



# TROJAN TIMES

2nd Quarter  
2009

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## Trojan Pride Forever

BY DR. BARBARA PARKINS, SUPERINTENDENT

One of the more enjoyable aspects of working for our school district is seeing students progress from elementary school all the way through to high school graduation. In many cases, we are even able to maintain contact with our alumni as they continue to succeed in their careers.

We are also fortunate to have a strong Alumni Association featuring graduates and friends of Johnstown Central High School and its successor, Greater Johnstown High School. The Alumni Association was formed in 2003 to promote a spirit of alumni unity and camaraderie through communications, reunions and social programs.

Our Alumni Association actively supports and promotes the ongoing successes of our district within the community and provides a source of historical information about Greater Johnstown School District. The organization also supports

and funds major initiatives such as:

- Refurbishing the Steinway Piano used at Cochran Auditorium

- The roof on the Trojan Stadium Press Box and a plaque for the stadium

- \$1,200 in scholarships each year to the Top 10 graduates

- Gifts for all senior athletes, band members and cheerleaders

Membership in the Alumni Association is open to any individual who attended the Greater Johnstown High School. Yearly membership is \$10.00 or a lifetime membership is \$100.00. As a member of the association you will receive a membership card, lapel pin, and the association newsletter which is mailed quarterly.

I want to thank the Alumni Association for all that they do and I ask all alumni to consider joining the association. It is a great way to show your Trojan Pride long after you graduate!

***Happy Holidays and see you in 2010!***

## East Side Stories

Photo courtesy of Jason Moore, GJSD

**L**ights on at East Side: The Lights On program celebrated its 10th anniversary at East Side on Oct. 22. The Greater Johnstown School District in conjunction with the After School Live program and the 21st Century Community Learning Center have made the event a success.

High school athletes visited East Side and shared lunch with the students, who were presented player cards of the Trojans student-athletes. The elementary students were encouraged to do well in school, listen to their parents and teachers, and to avoid bad behavior.

After lunch, a group of local and regional dignitaries spoke to the children. State representatives, county commissioners and a representative from the district attorney's office spoke about the importance of making good choices. Johnstown Mayor Tom Trigona provided a Proclamation for National Lights On Day in Johnstown. The event closed with an enthusiastic cheer from the Johnstown cheerleaders.

**Honoring Our Veterans:** Another important tradition continued at East Side Elementary, as the 8th annual Veterans Day Breakfast honored members of the Conemaugh Valley Veterans Association as well as all the men and women in the United States Armed Forces who have served our country.

More than 270 members of the Conemaugh Valley Veterans attend-



*JHS Senior Kashmir Pretlor is bonding with some students at East Side Elementary during the 10th annual Lights On program.*

ed and were served breakfast. East Side students performed a number of presentations that honored each branch of the military. Patriotic songs also were played.

Among the students who performed were Kayla Leventry, Hunter Dryzal, Joey Critz, Sadonia Critz, Valbona Dede, Giovanni Capriotti, Katelyn Csehowski, Jyontae Jordan-Maines and Aiden Stuart.

The event was sponsored by Greater Johnstown School District, Nutrition Inc. and the Conemaugh Valley Veterans.

**Commissioners Visit:** East Side presented the three Cambria County Commissioners with certificates of recognition for the county's support of the Greater Johnstown School District.

Commissioners Milan Gjurich, William Harris and P.J. Stevens received the certificates during the Lights On celebration.

**Family Night Out:** In conjunction with the Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC), East Side held a Family Night to engage families and increase parent-family involvement on Nov. 10.

East Side families visited the Scholastic Book Fair sponsored by the PTA in the auditorium. More than 200 people attended. Families snacked on popcorn and McDonald's Restaurant provided refreshments. The movie "Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs" was the feature event. Plans for another Family Night this winter are in the works.



# West Side Stories

**Collecting for a Cause:** The students and staff at West Side collected enough non-perishable items to fill 20 boxes of food that were donated to the local food pantry in time for Thanksgiving.

The special delivery capped a successful drive in which West Side Elementary helped those less fortunate. West Side held a contest in October encouraging each home-room to donate as many non-perishable food items as possible to help the local food pantries which have been running low on supplies.

West Side's staff got into the spirit of the event by donating money as part of "Pride and Tradition Days" held on Fridays during the month. For a donation, staff members are allowed to wear their less formal Trojan attire. The money raised was donated to the food pantry in the form of Giant Eagle gift cards.

**Excellent 4Sight:** West Side students in grades 3, 4 and 5 participated in a 4Sight test in November and increased their scores in both reading and math proficiency. The 4Sight tests help students prepare for the PSSA tests.

**High Honors:** West Side Pre-K teacher Lynn Berkebile received the Konrad Lindenberg Memorial Award for Outstanding Family Involvement. The Parent Information Resource Center presented the award in November.

Berkebile was honored for "outstanding accomplishments in the area of family involvement." Teachers in Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York

and Pennsylvania are eligible to receive the award, which was presented at The Resort at Split Rock in the Poconos.

**Helping a Classmate:** Grade 5 students at West Side collected

money to benefit a fellow student and the student's family after a fire destroyed their home. The fifth graders raised \$600, which was presented to the family in the form of a Wal-Mart gift certificate.

**Good Manners:** The Women's Help Center addressed West Side kindergarten students about the importance of good manners during a late November presentation.

The kindergarten class had an opportunity to put those good manners to use during a class Thanksgiving Feast. The Westwood

Photo courtesy of of Jason Moore, GJSD



*Students and staff at West Side collected enough non-perishable items to fill 20 boxes of food that were donated to the local food pantry in time for Thanksgiving.*

McDonald's even donated pumpkin pies for the gathering.

**Marching Along:** A large contingent from West Side Elementary was among 75 Greater Johnstown School District students who participated in the Nov. 10 Veterans Day Parade. The high school and middle school bands also performed.

**Spirit of the Season:** West Siders circled December 18 on the calendar. On that date, the Breakfast With Santa event and Christmas concert were scheduled.

## Superintendent

Dr. Barbara Parkins

## Administrators

Dr. John Jubas, *Public Relations*  
Thomas Kalinyak, *Business Manager*  
Brian McDermott, *Director of Education*

Amy Lumadue, *Director of Special 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

Michael Vuckovich, *Principal*  
Don Cavis, *Assistant Principal*  
Ric Lucas, *Assistant Principal*

## Middle School

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

## East Side

Doug Henry, *Principal*  
Amy Arcurio, *Assistant Principal*

## West Side

Robert Beatty, *Principal*  
Raymond Arcurio, *Assistant Principal*

*With Support from  
Federal Programs Title 1*



## Contact Us At:

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# MIDDLE SCHOOL MILESTONES

Photos Courtesy of Jason Moore, GJSD



*Students from JMS showed their spirit for giving by participating in a shopping spree for local children.*

**Shopping Spree:** Helping others has been a theme at Johnstown Middle School this holiday season. JMS students participated in a shopping spree and purchased enough items to be presented to 12 children through the local Salvation Army.

The shopping trip was made possible through \$700 from the JMS Student Council Fund.

**The Way the Ball Bounces:** Johnstown Middle School faculty and students squared off in a charity basketball game on Nov. 25. Proceeds from the contest benefited the JMS Yearbook.

The game raised \$432, which will be used to lower the cost of the yearbook for students. The teachers edged the students 36-19 in the game.

JMS still is taking orders for the yearbook. The early-bird price of \$8 lasts until Dec. 23, with the cost going to \$10 after that date. For more information, call 533-5570.

**Dinner Time:** Six families at the Women's Help Center were grateful to Johnstown Middle School students who purchased food items that enabled the families to have a Thanksgiving dinner.

The students bought turkeys, stuffing, vegetables, eggs, rolls, juice and pumpkin pie for the families. A \$350 donation from the JMS Student Council Fund made the shopping trip possible.

## **Pennies Saved for a Cause:**

Johnstown Middle School students have been saving their pennies as part of a fund-raiser. The 16th annual Million Pennies Campaign for Easter Seals in Cambria County raises money for those with speech and hearing disabilities.

Students were encouraged to gather pennies and place them

in containers in their homerooms. The fund-raiser was scheduled through Dec. 14.

**High-tech Anglers:** Mr. Dadey's sixth grade students held an electromagnetic fishing derby as part of science class. Students built their fishing rods and held a competition to see who could pick up the most paper clips in 30 seconds.

The extra-credit/enrichment activity connected school and family because the students built their project at home, working with their families.

**Students of Troy:** Johnstown Middle School students became superstar Steelers fans and created their own mega poster of star safety Troy Polamalu.

JMS entered the Sunday Superstar Poster Contest held by one of the region's newspapers, The Altoona Mirror.

The contest entailed the students' saving eight sections of the Sunday papers donated by retired JHS teacher Mr. Vince Golden. The sections each contained part of a large photo of Polamalu. When assembled together, the individual pieces formed a giant Polamalu poster.

The contest encouraged students to work together and then take the poster and incorporate it into a photograph of the students.

Photo courtesy of Jason Moore, GJSD



*Front row: Mr. Frontino; Second row: Jessica Salem, Brooke Tavalisky, Seth Reese, Jonah Strenski, Noah Sadler, LesPaul Buchko; Third row: Brittney Ford and Jenna Palmer; Fourth row: Devin Smith, Sage Wilt, Jeremy Shaffer, Angelique Stoler-Hall, Grant Brandon, Zachary Ramsdorfer, Grant Noon, Jonathan Skufca, Kristen Rogers, Kyllie Onkst.*



# IT'S GAME TIME

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes

## **W**e are the Champions:

The Trojans claimed their first District 6 Class AAA football championship since 2004 by beating Hollidaysburg in a rematch of last year's final. Coach Kevin Marabito's team beat the Golden Tigers 21-14 at Mansion Park in Altoona, avenging a loss to Hollidaysburg in 2008.

LaQuinn Stephens-Howling carried 10 times for 85 yards, and Richard Agurs caught four passes from John Siciliano for 63 yards in the title game.

Johnstown's season ended at 8-4 the following week, as state top-ranked and undefeated Selinsgrove beat the Trojans in a PIAA Class AAA playoff game at Richland's Herlinger Field.



*Members of the District 6 Champion Trojans celebrate after their 21-14 victory over Hollidaysburg.*

**Hoops Rivalry:** Greater Johnstown and Altoona have kept their longstanding basketball rivalry alive even though the two programs compete in different conferences.

On Dec. 15, the Trojans boys and girls programs scheduled varsity-only meetings with the Mountain Lions in Altoona.

The Johnstown boys will be guided this season by first-year Trojans head coach Neil Cobaugh. The Johnstown girls team is coached by Chuck DiFalco.

**Halftime Performance:** Johnstown High's alumni band performed at halftime of the Trojans' Oct. 30 win over visiting Penn Cambria.

Nearly 50 alumni band members attended a pregame dinner and then

participated in the halftime show. Among those alumni performers was Superintendent Dr. Barbara Parkins, who played the clarinet.

**Worth the Weight:** The Johnstown weight room will be open for student-athletes hoping to improve their conditioning. As of Dec. 2, the room was open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3 to 5 p.m.

After Jan. 4, the expanded weight room hours will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 3 to 5 p.m.

**NFL Alumnus:** Greater Johnstown High School graduate LaRod Stephens-Howling continues to make a name for himself in the National Football League.

Stephens-Howling earned NFC

Special Teams Player of the Week on Dec. 1 after returning a kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown in the Arizona Cardinals' 20-17 loss to the Tennessee Titans on Nov. 29.

LaRod, who rushed for more than 4,000 yards at Johnstown High before playing four years at Pitt, also downed three punts inside the Titans' 5-yard line during the game and made one tackle.

**Wrestling Moves:** The Trojans wrestling team was among the field at the 42nd Conemaugh Township Tournament to open the 2009-10 season on Dec. 11-12. Coach Gary Radnotti's team also will compete in the LHAC and District 6-AAA.

*Continued on page 8*

# TROJAN TRIUMPHS

Photo courtesy of Jason Moore, GJSD



11th Grader Karissa Grossman works with the WJAC-TV Severe Weather Team through the district's job shadowing program.

**TV Time:** Greater Johnstown School District in conjunction with WJAC-TV Channel 6 introduced a monthly "job shadowing" program that enables two Johnstown High communication students to participate in the behind-the-scenes aspects involved with Channel 6's news broadcasts. From production, to news gathering to working with meteorologist Jim Burton on weather forecasting, the students saw first-hand the process of putting together a newscast.

"The greatest benefit is that kids get to see a career before they spend four years and a lot of money in college," said JHS communications/graphic arts teacher Mr. Richard Capraun. "In four hours we can show kids nearly every aspect of a job. We can let them know that it's a career they can truly spend the rest of their life with, or if this is a field that might not be for them. WJAC has really helped kids who want to be in front of the camera or behind the camera."

The students attend production meetings, observe the control room operations and the on-air talent at work.

**Yule Like the Drum Line:** Greater Johnstown High School provided

the drum line for rock performer B.E. Taylor during the singer's Christmas Show on Dec. 8 at the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center on the Pitt-Johnstown campus.

In every performance, Taylor includes a local high school drum line in the show. "It ties into the community," Taylor said in a Tribune-Democrat interview prior to the concert. "These are their kids. The drum line plays one song with us, and then we feature

them in whatever we want to do."

## Models of Teaching Success:

Three Johnstown High School educators were named model teachers by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Dr. William Brotz, Miss Robyn Cummings and Mr. Robert Heinrich were selected from 40 teachers nominated statewide.

Learning Sciences Services filmed the teachers in April. The films will be used in an online masters-level education.

Mr. Heinrich demonstrated Power Teaching in an American History class. Dr. Brotz and Miss Cummings modeled Team Teaching during a Chemistry class.

**Banding Together:** The first "Bands in Review" event was held on Nov. 7 in the historic Cochran Auditorium as marching bands from Johnstown High, Forest Hills and Richland performed their respective halftime shows in what is intended to become an annual event.

**Trojan Times Shines:** The Pennsylvania School Boards Association honored The Trojan Times with the PSBA 2009 Print Newsletter/Newspaper Award of Excellence.

The strategic marketing firm

Massolutions produces the newsletter on a quarterly basis.

"The Trojan Times has put a spotlight on the many positive achievements of our students, teachers and administration," said Superintendent Barbara Parkins. "In each edition, we do our best to tell the uplifting stories that happen throughout our district. It's an honor to be recognized by the PSBA with the Award of Excellence."

PSBA used independent judges to determine the winners from among 210 entries.

"We are grateful to the PSBA for acknowledging the hard work of so many individuals involved in the publication of Trojan Times," said David M. Mastovich, President of Massolutions. "It's a privilege to document the accomplishments of the dedicated students, teachers and administrators in the Johnstown School District. Superintendent Barbara Parkins and the district's Board of Directors are the driving forces behind the publication and the positive improvements throughout the district."

Photos Courtesy of Shelby Mastovich, JHS Student



Dave Mastovich, president of MASSolutions, accepts the PSBA 2009 Print Newsletter/Newspaper Award of Excellence from Superintendent Dr. Barbara Parkins



# Greater Johnstown School District's

# 1,000 POINTS OF LIGHT

**T**his edition of The Trojan Times' 1,000 Points of Light spotlights the combined efforts of students, staff, administrators, students' families, alumni and local contributors who have made The Trojan College Access program a success.

The Trojan College Access Center is in its third year of operation. When the program started there were only 39 percent of Johnstown High students who went on to attend post secondary schools.

This year, our enrollment in post-secondary schools has risen to 69 percent.

The first year of the Trojan College Access Center, the program raised enough money to provide seven students with a total of \$13,000 in scholarships.

In Year 2, with the help of local colleges such as Cambria Rowe and the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, as well as the Greater Johnstown Housing Authority, The Jacob Fend Foundation and all of the people and businesses who donated to the Trojan College Access Scholarship Fund, a total of \$45,000 in scholarships went to 21 Johnstown High students.

The Center hopes to assist even more

Photos Courtesy of Greater Johnstown High School



*Miss Cyndi Ahlborn of the Trojan College Access Center accepts a check from the GJHS Key Club. From left to right: Tyler Smay, Jocelyn Lonsinger, Alisha Boesrtler, Cyndi Ahlborn, Molly Ash, Katy Landis.*

students this academic year. Donations may be made to:

The Trojan College Access Scholarship Fund,  
Community Foundation for the Alleghenies  
116 Market Street, Second Floor, Suite 4  
Johnstown, Pa. 15901.

All donations go directly to the scholarships and are not used for any other purpose.

*Continued from page 5*

**Three Cheers:** The Trojans Junior High Cheerleading squad captured its third consecutive Pennsylvania Championship title on Nov. 21 at the state cheerleading championships held at Cambria County War Memorial Arena.

Johnstown's cheerleaders competed in a division that included teams from Forest Hills, Richland, Manheim Central, New Oxford and Blairsville.

In recognition of their achievements, the cheerleaders will receive written citations from the Pennsylvania Senate and House of Representatives. The student-athletes also will be asked to visit Harrisburg this spring to be recognized in person by the Senate and House of Representatives. The team also hopes to attend a national competition in Richmond, Va. in 2010.

The 26 junior high cheerleaders are coached by Teri Vardian and Ashley Minemyer.

**On Ice:** Johnstown's varsity hockey team opened its season with a 3-3 tie against Bishop Guilfoyle. Coach Sean McTighe's team competes in the Laurel Mountain Hockey League.



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## SPOTLIGHT ON...SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes

**T**his GJSD Board of Directors purchased new uniforms for the Trojan Marching Bands at JHS and JMS.

"They went above and beyond the call," Johnstown Band Director Mr. Eric Pfeil said. "The uniforms included a coat, bibbers (pants), shoes, shakos (hats) and plumes."

Eighty Columbia blue and black uniforms with white trim and 114 rain coats went to the high school. The middle school received 60 uniforms and 90 rain coats.

"The uniforms were modeled after vintage Johnstown Band uniforms from the early 1980's," Pfeil said.

WTAJ-TV featured Johnstown as the "Band of the Week" on Oct. 23.



*Members of the Trojan Marching Band perform during a football game this season while wearing the newly purchased band uniforms. The Johnstown School Board of Directors and administration was instrumental in the purchase of new uniforms and accessories for both the high school and middle school bands.*