranteed a spot at Deal Middle School next year. Deal Middle School is located at 3815 Fort Dr. NW. For more information on Deal's program, please visit [www.dealpta.org](http://www.dealpta.org).

Depending upon the address of the house or apartment in which you live, your student may have another option in addition to Deal Middle School. Every child is "assigned" to a school, based on your address. You can find out your child's assigned school by visiting [www.k12.dc.us/options](http://www.k12.dc.us/options), once there locate the link for "Find your Assigned Schools" and enter your address.

If you prefer for your fifth or sixth grader to attend a school other than their "assigned" school than you must apply through the DCPS Out-Of-Boundary Enrollment Process. Please refer to the information sheet sent home with all students Thursday or visit [www.k12.dc.us/options](http://www.k12.dc.us/options) for more information.

### Inclement Weather

Occasionally inclement weather hits our area and it requires changing school schedules. When this happens the school systems works closely with radio, TV and other news outlets to notify the community. If there is a school closing or delay please look for updates on the radio, internet and TV stations listed on the front page of this issue of *The Mustang*.

You can also call 202-442-5885 or dial 311 for DC's City-wide Calling Center.

Thank you for all you do!

Warmest regards,

*Jamie Miles*



(PTA, continued from page 1)

Still, the current budget report by the Treasurer presents a bleak budget picture. The school year budget, approved by the membership in September is based on a conservative estimate that 135 of the school's approximately 275 families would pay the \$50 PTA membership fee, and that 65 families would pay the \$500 Family Enrichment Fee (FEF). Those estimates were based on numbers from past years, but the membership dues and FEF payments are well below projections for this point in the school year. To date, only 88 families have paid PTA membership dues. Only 17 families have fully paid the FEF, 22 families have pledged FEF contributions and have made partial payments.

The situation, therefore, is that the PTA will have to receive substantially more contributions right away, or it will have to make huge budget cuts in all line items, including the compensation of those school staff members that the PTA membership committed to financing this year.

*We believe that YOU can make such budget cuts unnecessary – if you and other parents come forth to assume a fair share of the costs!*

With DCPS' support, the Principal's leadership, and the teachers' and students' hard work, the regular classes and the newly-initiated Saturday Academy are going well. We want very much to continue supporting the efforts of the school staff to make this a great year for our children. We urge you, therefore, to make your PTA dues payments immediately. **Starting** FEF contributions right away is also very important, critical, but those contributions can certainly be paid over the remaining months of the school year. Ask us about the details of payment plans.

Payments may be made to Doug Noble, PTA treasurer or any other PTA Board members (by check payable to "Shepherd Elementary School PTA"). Thank you for your quick action on this urgent matter.

*Earl Yates*

President  
Shepherd Elementary School  
Parents and Teachers Association



## AUCTION NEWS!

The theme of this year's Shepherd Elementary School auction fundraiser is "Spotlight on D.C. Excellence, Past, Present, and Future." Count on a lot of great things to be spotlighted, both on and off the auction floor.

The auction will again be held on the campus of Howard University. While the exact date has not been determined, it will be held during the Memorial Day weekend.

Get on board the Auction Committee right now by contacting either of our two Auction Committee co-chairwomen:

Chantale Swanson (Co-Chair) – [swanprncess75@aol.com](mailto:swanprncess75@aol.com)  
Marnie Keller (Co-Chair) – [marniekeller@gmail.com](mailto:marniekeller@gmail.com)



## Don't be Late for After Care

This past Monday, the STAR ACHIEVERS Before and After Care program began a new policy of collecting late fees for parents who pick up their children after the 6:30 p.m. pick up time.

Any late charges (\$3 per minute) will automatically be added to the parent's monthly payment. In addition, this is a reminder that monthly payments are due the 15th of each month. The annual after-care payment must be paid in full by April 15.

For questions concerning your STAR ACHIEVERS account, please contact Mr. Huff at 301-699-9266



## The Mustang Is YOUR Newsletter

Do you have a comment, a suggestion, or something to share with the Shepherd family in *The Mustang*? Would you like to write an article to be included in an issue of *The Mustang*?

Send it in an e-mail to [SESmustang@gmail.com](mailto:SESmustang@gmail.com).

The next issue of *The Mustang* comes out on Friday, February 6, 2009.

Submit information to be included by Tuesday, February 3.



## Spread the Word!

### Open Houses for Prospective Shepherd Parents

Shepherd Elementary School's second Open House is scheduled for February 11, from 9:30 am to 11:00 am. There will be a brief information session, followed by a Q&A and building tour.



### Building Tours for Prospective Shepherd Parents

Building tours for prospective parents continue through the second week in February (February 13). Tours will be held every half hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am - 11:00 am. These tours are for parents who are unable to attend the Open House but would like to tour our facilities. Prospective parents must call the school at 202-576-6140 to schedule a building tour.

If you are a parent interested in providing potential parents with a guided tour, please send an email to Ms. Brooks at [robryna.brooks@dc.gov](mailto:robryna.brooks@dc.gov) or call her at 202-576-6140.

## PTA Begins Partnership with SCORE!

The Shepherd PTA has entered into a "Learn and Earn Agreement" with SCORE! Educational Centers. Through this partnership, families of Shepherd students will have more available tutoring and study skills development choices. The school's families will qualify for significant savings on tutoring and study skills development services. Based on participation, the partnership can generate SCORE! financial contributions to the PTA for its on-going support of school activities.

SCORE! Educational Centers is a learning services company that utilizes face-to-face and on-line tutoring approaches that feature: customized learning plans; blended learning - integration of in-Center tutoring sessions and on-line learning; unlimited access to SCORE!'s online curriculum, with more than 1000 hours of instruction; real-time online progress reports; and proven motivational techniques to promote self-confidence.

The participating SCORE! Center is in the Columbia Heights community, at 14<sup>th</sup> and Columbia Road N.W. Detailed information on the programs, and their costs, that SCORE! will offer to Shepherd School families, under the "Learn and Earn Agreement," can be obtained by calling the Columbia Heights Center at (202) 232-3437.

Forms and other information on enrollment will be available in the Shepherd school office by Friday, January 30.



## *Shepherd IB-PYP Corner*

### *What Does Inquiry Look Like?*

#### **Update:**

Two important PYP activities took place last week. Last Wednesday's faculty meeting was devoted to having teachers in all grade levels to begin to collaboratively examine the first draft of Shepherd's PYP Programme of Inquiry (POI). Many constructive suggestions were made, and teachers are working this week to incorporate those changes in their grade level's units of inquiry. In February the faculty will come back together to examine and discuss the latest draft of the POI. Remember, the four to six units of inquiry for each grade level collectively comprise the school's POI.

The second important activity last week was the visit to College Gardens Elementary School in Rockville. College Gardens is in the middle of its third year as an authorized PYP school. Principal Miles, Ms. Tucker, Ms. Gilmore and Ms. LaPenna observed classes and had a fruitful group discussion with the IB coordinator and the principal. Principal Dupont was gracious enough to personally give a tour of his school and a lengthy private meeting for the four principals who were in attendance. As a result of this visit, the Shepherd team learned a great deal more about the PYP and had many questions answered. Seeing the PYP program in action in another public school was an invaluable experience.

#### **PYP Lesson of the Week:**

Many of you may wonder what a PYP classroom looks like. What should you expect to see in such a classroom? In the IBO publication, *Making the PYP Happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education*, inquiry is described in the following way:

Inquiry, interpreted in the broadest sense, is the process initiated by the students or the teacher that moves the students from their current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding. This can mean:

- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities
- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events
- deepening understanding through the application of a concept
- making and testing theories
- researching and seeking information
- taking and defending a position
- solving problems in a variety of ways.

Notice that the items in this list are of actions by students, not physical characteristics of the classrooms. There are some visuals that are required in a PYP classroom, such as representations of the Learner Profile attributes and information about the current unit of inquiry, but what the students are doing is much more important.

#### **Questions for reflection and discussion:**

Is the inquiry approach very different from traditional teaching and learning? If so, in what ways is inquiry different? Are there any similarities?

~ Patricia L. Tucker  
& Jamie Miles



### *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 questions by Tuesday.

#### **Trivia Question:**

What is:  $111,111,111 \times 111,111,111$  ?



Answer to last week's trivia question:

What is the name of the only planet that rotates clockwise? VENUS

***Have YOU joined the  
Shepherd PTA yet??***

**PTA<sup>®</sup>**  
*everychild.onevoice.*



## Literacy Corner

### Primary Grades

**1. Have your child search for different letters of the alphabet.** Throughout the various sections of the newspaper children will find type written in different sizes, colors, fonts (type faces), and styles (bold, italic, etc.). When they cut out letters of the alphabet, they discover the many ways that a letter can be written and still be that letter. These letters can be glued to paper to **make an ABC poster** or stapled together to **make a book**.



**2. Introduce your child to some simple concepts related to newspapers:** headlines and articles. Show them that the headline is like the title of a book: it is written in larger type and tells what the article is about. Cut out and laminate articles; separate the headline from each article. Have the child sort the “pieces” into two piles: headlines and articles.



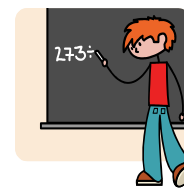
### Intermediate Grades

**Introduce your child to the differences between articles and advertisements.** Show them both and have your child generate the characteristics of each. Point out the drawings, prices (with dollar sign), and borders that often surround ads. Talk about the purposes of newspaper articles and ads: articles are intended to inform while advertisements are intended to influence us to buy something. After reading, your child should be able to use the R.A.C.E. strategy to answer the following question: What is the author’s purpose for writing this article/advertisement?

#### How to Answer a Constructed Response Item **R.A.C.E**

- R—Reword** the question into a statement  
**A—Answer** the question  
**C—Cite** evidence from the passage to support your answer  
**E—Explain** how your evidence/example supports your answer

## Math Corner



### Primary Math

José had 16 baseball cards. He gave 12 cards to his sister. Then he divided the remaining cards equally among his FOUR friends. How many cards did each of his friends get?  
**Parents, please allow your student to use real cards or other hands-on material to help your student solve this problem**

### Intermediate Problem

Once a week, the students at Shepherd Elementary School get to choose the main dish and side items they will have for lunch. The choices they have this week are shown below.

#### Choice of 1 Main Dish Choice of 2 Side Items

- tacos
- hamburgers
- corn
- piece of fruit
- French fries

a. Based on the choices above, what are ALL of the different combinations of one main dish and two side items that are possible? Show your work in an organized list, chart, or table.

b. Next week, in addition to the choices of one main dish and two side items, the students will have the choice of one dessert—either cake OR ice cream. How many different combinations of one main dish, two side items, and one dessert will there be? Explain or show how you got your answer.



## Father-Daughter Dance in Takoma Park



A girl's first date should be with the most important man in her life: her dad, stepfather, grandfather, uncle, older brother — any significant male in her life. Senior Girl Scout Troop 2986 will host its annual Father Daughter Dance 7:30 p.m. Feb. 7. at the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church, 310 Tulip Ave. in Takoma Park.

The event includes a father-daughter photo, a corsage or boutonniere, light refreshments, activities and of course, dancing. Tickets are \$12 per couple and \$4 for each additional daughter or friend and the dance is open to the entire community. Tickets will be available at the door. Contact troop advisor Winnie Neunzig with any questions at 301-891-2192 or [loeb90@comcast.net](mailto:loeb90@comcast.net).

Girl Scout Troop 2986 took the Father Daughter Dance event over from a previous Girl Scout Troop that began it as a fundraiser for their troop's travel funding. This will be the ninth consecutive year of the Father Daughter Dance.

Host Girl Scout Troop 2986 grew up attending the dance with their fathers and now enjoy running it. The average age of the girls who attend the dance are 3 to 13, but all ages are welcome. The girls generally like to dress up for the event, as it is a special occasion.

Proceeds will go to benefit the troop's trip abroad during their spring break of 2009. The troop would like to travel to London where the Girl Scout organization was founded.

## Past Issues of The Mustang are Online

Would you like to read *The Mustang* electronically? Need to refer back to a past issue? Each week, *The Mustang* is uploaded to the files area of the PTA listserv. Join the listserv and click to read.

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Shepherd\\_Elementary\\_PTA/files/%22The%20Mustang%22/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Shepherd_Elementary_PTA/files/%22The%20Mustang%22/)

## Parenting Skills Sessions Come to Silver Spring

**The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington's Youth and Family Services Parenting Programs is offering "Dealing with a Strong-Willed Child"** 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Feb. 4 at the White Oak Library, 11701 New Hampshire Ave. in Silver Spring.

Do you sometimes feel your child is more determined, more sensitive, more argumentative and more volatile than others? Come and learn how to turn these strong characteristics into positive attributes and make day-to-day family living more tranquil.

The event is free and bilingual. To register or for more information call 301-229-1347 or e-mail [parenting@ymcadc.org](mailto:parenting@ymcadc.org).

**The Montgomery County Public Schools Parent Academy workshops will also feature events in Silver Spring.** "Parenting Preteens and Teens" will be held 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 9 at Sligo Middle School, 1401 Dennis Ave. in Silver Spring.

At this workshop, parents can explore the stages of adolescent development, communication styles and effective parenting tips to survive the teen years.

**"CyberSafety: Keeping Children Safe on the Internet"** will be held 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 11 at Eastern Middle School at 300 University Blvd. East in Silver Spring. This workshop will be in English and Spanish and will also be held 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 19 at White Oak Middle School at 12201 New Hampshire Ave. in Silver Spring.

At this workshop, parents will learn to identify the most common Web sites children use, their content and techniques for monitoring computer use. This workshop is presented in collaboration with the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office and the Montgomery County Police Department.

For more information, including the registration form, visit [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy) or call in your registration at 301-517-5940 or 301-279-3100. Registrants can fax a completed registration form to 301-279-3815. All workshops are free and child care can be provided.



## Mardi Gras Box Tops Collection Contest

Turn your Box Tops into the Collection Box in the Main Office no later than **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009**. Make sure your full name is included with your submission to receive a prize.

For more information about the Box Tops for Education program at Shepherd, contact Laura Noble, Box Tops Program Coordinator at: [TaylorFarm@kddmgroup.com](mailto:TaylorFarm@kddmgroup.com).

**Remember to keep clipping  
Box Tops for Shepherd!**

*Laissez les Bon Temps Roulez!*



## Songs of Freedom and Justice Concert Set for February



Shepherd Elementary School, under the direction of music teacher Mr. Ken Giles, will present a musical history of America, "Songs of Freedom and Justice: 150 Years of American History in Song."

There will be two performances. The public performance will be held Thursday, February 12, at 6:45 p.m. Numbered tickets will

be sold for \$5 each, and extra contributions are welcome at the door. Tickets are on sale now!. Parents are invited to a free-admission dress rehearsal to be held Wednesday, February 11, also at 6:45 p.m.

The concert will feature 25 songs and 30 historical characters tracing American history from the anti-slavery era through the union movement to the civil rights movement. Students will portray such historical figures as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Bernice Johnson Reagon.

The D.C. Labor Chorus will sing with Shepherd's students throughout the show.

Both the dress rehearsal and the performance will be recorded for a CD. Each and every Shepherd student will receive a free CD. If you want to buy extra CDs to give to neighbors, friends and family, you can order them for \$10 each through the PTA. CDs should be available about a couple of months after the show.

CDs and copies of the script will be sent to school music teachers around the country to show them how easy it can be to mount their own production of "Songs of Freedom and Justice."

## Inaugural Prize Update

Did you know what our four Shepherd Elementary students REALLY won in the Presidential Inaugural Committee essay contest? How about this for a prize: bleacher seats next to the Presidential Reviewing Stand for the inaugural parade on January 20.

The won the coveted spots because of the essays they submitted to the Presidential Inaugural Committee, which determined the rules of the contest and the theme of the essays: community service.

And the competition was tough. The Presidential Inaugural Committee received about 1,100 essays from students throughout the District of Columbia and picked 120 winners, so Shepherd Elementary having four such winners makes this a remarkable achievement.

The four students – Paul Cienke, Tyler Jones, Kyla Marrkand and Jock Pollock – are all in Mr. Steven King's sixth-grade class, another testament to Mr. King's skill and dedication as he had all 28 of his students write and submit something.

One proud – and thawed-out – parent reported from his unique vantage point: "Apart from arctic-like conditions that special day and everything running quite late (these are Democrats, after all), Jock Pollock and his family, Tyler Jones and her family, and Kyla Marrkand and her family got to their prized bleacher spots rather painlessly; and they were then thrilled soon thereafter to see [Barack] Obama and [George] Bush exit the White House on their way to limos and the procession to Capitol Hill for the swearing in. Then, about six-and-a-half hours later, we blocks of ice all witnessed from mere feet our new president and 'beautiful' wife (Kyla Marrkand's word) stride down Pennsylvania Avenue.

"The only sad note is that we, and I believe everybody else, then fled the scene, fearing hypothermia, and leaving all those hard-working parade participants to perform to rather empty streets."

## The Mustang is for Parents & Kids!

Hey Parents: Be sure to share the activity sections of *The Mustang* with your children each week. You can help your children work through the fun and educational activities featured in each week's *Mustang*. These activities are based on DCPS standards.



And don't forget to have your kids answer the weekly Trivia question! Winners names will be published here in *The Mustang*.

## Join the PTA Listserv Today

To subscribe, send an email (include your name, your child's name and his/her teacher/class) to:  
[Shepherd Elementary PTA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Shepherd_Elementary_PTA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

Once signed up, you will be able to receive listserv updates directly to your email inbox. If you prefer to not receive emails for each listserv posting, simply select "no email" under the message delivery option in your listserv user set up.

## Community Events

### Discover Engineering Family Day Festival

National Building Museum,  
401 F Street NW; 202-272-2448 or [www.NBM.org](http://www.NBM.org)  
Saturday, February 21, 2009; 10:00 am-4:30 pm  
Free admission; all ages welcome

Spend the day becoming a *rocket scientist* and explore the basic principles of aerodynamics. Watch Nate Ball as he *rappels* from the Museum's rafters using his rope ascender invention. Play a *carbon footprint game* and learn about the carbon cycle. Explore the inner-workings of a *real race car*. Create a *fliker* (something that neither floats nor sinks).

### Northwest Football Academy

Register Now! Northwest Football Academy (NWFA), a new youth football and cheerleading organization for ages 5-15 is gearing up for Fall 2009. NWFA will teach the fundamentals and techniques of football and cheerleading. The program also will offer tutoring and mentoring services. Serving Crestwood/16th Heights/Brightwood/Shepherd Park/Takoma/Colonial Village corridors, the program will be located at Fort Steven's Recreation Center, 13th & Van Buren St NW, Washington, D.C. For more information, email: [info@nwfootballacademy.org](mailto:info@nwfootballacademy.org)

### Auditions for ballet summer course held in Silver Spring

Washington, D.C., and Maryland-area ballet students are invited to audition for the School of American Ballet's 2009 Summer Course 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Saturday. The auditions will be held at Maryland Youth Ballet, 926 Ellsworth Drive in Silver Spring.

Auditions for 12- to 13-year-olds will be held 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m., for 14- to 15-year-olds 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and for 16- to 18-year-olds 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Students must register one hour in advance of the audition. The application fee is \$25. Auditions are for intermediate and advanced ballet students, 12 to 18 years old as of June 30. All students should bring a copy of their birth certificates to the audition. Girls must bring pointed shoes to the audition.

During the next two months, more than 2,000 aspiring ballet dancers in 22 cities will vie for approximately 200 spots in SAB's five-week summer program. Students invited to SAB's Summer Course will attend classes in New York City from June 22 to July 24. The 2009 National Audition Tour is sponsored by Freed of London.

For more information, visit [www.sab.org](http://www.sab.org) or call the School of American Ballet at 212-769-6600.

### Learn about Japanese culture in Silver Spring

The Long Branch Library at 8800 Garland Ave. in Silver Spring will continue its world cultures celebration 2 p.m. Feb. 7 as Shizumi Shigeto Manale visits to help participants explore the many aspects of Japanese culture including theater, calligraphy and Samurai swordsmanship.

Manale is the artistic consultant to the National Cherry Blossom Festival Opening Ceremonies and a noted documentarian, having aired her work, "*Geisha: An Artist's Journey*," on public television in 2007.

Other programs in the series will feature the Caribbean musical group Goombay which will perform in April and Spilling Ink, an Indian performance, in May.

For more information about the cultural series, call the library at 240-777-0910.

## Groundhog Day

Groundhog Day is February 2nd. It is said that if the groundhog comes out of his burrow and sees his shadow (because the day is bright and sunny), he will get frightened and run back in his burrow bringing 6 more weeks of winter. If the groundhog comes out of his burrow and does not see his shadow (because the day is cloudy and overcast), he will stay outside and we will have an early spring.

When German settlers arrived in the United States in the 1700s, they brought a tradition known as Candlemas Day. Candlemas Day came at the mid-point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. Superstition told that if the weather was nice on that day, the second half of Winter would be stormy and cold. February 2nd happens to be the day that winter is half over.

In Europe, it was a hedgehog that was watched with hope that he'd not see his shadow. When settlers arrived in America, there were no hedgehogs to be found. So they adopted the groundhog as the New World's weather forecaster.

The groundhog was chosen because it wintered underground like the hedgehog and because the Native Americans in the region respected the animal greatly. They considered the groundhog to be a wise and sensible animal.

The "official" groundhog is named Punxsutawney Phil. He lives at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. On February 2, Punxsutawney Phil comes out of his burrow to predict the weather for the rest of season to crowds of onlookers and fans.



## Shepherd Elementary School

7800 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20012  
Office Telephone: 202-576-6140  
Office Fax: 202-576-7578

Mrs. Jamie Miles, Principal — [jamie.miles@dc.gov](mailto:jamie.miles@dc.gov)  
Ms. Robyn Brooks, Admin. Assistant — [robyna.brooks@dc.gov](mailto:robyna.brooks@dc.gov)

*The Mustang* Newsletter Editors: Kimberly Brandon, Fred Lewis, Mark Pattison, and Matt Sullivan. Layout/Design: Laura Noble

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