



THE MUSTANG

Mark Your Calendars!

- Monday, Jan. 11: Pep rally
- Monday, Jan. 11: Communications Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Ledo's Pizza
- Tuesday-Thursday, Jan. 12-14: DC-BAS testin
- Wednesday, Jan. 13: PTA Executive Board meeting
- Thursday, Jan. 14: LSRT meeting, 3:55 p.m.
- Friday, Jan. 15: No school - professional development
- Monday, Jan. 18: No school - Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. birthday holiday observance
- Wednesday, Jan. 20: PTA meeting, 6:45 p.m., auditorium
- Friday, Jan. 22: Early dismissal at 12:15 p.m.

FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT...

Dear Shepherd Parents;

Happy New Year and welcome to a new decade! At the end of this new decade our elementary school children will be teenagers and college students! I am already getting nostalgic (sob sob).

Over the winter break your PTA Executive Team was hard at work tying up end-of-year action items. Below is a listing for your review:

Congratulations to Ms. Gibbs' class for collecting the most Loose Change! As a school we collected almost one thousand dollars (\$972). Fifty percent of the proceeds will go to a needy family designated by Principal Miles. Thanks to Leonie Stephenson for the coordination and to Marnie Keller who actually took all of the loose change to the bank! More details are provided within this week's Mustang.

LSRT members attended Chancellor's Rhee's Budget Briefing for School Year 2010-11. Shepherd is well-positioned to keep its existing faculty due to our high enrollment numbers. Did you know that we have 330 students enrolled this year? For every family that has left we have had many families on the waiting list vying to replace them. I think this says a lot about our administration, teachers, and Shepherd families.them.

Con't on Page 2

A Word from Mrs. Miles!

Dear Parents:

Happy 2010 to one and all! I hope that the New Year brings health and happiness to all.

DC BAS and Lower Grade Assessment

On January 12-13, students in first and second grades will be participating in a benchmark assessment. This assessment is not a part of the mandated District assessments. It is however, another tool we can use to make sure we are meeting the needs of our students.

The assessment results will provide us with information on how our students are progressing in reading and math and will help us make more informed data driven decisions about your child's education.

Students will be assessed twice this year, once in January and again at the end of the year.

Please make sure your child gets plenty of rest during the testing period, eats breakfast and arrives to school everyday on time. Students in grades three through five will be assessing during this time period as well so your cooperation will help us create a positive and conducive test environment for all students.

If you have any additional questions regarding this assessment or your child's subsequent results (which will be shared with parents), please contact us.

SCHOOL CLOSING

The ConnectEd messaging system will alert all parents if school will be closed or delayed. Our school closing information can also be heard on local TV channels and FM and AM radio stations listed below and the DCPS Web site. In general, if schools are closed, all after-school activities including athletic events and practices will be canceled.

AM Radio

WMAL (630)
WOL (1450)
Radio America, Spanish (1540)
WTOP (1500)

FM Radio

WAMU (88.5)
WTOP (103.5)
WHUR (96.3)

Television

Channels 4, 5, 7, and 9
Cable Channels 8, 16 and 28

Web Site

dc.gov/closures

(See Principal, continued on page 2)

Auction Committee Will Meet Monday

I hope that this message finds everyone doing well, and sticking to their resolutions. Now that the holidays are over it is time to jump into HIGH GEAR with auction planning. The January meeting, date is Monday, Jan. 11, at 6:30 p.m. at Ledo Pizza on Georgia Avenue. As always kids are welcome. I believe \$5 per family should cover the cost of pizza and drinks. Below is the agenda for January's meeting. I hope that everyone can make it. If you know of someone who is interested in being on the committee let them know! I look forward to seeing you all really soon. Thanks for your help, patience and understanding.

Meeting Agenda

1. Auction Schedule
2. Committee Assignments
3. FUN-raising
4. Action Items
5. What's Next

We look forward to seeing you there!!!

--Bianca Bostic, Auction Committee Chair



From the PTA Pres (con't from pg 1)

Cell-Phone Drive (part deux): For all those members of the Shepherd family who got a brand new phone this holiday season-WE WANT YOUR OLD PHONE! Please drop it off in the school office. We can get at least \$2 per phone.

Plus... finalizing the 2009-10 budget, and finalizing the Auction budget.

Our next PTA meeting will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 6:45 p.m. We will be voting on our budget, discussing the First and Second grade testing, and giving an auction update. Please try to attend. An involved parent-body creates a successful student-body!

Pharisse Brassard

(Principal, continued from page 1)

You can also call 442-5885 or dial 311 for DC's Citywide Call Center

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

There will be NO classes on Monday, Jan 18, due to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. In addition to the 18th, there will be no school on the 15th and students will be dismissed at 12:15 on the 22nd. Please plan accordingly.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

The out-of-boundary and pre-K lottery application period opens on Thursday, Jan 28. If you know of a family with a student who will be age 4 by September 30, please let them know they must go online and enter the pre-K lottery. All parents wishing to enroll their student must go through the lottery even if Shepherd is their home school. The lottery closes on Thursday, Feb. 18.

Snacks with the Principal

Our third parent- principal chat will take place on Thursday, January 28, 2010. It will be held at 2 p.m. in the library. Light refreshments will be provided. The topic of discussion will be announced next week. I look forward to seeing each of you on the 28th.

RECESS

Lunch recess is outdoors and will continue as such unless it is raining or the temperature is below 32 degrees. Please keep this in mind and help us assure that the children are dressed appropriately for winter months.

Lost and Found

As your child continues wearing boots, mittens and hats to school during these cold weather months, we remind parents how helpful it is to write your child's name (or at least initials) in these articles of clothing. With many students in our school wearing similar styles and colors of this kind of clothing, it is much easier to find lost items when a name or initials are located somewhere on the clothing. Thanks for your assistance with this matter. We want our students wearing warm clothing during these cold winter months, and your special attention with this matter will insure this!

Thanks for all you do!

Jamie Miles

Principal, Shepherd Elementary

Last Open House for Deal Middle School

The final Alice Deal Middle School Open House is this Saturday, Jan. 9, 9 a.m.-noon. Principal Kim and Deal's IB Coordinator, Mr. Albright, will make a brief presentation at 10 a.m. Tour the newly renovated school and talk with teachers, students and parents. Alice Deal serves students in grades 6-8. Deal is in the final stage of receiving IB authorization -- a decision is expected this spring. For more information about Deal, visit www.alicedeal.org Deal is the in-boundary middle school for Shepherd Park.

Alice Deal Middle School 202-939-2010
3815 Fort Dr. NW (just off of Nebraska Ave. NW)

Loose Change Makes Change!

Happy New Year and welcome back to the second half of the school year. We finished off 2009 with a very successful Loose Change fundraising effort. We raised a total of \$972.05!

Ms. Gibbs collected the most loose change and has won the pizza party. Ms. Gibbs' class collected \$287.61. Way to go! Half of the money collected goes to Principal Miles for distribution to a needy family. The rest of the money collected goes toward supporting school enhancement activities.

A very big thanks to all the students and their parents who brought in lots and lots of loose change. It continues to show how very giving and supportive is the Shepherd family.

*--Leonie Stephenson and Marnie Keller
PTA Fund Raising Committee co-chairs*



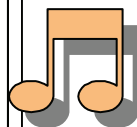
Thank You Corner

Much thanks to Rose Dawson, a new Shepherd parent who alternated weeks during 2009 performing layout and design functions for the Mustang. Rose's job, sadly, is pulling her away from this volunteer job. We'll miss you, Rose, but thanks for your trained eye and obvious skills in assembling a top-notch newsletter.

Another new Shepherd parent, Sherry Hooks, has agreed to take Rose's place, and for that we thank her, too.

Remember, you can thank anybody at Shepherd - and let the whole school community know about it - with the Thank You Corner.

Simply send your note of thanks to sesmustang@gmail.com and you'll see it magically appear!



Notes From the Music Teacher

Two Shepherd Elementary School fourth graders -- Theo Biddle and Sandra Stevenson -- were interviewed "live" on WFW radio (89.3 FM) about Paul Robeson. The students joined music teacher Ken Giles to discuss their campaign to get Paul Robeson into the next music textbook used by D.C. Public Schools. They appeared on the "From the Community" program which aired Dec. 23 on WFW. Several callers complimented the students on their activism and encouraged others to join the effort to get Paul Robeson into the next music textbook.

--Ken Giles, music teacher, Shepherd Elementary School

Shopping for Shepherd

Target has a "Take Charge of Education" program that Shepherd families can help get cash back for school activities. Designate your Target Card or your Target Visa this way. Shepherd's "Take Charge of Education" enrollment code is 39625.

Literacy Corner

Happy New Year! Our focus for the month is fluency. Fluency is the ability to read text accurately and quickly. Fluency bridges word decoding and comprehension. Comprehension is understanding what has been read. Fluency is a set of skills that allows readers to rapidly decode text while maintaining high comprehension.

Here is a list of strategies you can use at home to help your child become a more fluent reader:

Provide children with opportunities to read and reread a range of stories and informational texts by reading on their own, partner reading, or choral reading.

Introduce new or difficult words to children, and provide practice reading these words before they read on their own.

Include opportunities for children to hear a range of texts read fluently and with expression.

Encourage periodic timing of children's oral reading and recording of information about individual children's reading rate and accuracy.

Model fluent reading, and then have students reread the text on their own.

For student success, it is important for children to read text that is on their reading level. Please see your child's teacher or our school librarian, Ms. Scinto, for ideas and suggestions of text that is appropriate for their reading level.

Instructional Coach, Crystal Moorefield



World languages Corner



Which Language Is Best for My Child?

Spanish today. French tomorrow?

Fortunately, parents who are trying to decide what second language would be best for their child aren't limited to just one.

Children are perfectly capable of learning more than one language, and even of learning multiple languages simultaneously. There is absolutely nothing hardwired into the brain that prevents children from learning more than one secondary language, or from learning more than one language at a time. It is also important to note that a child's capacity to learn more than one language simultaneously isn't something children have to grow into; they can begin their exploration of language (s) very early, and often with amazing results. In fact, the earlier they start, the longer and richer their exposure will be to the language or languages, and the deeper the effect will be.

*--Mme. Gadié, Srta. Ainhoa and Sr. Valera
Shepherd Elementary World Languages Dept.*

Find Your Teacher Online

All Shepherd teachers are now on the information superhighway! You can get information on what is going on in your child's classroom all with a click of a mouse.

To access your child's teachers site go to:

www.teacherweb.com

- ▶ Then click "find your teacher" in the top right corner
- ▶ Select the city/state
- ▶ Select the school (ShepherdElementarySchool—of course!)
- ▶ And select your teacher! That's it!

As these are all new sites please bear with your teachers until they are able to upload information o their site.

TeacherWeb.com



*"Enhancing communications among
teachers, students and parents!"*



Student's-Eye View

(Did you know that Shepherd Elementary fourth grader Ehmani Grant is a weekly contributor to the "Student Dispatches" section of the Northwest Current? Aha! Didn't think so! But that's OK. We realize that not everyone may get the Northwest Current delivered free on their sidewalks each Wednesday because not every Shepherd family lives in the paper's distribution area. That's why the Mustang reprints Ehmani's columns here. But, while the Mustang took a two-week vacation from publication, the Northwest Current never takes a vacation. And so we reprint all three columns Ehmani submitted to the Northwest Current so you, too, can keep current. And if you want to find the Northwest Current nearby, go to the Shepherd Park Library or Ledo Pizza, across the street from each other on Georgia Avenue north of Geranium Street, to get your copy.)

Winter break is almost here! Not everyone here at Shepherd celebrates Christmas. We have people who practice many different religions.

Fama Sissko is Muslim. One of the holidays Fama celebrates is Eid al-Adha, or the "Festival of Sacrifice." Eid al-Adha is celebrated the day after Thanksgiving. Her favorite part is the clothes she gets to wear and that her family and friends come over.

Hannah Schuster is Jewish. Hannah celebrates Hanukkah. It began on Dec 12 at sunset. It last for eight days and they light a candle or candles on the menorah on all eight days. One of the games the children play with during Hanukkah is a dreidel, which looks like a top with Hebrew letters on it.

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(Editor's note: The above article appeared in the Dec. 23 issue of the Northwest Current.)

Weeks ago, I wrote about the Pay It Forward Club at Shepherd Elementary School.

But this is not the only way I and others give back. On days when there is no school, I volunteer at Israel Metropolitan CME Church in Washington as part of its "We Care, We Share" program. This program helps the needy in many ways. The church also has people who talk to the needy about the Bible.

The "We Care, We Share" Program gives clothes to people who do not have the ability to acquire newer items. People donate clothes and toys to the program to be given away. Visitors take clothes and toys for themselves and people in their household.

"We Care, We Share" gives school supplies to needy children as well. Two or three times a year, the program provides many kinds of items less fortunate children might need for the school year, including book bags. Sometimes they give gifts to the children also.

Also, many times "We Care, We Share" serves hot breakfasts and hot lunches as well as offers canned and box foods so that others in our city will not go hungry.

"It is a joy to be able to help other people because that's what God wants us to do," said program volunteer Barbara Grant.

To learn more about "We Care, We Share" visit Israel Metropolitan CME Church, located at 557 Randolph St. NW, or go to their website: www.israelcme.org. Your participation or donations would be welcomed and appreciated.

(Editor's note: This column appeared in the Dec. 30 issue of the Northwest Current.)

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The year 2009 was great--but 2010 will be even better.

In 2009, every student at Shepherd Elementary started a new grade and got to know their teachers.

There was a fall festival that a lot of children enjoyed which raised money to cover activities and needs not met in the budget.

We learned a lesson in activism by writing letters to get famed actor and singer Paul Robeson added to music textbooks. Our dreams came true as Robeson will be added to all music text books used in District of Columbia public schools.

To teach social responsibility and kindness, A "Pay It Forward" Club was started. The club sponsored a food drive for the homeless.

There were great Thanksgiving and other holiday parties. We also had a wonderful holiday concert.

In 2010, there will be another concert with performances including blues, jazz, ragtime and message songs, which will take place on Feb. 11.

There will be a school auction on April 30 with a Caribbean theme.

On May 7, there will be a Black, White, Latino (BWL) Band, Violin and Guitar Concert.

The Shepherd family and its supporters shared many bright points and had lots of fun in 2009. The New Year is shaping up to be just as active and inspirational. Happy 2010 everybody!

(Editor's note: This column appeared in the Jan. 6 issue of the Northwest Current.)

To submit news tips, comment or contact the Mustang reporter, send an e-mail to: Emahni5@gmail.com.



School's Paul Robeson Campaign Collects More Media Attention

The Northwest Current, which is circulated and distributed free in the neighborhood surrounding Shepherd Elementary and over much of Ward 4, has published its own story on the campaign to get Paul Robeson included in the next music textbook purchased by D.C. Public School. Here is the story, written by staff writer Jessica Gould and published in the Dec. 30 issue:

Students at Shepherd sing out for change
By JESSICA GOULD
Current Staff Writer

At Shepherd Elementary School, music instructor Ken Giles is teaching his students to be the instruments of change.

For the past two years, Giles' students have been on a campaign to make sure their next music textbooks include information about African-American singer, actor and activist Paul Robeson.

"We have been sending letters and learning about Paul Robeson for a long time," said Mattie Melnyk, a Shepherd third-grader. "I think we should have him in our music textbooks because he was a very important musician."

"I really want Paul Robeson in our music textbooks because he was a good person who was a fighter for what he stood for," added fourth-grader Autumn Parrish. "Paul Robeson was an activist for peace and human rights."

Giles said he's been a fan of Robeson since he was a kid. "From childhood, I heard his music and heard his big bass voice, and I knew about his civil rights activism."

He said he's particularly fond of Robeson's rendition of "Old Man River," from the musical "Show Boat." And he's drawn to the musician's life story.

For example, he said, Robeson broke boundaries in American theater as the first African-American to play Othello, and helped introduce a broader audience to African-American folk music and spirituals.

Meanwhile, he said, Robeson was an advocate for peace and equality who spoke out against Jim Crow, colonialism and war - even though his activism, and his socialist leanings, often made him the target of anti-communist campaigns.

"I knew that he had gotten in trouble with the U.S. government in the 1950s over his activism, and for a while, his passport was taken away. Then he won a Supreme Court case and he was given his passport back," Giles said.

Paul Robeson Can't on pg 7

Deadline Nears for Latest Box Tops Collection Contest

Happy New Year and welcome back from the holiday break! Our current collection drive, "Hooray for Snow Days!", ends next Wednesday, January 13. You can find the collection sheet at

<http://www.boxtops4education.com/Image.aspx?Id=35> or outside the school office. Thanks to your efforts we've already collected \$283 toward our 2009-10 goal of \$500.

Here are the rules:

Glue or tape (no staples) one Box Top Coupon onto each dotted box on the collection sheet and help earn cash for the Shepherd Elementary PTA. Each completed sheet is worth \$1.00 to our school.

(Expired Box Tops, Box Tops with missing expiration dates, and other coupons such as Betty Crocker points cannot be used.)

By next Wednesday, please submit your family's completed collection form(s) to your child's teacher or put them in the Box Tops collection box in the front office.

For more information about the Box Tops for Education Program and eligible products please visit <http://www.boxtops4education.com>.

Thanks for your participation!

--Katherine Trimble
Shepherd Box Tops Program Coordinator

Communication Committee Meets Monday at Ledo's

The PTA's Communication Committee will meet this Monday, Jan. 11, at Ledo Pizza on Georgia Avenue. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. and things should be wrapped up by 7:30 p.m. It's an open meeting: Any and all parents interested in newsletter, Web site, sign board and publicity and promotion efforts are welcome to attend. And if you have to bring your children, then do! We've got room at Ledo's for them.

Early Deadline for Next Week's Issue

Because of the professional development day scheduled for next Friday, Jan. 15, there will be no school that day.

This means that the Mustang will be available in backpacks and online on Thursday, Jan. 14.

But to make that happen, we've got to make the copy deadline earlier:

Monday, Jan. 11, at 5 p.m. All submissions are appreciated. Send your material to sesmustang@gmail.com by the deadline and we'll get it in.

No School Next Friday?!? What to Do With the Kids!?

Remember, there's no school next Friday, January 15. So where will your child go if not to school?

The D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), in coordination with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), offers DPR Play Day, a full day of programs for DCPS students in grades K-8 throughout the District. DPR Play Days coincide with DCPS' Professional Development Days for teachers and ensures that students engage in a mixture of arts and crafts, fitness, and enrichment activities outside of the classroom. DPR Play Day programs begin at 8:30 a.m. and continue until 5 p.m. Breakfast, lunch, and snack will be available for all registered youth.

Enrollment forms are available at any DCPS school or DPR recreation center. Completed forms must be delivered to the DPR site where you wish to have your child enrolled. Same day enrollment is available only if space permits.

DPR will offer three remaining DPR Play Days for the 2009/2010 school year. The dates of the remaining DPR Play Days are:

Friday, January 15
Friday, February 12
Friday, March 19

D.C. Parks and Recreation is already conducting registration for no-school play dates at its recreation centers. Here are the names and locations of the four rec centers in Ward 4:

Emery Recreation Center
5801 Georgia Ave NW
(202) 576-3211

Lamond Recreation Center
20 Tuckerman St NE
(202) 576-9541

Riggs LaSalle Recreation Center
501 Riggs Rd NE
(202) 576-5224

Takoma Community Center
300 Van Buren St NW
(202) 576-7068

If you live or work somewhere else that is more convenient for you, this is taking place at all rec centers throughout the District.

There are three rec centers each in Wards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

You can go online and register at the rec center of your choice at

<http://dpr.dc.gov/dpr/cwp/view.a.1239.q.644815.asp>.

Paul Robeson Con't from pg 6

The intersection of music and activism resonates with Giles, who was a member of the '70s and '80s activist/folk group Bright Morning Star. Teaching is his second career, something he took up after retiring from a job with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

When he arrived at Shepherd five years ago, Giles knew he wanted to introduce his students to Robeson. "I wanted to share that story, because it's a very inspirational story about a musician who becomes an activist," he said.

But while the school's music textbook, by publisher Silver Burdett, includes a lot of interesting tidbits about important figures in American music, Giles said it doesn't mention Robeson once.

"So I created a little lesson including some of Paul Robeson's songs, showing some video clips that I have, and every year I've been teaching students about Paul Robeson," he said. "And then I realized, of course, that students who didn't have a music teacher who wanted to teach them about Robeson wouldn't find out about him."

Last year, Giles' students wrote letters to the director of music for D.C. Public Schools asking that Robeson be included in their next music textbook. This year, they did the same thing, sending 120 letters to the school system's central office.

In November, when Ben Hall, a supervisor with D.C. Public Schools, visited the school, students read him their letters and serenaded him with a version of Robeson's trademark "Old Man River."

According to Giles, Hall responded with great news. He said he would make Robeson's inclusion a condition in the selection of the next music textbook.

In an e-mail, D.C. Public Schools spokesperson Jennifer Calloway said the school system seeks textbooks "that provide a rich array of content that supports the teaching of the DC learning standards, including - in music - profiling individuals such as Paul Robeson as well as notable artists associated with the District."

In the meantime, Giles said, "here at Shepherd School, our students have learned his songs, learned about his social activism and learned that there can be consequences if you become an activist, but eventually our society does the right thing."

Third-grader Melnyk said she's appreciated the lessons. "I think it's really great that he's been teaching us so much about him, even though he's not in our textbooks," she said. "Because we've gotten an extra education for the past few years, all because of him teaching us about Paul Robeson."



One SWEET Message! Sign Up to Get SES Tweets

There is new way members of the Shepherd nation can stay in touch and be notified of breaking news or situations. Shepherd Elementary's Communications Committee is proud to announce that we all can stay connected via Twitter. [Finally, right.]

If you have a Twitter account, gain access to the Internet, then go to: twitter.com/SESmessenger [no spaces, please] and click the "followers" button.

Or simply send your e-mail address or Twitter handle/name to: sesmustang@gmail.com or Richard.mcintire@gmail.com and we'll send you an invite. (An effort is already underway to utilize databases to send invites to Shepherdites, but it is not clear who has a Twitter account.)

Shepherd leadership and the Communications Committee will use Twitter to let parents, staff and others know about information crucial to the operations, security and event schedule of the school.

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing? Tweets can be received and sent via PCs and other mobile devices. Join today to start receiving **SESmessenger** tweets.

If you haven't already, give it a try. Look for updates and tweet ya later!



Peaceful Parenting:

Children who sass parents may provoke a parent to want to use physical punishment. In this situation, it is best if you withdraw from the situation immediately. Do not leave the room in anger or in defeat. Calmly say, "I'll be in the next room when you want to talk more respectfully."

The Mustang Round-Up

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.

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, simple select "no email" under the message delivery option in your listserv user setup.

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.

The Mustang is also available on the Shepherd Elementary School website at www.shepherd-elementary.org.

Support Shepherd PTA's



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