



# TROJAN TIMES

3rd Quarter  
2008

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## Always Reaching Higher

BY BARBARA PARKINS, SUPERINTENDENT

**Y**ou may have noticed that many of my Trojan Times messages focus on our academic progress. The reason is simple. Student achievement and growth—in the classroom and beyond—should drive everything we do at the district. Our community's future relies on our ability to successfully prepare students for life after high school.

As a result, our board, administration and teachers will always set higher goals and challenge our students to attain increased academic achievements. In addition, our Adequate Yearly Progress proficiency targets will increase this year to 63% in reading and 56% in mathematics, up from last year's 54% in reading and 45% in mathematics.

The good news is we are on the right track to meet or exceed the new targets. By now you have probably heard about our high

school's increase (23% increase in reading and 21% increase in mathematics) in last year's PSSA scores. Those increases were actually enough to meet the new requirements. At the other schools within our district, many of the subgroups would have met the new proficiency targets as well.

We have also developed targeted improvement plans for the groups with scores that would not meet the new standards. In these cases, additional attention will be provided to help students achieve the new levels of proficiency.

The Board, administration, teachers, students, parents and community members are working together to focus on the state standards within our curriculum. This concerted effort and ongoing desire to always reach higher is what makes our district extraordinary.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication.

# IT'S ELEMENTARY

## East Side Stories

**Letter Winners:** Principal Mr. Henry commended fifth grade students Jeremiah Brezovic and Kyle DeFrehn for coming up with the idea of the first ever East Side Elementary Spelling Bee.

Students in Grades 3, 4 and 5 were pared down through preliminary rounds. The Dec. 19-21 finals included cheering sections of classmates, parents and family members. The event was so well-received by the students that the "spellers" immediately began a campaign to hold a second edition of the Bee before the school year concludes.

Placewinners in fifth grade included: Champion Essence Gunby; Second-place winner Hannah Fleck; and third-place winner Michala Brown.

Placewinners in fourth grade included: Champion Shyheim Smith; second-place winner Rebecca Oglino; and third-place winner Noah Sadler.

Placewinners in third grade included: Champion Anthony Lobo; second-place winner Aliza Armann; and third-place winner Valbona Dede.

**Seeing Pink:** Pink was the fashionable color at East Side on Jan. 25, as students, faculty and administration wore pink T-shirts as part of the Breast Cancer Research and Awareness fundraiser held throughout the district. Students sold pink paper ribbons to be displayed on a tree. The approximately \$200 raised went to the charity.

**One for the Books:** The East Side Scholastic Book Fair was held Jan. 28 to Feb. 1. With the hard work of the East Side PTA, the Book Fair enabled more students to obtain books and put additional books on the shelves of classrooms and the library.

The One for the Books fundraiser included a \$1 book slip to be used as a donation that went directly into a fund to purchase more books at the school. Scholastic matches monetary donations raised with a donation of up to one million books to three non-profit organizations dedicated to helping



Photo courtesy of East Side Elementary School

*Eight East Side art students had their work selected to be a part of the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art's Student Art Exhibition in Loretto, PA. Back row (left to right): Ms. Lesko (Student Teacher), Kane Stiffey (4th Grade), Sadie Critz (3rd Grade), Rebekah Mikeasky (5th Grade), Mr. Barr (Art Teacher) Front row: Ricky Weimer (4th Grade), Kohl Henry (4th grade), and Les Paul Buchko (4th Grade). Absent from photo are 1st graders Corgan Paulovich and Kirsten Meyer.*

kids and families in need (Kids in Distressed Situations Inc.; National Center for Family Literacy; and Toys for Tots).

**Raising the Bar:** East Side and West Side elementary schools each had 100 percent returns on the Pennsylvania Parent Information and Resource Center and Solid Foundation teacher, student and parent survey handed out during open house nights at the schools.

Project Coordinator Denice Hildebrant, who works for the Academic Development Institute in Lincoln, Ill., stated that East Side and West Side have set the bar nationwide. "Reaching 100 percent of student enrollment represented on the parent surveys has never been done before," she said. "Hats off to the staff at East Side and West Side for doing an outstanding job on the survey distribution and collection."

The Greater Johnstown School District has collaborated with PA PIRC, Pennsylvania Parent Information and Resource Center, and Solid Foundation to improve student achievement through parent involvement. Research has shown that schools using both SF and PIRC have doubled state assess-

ment scores over a two year period.

Through a three year process PA PIRC and Solid Foundation provide service and support by tailoring its efforts to the resources and needs of each school. The first step of this process is the completion of a teacher, student, and parent survey that will generate information about our schools. The analysis of this information will be used to develop an action plan for each building.

Every school needs to have a 40 percent return of parent surveys. To encourage parent survey responses, each school used a variety of incentives to rally support. Both West Side and East Side Elementary Schools offered ice cream sandwiches, courtesy of Nutrition, Inc. The students who returned a completed parent survey were issued a coupon that was redeemed for the treat.

Many area businesses were contacted and several provided rewards for returned surveys. Papa Johns, Pizza Man's Pizza, Subway, Sheetz, and American Eagle Screen Printing were all very generous in providing prizes to our students. Names of students whose parents completed the survey were drawn and several prizes were handed out.

# West Side Stories

**W**e are Trojan Heroes: This school year West Side Elementary School was awarded a bullying prevention grant. In August, several teachers from both East and West Side attended the two day Bullying Prevention & Intervention Workshop sponsored by the Alternative Community Resource Program (ACRP) to learn how to develop an anti-bullying program for the elementary schools.

West Side formed its "Hero Committee." Members of the committee include Lynn Berkebile, Robbin Hoffman, Stephanie Kobal, Beth Nati, Patty Respet and Diane Shoup. The committee developed several strategies to introduce and implement the "The Trojan Hero" program at West Side. The program was introduced to the teaching staff, then letters were sent home to parents explaining the concept and goals of the "Trojan Hero" bullying prevention program. The students were introduced and are reminded daily of the requirements of being a Trojan Hero:

**H**elp others

**E**ach day keep hands and feet to self

**R**eport all bullying

**O**nly use kind words

These rules are posted in each classroom and around the building. When a child is noticed doing any of the above, they are issued a Trojan Hero coupon that is then deposited in a Trojan Hero box. Each week several coupons are drawn from the boxes and rewards are given to the worthy students. The teachers at West Side believe that recognizing the students when they exhibit positive behaviors will decrease the incidents of bullying in school.

**West Side Welcome:** Students and faculty welcomed West Side's new Assistant Principal, Mr. Raymond Arcurio, this school year. Mr. Arcurio

Photo Courtesy of Kathy Legat



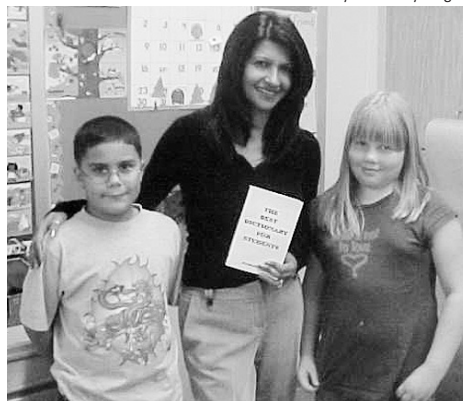
*Trojan Hero David Edwards, from Mrs. Skufca's Kindergarten class, is shown depositing his coupon in a Trojan Hero box.*

previously was the Reading Facilitator at Johnstown Middle School.

**Hoops Recital:** Players from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown men's and women's basketball teams visited West Side on Jan. 25 to read to pre-K and kindergarten students. The UPJ players will continue reading to the elementary students throughout the school year.

**Word Game:** Once again, the Johnstown Rotary Club delivered free dictionaries to West Side students. The significance of the written word was stressed by a group of community representatives who addressed the students. Each West Side third grader received a dictionary during an assembly. Sponsored by Somerset

Photo Courtesy of Kathy Legat



Trust Bank, the dictionaries are appropriate for elementary school aged children and encourage reading and writing.

**Pre-K Counts:** West Side benefited from an approximately \$95,000 grant through Gov. Edward Rendell's assistance to implement the Pre-K Counts program designed to provide one-on-one time and individualized instruction to 12 students who met the specific guidelines to qualify for the program.

Teacher Tricia Weslager instructs the Curiosity Corner program that is designed for 4-year-olds.

Pre K Counts is a public-private initiative that facilitates local pre-kindergarten partnerships among school districts, community-based providers and early intervention. Through Pre-K Counts coordinators, coach/consultants, and professional development activities, school district and community partners (such as child care, Head Start, early intervention) align curriculum to Pennsylvania early learning standards, share professional development opportunities, involve parents in their child's development, and educate business, education, legislative and community leaders about the value of quality early education to their community's future.

*Piya Nandi, Chairperson of the Johnstown Rotary's Literacy Project, is shown here distributing dictionaries to West Side Elementary students. Among the third graders who received a dictionary were Terry Brandon (left) and Mariah Eisenthuth (right)*

# MIDDLE SCHOOL MILESTONES

Photo Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes

**L**et's Go Bucs: A group of Pirates converged on Johnstown Middle School on Jan. 24. These Bucs weren't the type of swashbucklers seen in Pirates of the Caribbean films. Instead, Pittsburgh Pirates shortstop Jack Wilson, outfielder Nyjer Morgan and pitcher Zach Duke stopped at JMS as part of the Pirates Winter Caravan tour. The traveling "Hot Stove League" is an annual tradition that brings players, management and coaches to cities in Western Pennsylvania, keeping baseball on the fans' minds during the winter months. Also attending the Jan. 24 event were Pirates new pitching coach Jeff Andrews and broadcasters Greg Brown and John Wehner.

The Pirates made their appearance a memorable one for the hundreds of middle school students gathered in the auditorium. Three JMS students played the Pirates' version of the popular TV show "Deal or No Deal" with help from the Pirates Parrot, announcer Brown and the three Pirates players.

Sixth graders Shawn McLean and Anastasia Geringer and eighth grader Andrew Lund each had an opportunity to play "Deal or No Deal," as Wilson, Morgan and Duke each pretended to be a celebrity "banker." All three JMS students won prizes and tickets to Pirates games.

Andrew Lund made a "Deal" that won him two Pirates tickets and earned a ticket to an upcoming Pirates game for the all the JMS students.

**Special Guests:** A group of approximately 20 elementary students and parents from East Side and West Side were special guests during the Pirates Winter Caravan appearance. The group toured the JMS building and participated in a math lesson that utilized the new Smart Boards aquired through the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Grant. The future middle school students and their parents also were treated to lunch at the JMS cafeteria as they joined the sixth grade students for a meal.



*Shawn McLean was one of three Johnstown Middle School Students who participated in the Pittsburgh Pirates' version of the game "Deal or No Deal" during the Pirates Winter Caravan's visit. Pirates announcer Greg Brown and the Pirates Parrot helped Shawn win prizes with his "Deal."*

**Good Game, Great Cause:** The Student vs. Faculty charity basketball game is a popular tradition at Johnstown Middle School. This year Greater Johnstown School Board Director Ed Mikesic served as a volunteer referee during the Student Council fundraiser. The basketball game helped JMS reach the \$10,000 mark for donations to Make-A-Wish Foundation during the past 10 years.

#### **Artful Experience:**

Mr. Buchko and Mr. Frontino joined approximately 25 Johnstown Middle School students who attended a performance of "The Nutcracker" at the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center on the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown campus. The performing arts field trip was made possible through a grant that the Johnstown Concert Ballet received.

Photo Courtesy of Johnstown Middle School

*Ed Mikesic was the guest volunteer referee during the annual Make A Wish Student Council fundraiser.*



# IT'S GAME TIME

**Outstanding Performance:** Greater Johnstown Lady Trojan Lauren Carosi was named Outstanding Player in the Berlin Holiday Shootout basketball tournament. Carosi scored a game-high 19 points in Johnstown's 55-40 loss to host Berlin in the championship game. Johnstown finished as the tournament runner-up. Tanea Preston also made the all-tournament team.

**Skating with the Stars:** The Trojans hockey team was well-represented on the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Hockey League (PIHL) Open Division Northeast Conference

All-Star Team. Senior Zachary Lovely was an all-star forward. Juniors Derek Grove, a defenseman, and David Dunkleberger, a goalie, also were named all-stars for the Jan. 26 game at Airport Ice Arena near Pittsburgh.

**The Few, The Proud:** The U.S. Marine Corps marched into Ed Stofko Gymnasium on the mission to assist the Trojans wrestling program. The Marines donated a \$9,000 wrestling mat that is expected to soon arrive at the high school once the mat is assembled. "It's going to have Marines.com on the bottom. In the

middle it will have Johnstown High School Trojans and the lines that are required by the wrestling association," said Trojans Athletic Director Tony Penna, who was instrumental in the project. "It's a state of the art mat. The thickness will help prevent head injuries." Two U.S. Marine wrestlers provided a wrestling demonstration during a November assembly in the gym.

*Continued on page 8*

## SPOTLIGHT ON...

### SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Photo Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



Pictured (from left to right) are GJSD board president Richard Unger, Johnstown mayor Tom Trigona, board member Archie Arcurio and Family Dollar district manager Bill Futey of Gallitzin.

**G**reater Johnstown School District welcomed a new neighbor on Jan. 19. School Board President Richard Unger and Board Member Raymond "Archie" Arcurio participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Mayor of Johnstown Tom Trigona at the site of the new Family Dollar Store recently built across the street from the high school and Trojan Stadium.



**Superintendent**  
Barbara Parkins

**Administrators**  
Thomas Kalinyak, *Business Manager*  
Brian McDermott, *Director of Education*

**Board of Directors**  
Richard Unger, *President*  
John Berzinsky, *Vice President*  
John Kuzmiak, *Solicitor*  
Debra Crowder, *Board Secretary*  
Raymond Arcurio  
Vincent Arcurio  
Tom Dadey  
Edwin Mikesic  
Kimberly Murray  
Eugene Pentz  
Dan Tomak

**High School**  
Dan Resenic, *Principal*  
Don Cavis, *Assistant Principal*  
Michael Vuckovich, *Assistant Principal*

**Middle School**  
Darren Buchko, *Principal*  
Frank Frontino, *Assistant Principal*

**East Side**  
Doug Henry, *Principal*  
Dr. John Jubas, *Assistant Principal/  
Public Relations*

**West Side**  
Robert Beatty, *Principal*  
Raymond Arcurio, *Assistant Principal*  
*With Support from Federal Programs  
Title 1*

**Contact Us At:**  
Johnstown High School 814 533-5601  
Johnstown Middle School 814 533-5570  
East Side Elementary 814 533-5550  
West Side Elementary 814 533-5540  
Athletic Department 814 533-5601, ext. 1022

# TROJAN TRIUMPHS

Photos Courtesy of Lauren Carosi

**Get Quizzical:** The Johnstown High School Scholastic Quiz team had a banner season, going 4-1 and ranking third of 12 schools in the Central Western Scholastic Quiz League. Johnstown advanced to the playoffs.

Team members included Zach Cacicia, Vicki Hammer, Alex Skufca, Laura Stibich and Anna Svirsko, who is the team captain. Math teacher Brian Allison and retired math teacher Wanda Keller advised the successful quiz squad.

Alex Skufca posted the Quiz League's highest individual point score of 440 points. Each correct answer to a question is worth 10 points.

The Quiz team was set to make its television debut on PBS on Feb. 16 against Indian Valley.



*Pictured are the members of the Trojan's Scholastic Quiz Team. Front Row (left to right): Alex Skufca, Laura Stibich, Anna Svirsko, Victoria Hammer, Zachary Cacicia. Back Row: Wanda Kellar (advisor), Eden Zagrod, Brian Allison (advisor).*

**Reaching the Summit:** Greater Johnstown High School signed on to participate in the Cambria County High School Summit on Diversity. St. Francis University in Loretto hosts the Feb. 15 Summit on Diversity, a program sponsored by the university and the Johnstown Unit of the NAACP and supported by a grant from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies.

Johnstown advisors were Melana Pavich and Rob Heinrick. Participating students included Kashmir Pretlor, Katelin Lindrose and Melanie Guerrero.

**Great Starts:** The Greater Johnstown High School Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) chapter had an impressive debut. DECA is designed to help students studying marketing, management and entrepreneurship in business, finance, hospitality and marketing sales and service through presentations and competition.

On Jan. 8, DECA advisor Nancy Thomas took eight GJHS students from the school's newly formed DECA chapter to the District 4/5 Competition at IUP. Students competed against Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center, Clearfield Career and Technology Center, State College High and Taylor Allderdice High.

Johnstown fared well as all eight GJHS participants placed either first or second and advanced to the State DECA Competition at Hershey on Feb. 27-29.

Ashley Oswald placed first in Food Marketing; Jennifer Gojmerac and

Shelby Mastovich placed first on the Travel and Tourism Team. Second-place finishers were Mariah Banks in Accounting Applications; Raghida Haidar in Restaurant and Food Service Management; Melissa Johns in Hotel and Lodging; Stephanie Mihalaki in Quick Serve Restaurant Management; and Jasmine Narcisse in Business Services.

**Orchestrating Success:** Ten Greater Johnstown students participated in the 2008 PMEA District 4 & 6 Orchestra Festival held at East Juniata High School near Harrisburg on Jan. 26.

Gerardo Edelstein, a native of Argentina, was the guest conductor. Greater Johnstown instructor Jodi Myers was among the directors participating.

Photos Courtesy of Nancy Thomas, DECA advisor



*Johnstown High School had a solid showing in its first DECA competition. All 8 JHS students advanced to the state competition in Hershey. Pictured from left to right are (Back row) Raghida Haidar, Melissa Johns, Stephanie Mihalaki, Ashley Oswald (Front row) Jennifer Gojmerac, Shelby Mastovich, Jasmine Narcisse, Mariah Banks.*

Johnstown students who performed included: Cassandra Charney (Violin 2); Tim Gosnell (Violin 2); Ashley Gwinn (Violin 2); Matthew Harris (Cello); Shelby Mastovich (Cello); Darren Allevato (String Bass); Marina Bible (String Bass); Alisha Boerstler (French Horn 4); Mike Stiffler (Trumpet 2); and Dave Mishler (Percussion).

**Losing is Winning:** Greater Johnstown implemented a district-wide "Biggest Loser" contest in which all faculty and staff are eligible to win

prizes as well as a trophy for their respective building. The weight loss contest, based on the popular television show, began with weigh-ins after the Christmas break and will last through April. The contest promotes workplace wellness and is based on percentage of weight loss by each individual.

**Banding Together:** Greater Johnstown had an excellent showing at the District Band competition held at Windber High School on Jan. 9-12. Six students advanced to the regional event

that will be held in Hollidaysburg Feb. 20-24. Those are: Dave Mishler (Percussion); Alex Skufca (Saxophone); Katy Landis (Flute); Alexandra Haggerty (Flute); Mike Stiffler (Trumpet); and Matthew Harris (Tuba).

**Choral Class:** The PMEA District 6 Chorus Festival was set for Feb. 6-9 at Bellwood-Antis High School. Johnstown High's representatives were Amber Gobbel (Soprano 2); Autumn Barrett (Soprano 2); Tim Gosnell (Tenor 2); and Matt Harris (Tenor 2).

## Greater Johnstown School District's

# 1,000

## POINTS OF LIGHT

**T**his edition of *The Trojan Times*' 1,000 Points of Light highlights team spirit and a willingness to work together toward a common goal.

The Lady Trojans girls basketball team helped raise approximately \$2,000 for breast cancer research and awareness through the team's "Shoot for a Cure" event held during the Jan. 25 game against Richland High at Stofko Gymnasium.

Johnstown coach Tom Ravida and his players annually choose a charity or a cause for the Lady Trojans' team project. In the past the team has read to elementary students and participated in other causes.

This year the players decided to think pink. The basketball team sold pink ribbons to place on the "Wall of Hope" in the gym. Pink ribbon pins and pink T-shirts commemorating the event also were sold. LHAC rival Richland enthusiastically participated in the charity and presented the Lady Trojans with a check for \$100 prior to the tip-off.

"It's a way for our girls to give something back to the community," Coach Ravida said in an article that appeared in *The Tribune-Democrat*. "Once the girls got the word out about what we are doing, it really took off. The whole school has gotten involved. The girls have really run with it."

The project truly hit home for Ravida and his players after they learned that one of their own mothers was battling breast cancer for the second time.

Karen Lovrich, mother of 5-foot-8 forward Lindsay, was originally diagnosed with breast cancer in December of 2004. Karen conquered the disease initially, but a recurrence was found in her pelvic bone in October.

"I never dreamed when I was going to Johnstown High School that I would find myself going through chemotherapy and radiation 30 years later," Karen Lovrich told *The Tribune-Democrat*. "It's a really great thing that the girls are doing. I don't think they realize that the money that they're raising can hopefully be used to find a cure for this (disease) so they don't have to worry about it when they are adults."

Photo Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



*A Trojan Supporter Pins a pink ribbon on the Wall of Hope during the Lady Trojan's Shoot for a Cure fundraiser.*

# IT'S GAME TIME

Greater Johnstown  
School District  
1091 Broad Street  
Johnstown, PA 15906

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
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Johnstown, PA  
Permit # 162

*Continued from page 5*

**Reed is Right:** Johnstown senior tailback-saftey Antwuan Reed continued to earn recognition. Reed became Greater Johnstown's third football player spotlighted nationwide in The USA Today as one of 50 National Old Spice Red Zone Player of the Year recipients. The USA Today and Old Spice announced the honor on Feb. 7. Reed's photograph appeared in the sports section of The USA Today along with the other state's recipients.

A day earlier, Reed had signed a letter of intent to continue his education and play football under a full scholarship at the University of Pittsburgh. His mother, Angela, and a group of 20 classmates, teammates, teachers, administrators and coaches attended the signing.

Greater Johnstown has the distinguished honor of producing three USA Today/Old Spice Red Zone Player of the Year picks in the past five seasons. A big-play running back and safety, Reed joined LaRod Stephens-Howling (2003) and Aaron Brezovic (2006) as Trojans who received the Old Spice Red Zone Player of the Year.

Reed rushed for 1,915 yards and went over the career 4,000-yard mark, while earning Associated Press First-Team All-State honors. Reed also was The Tribune-Democrat's Offensive Player of the Year.

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



*Greater Johnstown football standout Antwuan Reed was named one of 50 Old Spice Red Zone Player of the Year winners nationwide on February 7th. Reed is joined by Trojans football coach Kevin Marabito (center) and athletic director Tony Penna Sr.*

**Where there is a Will:** Trojans standout wrestler Will Harris signed a letter-of-intent to continue his education and athletic career at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, where he will wrestle under hall of fame coach Pat Pecora. UPJ has won two national team titles under Pecora and has produced numerous athletic and academic All-Americans. Harris was a PIAA state qualifier as a junior and is out to a solid season as a senior.

**Diamond Duty:** Greater Johnstown baseball standout pitcher-third baseman Bobby Helman also will take his talents to the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. A standout under Trojans coach Dee Dee Osborne, Helman committed to continue his studies and his baseball career for UPJ coach Todd Williams, who has led the Mountain Cats to four consecutive 20-win seasons as well as regional and even national prominence. UPJ competes in the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

**Court Presence:** The Trojans' boys basketball team qualified for the District 6 Class AAA playoffs with a 9-7 mark through 16 games. Paul Weatherly led the team with averages of 17.5 points and 10.4 rebounds a game. Point guard Nijan Joiner had a team-best 6.1 assists per game.

**Development Pipeline:** Greater Johnstown's boys basketball future appears to be on the right track. The eighth grade team coached by Ryan Durham opened the LHAC season at 9-0. The ninth grade team coached by Lonnie Bush started 8-1.