



TROJAN TIMES

2nd Quarter
2007

INSIDE

It's Elementary:
East Side
Stories.....2

West Side
Stories.....3

Middle School
Milestones4-5

Spotlight on School
Board Members.....5

Trojan
Triumphs.....6

1,000 Points
of Light7

It's Game Time....5, 8

Our Path to Progress

BY BARBARA PARKINS, SUPERINTENDENT

As you are probably aware, our entire team—board members, administration, staff, teachers, parents and students—is focused on improving our learning environment and meeting the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Studies of school districts that consistently achieve outstanding results find that such districts are data-driven organizations which closely monitor student progress and provide professional development around a set of research-based programs in each curriculum area.

Our board and administration made a commitment in January of 2005 to ensure that Greater Johnstown would become such a district by partnering with The Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education (CDDRE) of Johns Hopkins University.

The CDDRE focuses on helping schools meet their states' academic

performance standards by using data to identify where the district needs help to reach those standards and providing information on programs that help schools achieve their goals.

Our work with Johns Hopkins and the CDDRE has enabled our team to adjust our curriculum and instruction throughout the school year. This ongoing adjustment, analysis and evaluation should lead to overall improvement and successful results with regard to AYP.

We conducted an all day board retreat to assess our progress and asked each of our schools to make presentations using the CDDRE models, which are a sound predictor of a district's AYP performance.

The CDDRE assessments indicate that our scores have increased at every building and that we should meet AYP requirements in 2007.

Keep up the great work and continue to prepare for the testing. Thank you all for your efforts!

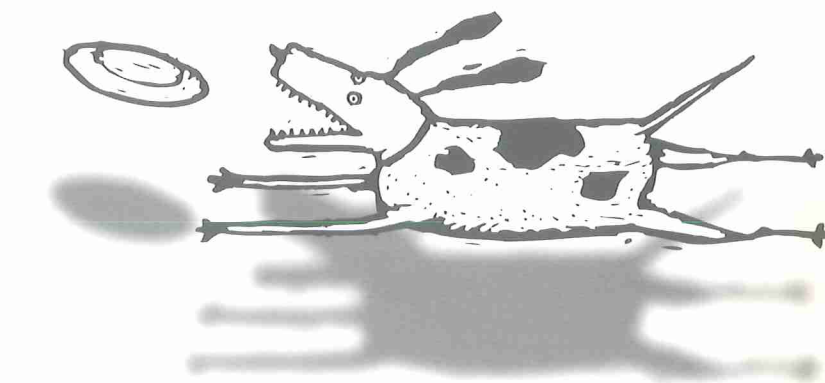
East Side Stories

Open Hearts: East Side students and teachers raised \$80 for the Humane Society of Cambria County during the "Open Your Heart" Valentine campaign. The donations were used to help care for the approximately 2,000 area cats, dogs and other companion animals the Humane Society will see this year.

Link by Link: East Side students "in grades 3, 4 and 5 are building proficiency link by link. Each quarter, students review their math and reading scores on the 4Sight Test, which is a predictor of the PSSA. This review determines if those "students will receive a "link" to add to their class proficiency chain through achieving their goals in math or reading. Students scoring proficient marks receive inspirational Lance Armstrong bracelets as a visual reminder to do their best on the test. The growing chains have inspired teachers and students as the colorful chains loop from floor to ceiling as proof of student achievement. East Side has adopted the motto "Stronger and longer... Building proficiency link by link."

A Math Knight in East Side:

The Kingdom of Computation was buzzing with activity on March 6 at East Side. The Math Knight was a joint effort of the East Side PTA and Mrs. Patti Assia, the math facilitator. Five castles named after reporting categories on the PSSA had interactive math activities for the entire family. Staff members Mrs. Arcurio, Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Hindman developed activities at each station. Mrs. Kessler, East Side's reading facilitator, joined in the activities at the Storyteller's Chamber, where she read math stories to the audience. Mrs. Heinrich, a substitute teacher, guided students through



the Magic "Function" Tunnel. Each castle had a royal staff of teachers, including Mrs. Bold and Mrs. Garczynski, and volunteers from PHCC as well as students from Johnstown Middle School and JHS. An authentic sword fight by knights of the realm illustrated the math involved in the sport of fencing. Students measured their own healthy snack, "Kingdom Krunch," with pretzels donated by Nutrition Inc. Town Crier Mr. Raymond Arcurio made sure the subjects moved from castle to castle in timely fashion. Chase Homza and Michael Mastovich won prizes for correctly estimating the length of the auditorium and the height of the knight, a drawing loaned to East Side by Mr. Barr, the art teacher.

Nature of the Book: Award-winning nature writer Toni Albert visited East Side on April 18 and

talked to students in grades 2 through 5 about some of the world's most pressing environmental issues. Albert read her book, "I Heard the Willow Weep." She demonstrated hands-on activities that children can do to "restore beauty and health" to our earth. Younger students took an imaginary trip to a coral reef, as Albert told them about fascinating reef animals in her book "Incredible Coral Reef."

Feelin' Good: East Side grade 4 and 5 students will put health and wellness on center stage during the musical "Feelin' Good," on May 17. Musical selections during the 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. performances will encourage healthy eating habits and exercising while also warning the audience about substances that can damage minds and bodies.

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With Support from Federal Programs
Title I

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West Side Stories

Goal-oriented Readers: Mrs. Diane Taylor's first grade class won the "Score With Books" competition sponsored by the ECHL's Johnstown Chiefs professional hockey team. Every student in the class received a free ticket to the Chiefs' April 1 game against Cincinnati at Cambria County War Memorial Arena. Top readers Tanner Thomas and Divine Rivera dropped the ceremonial first puck with Chiefs captain Dmitri Tarabrin and Cincinnati player Chad Starling taking the draw. Tanner read 102 books, and Devine read 87 books during January and February. As part of the program, the Chiefs players read to students at West Side.

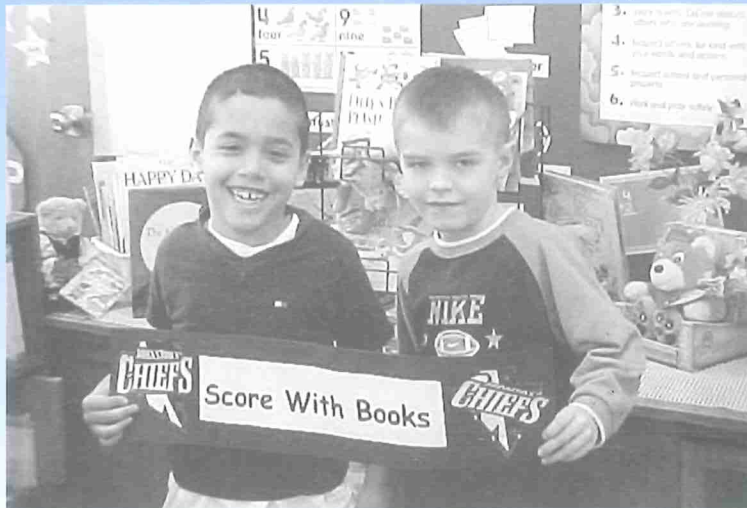
Party On: Grade 3, 4 and 5 students were in a partying mood after completing the PSSA testing. The West Siders celebrated with parties held on April 4-5 organized around the theme of Planet Math. Students visited stations aligned with math standards, including Nebula of Numbers and Operations, Meteor of Measurement, Satellite of Statistics and Probability, Geometry Galaxy, and Algebra Asteroid. Parents, student-teachers, interns from Pennsylvania Highlands Community College and school personnel joined Partners in Education (PIE) to hold the event. PIE provided ice cream for the kids.

Jump and Hoop for Heart: The American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart fundraisers once again were a success at West Side. Physical Education teachers Mrs. Robbin Hoffman and Mr. Jerry Simon announced that

215 participants from kindergarten through Grade 5 raised \$5,924.96 for the American Heart Association. Four students earned an opportunity to win a trip to Disney World after collecting more than \$150. Additionally, students earned 417 prizes for

their work. Daekwon Coleman and Trevon Williams qualified for the Disney contest after participating in Hoops for Heart, and Brady Harrison and Catlyn Marlowe did so in Jump Rope for Heart.

Photo Courtesy of Kathy Legat



Top readers Tanner Thomas (left) and Divine Rivera won the 'Score with Books' competition and dropped the ceremonial first puck at an April 1st Johnstown Chiefs game.

Photo Courtesy of Kathy Legat



Students in grades K-5 earned almost \$6,000 dollars for the Heart Association through the Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart Program. Students from left to right are Daekwon Coleman, Trevon Williams (Hoops for Heart) Brady Harrison, Catlyn Marlowe (Jump Rope for Heart).

MIDDLE SCHOOL MILESTONES

Photos Courtesy of Carrie Andraychak



Over 280 students pitched in to help the rock garden 'come to life'. This area was once overrun with weeds and debris.

Rock On: JMS' new rock garden already has reaped a successful harvest. Students helped create the picturesque garden as part of a beautification project that will offer space to both study and relax. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on April 12 in an area that once was overrun with weeds and debris. A student council project began with planning during the 2005-06 school year and work started on Oct. 9 when the council purchased 24 tons of river rock and three tons of sand and gravel. About 284 students pitched in after school to complete the \$5,000 project that included seating, water fountains and greenery.

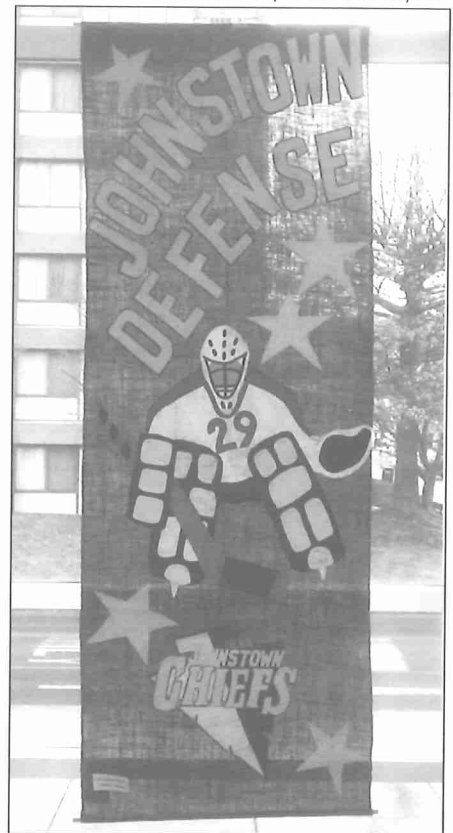
Orchestral Gathering: Johnstown Middle School hosted the County Youth Orchestra Festival on April 10-11. The festival concluded with an evening concert under the direc-

tion of Dr. Jason Worzbyt, an IUP "professor and associate director of bands at the university. A total of 112 students performed in the county event, which has roots dating to 1980. Mrs. Barb Gehosky of Johnstown Middle School helped coordinate the festival. Schools participating in the county event included: Greater Johnstown High School and Middle School; Bishop McCort; Indiana Area; Our Mother of Sorrows; Richland Middle School; St. Benedict's; Westmont Hilltop Middle School.

Enhancing Education: Greater Johnstown Middle School has been awarded an Enhancing Education through Technology Grant provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The grant was written by Superintendent Barbara Parkins, JMS Principal Darren Buchko, Mr. Raymond Arcurio and Mr. Michael J. Vuckovich. More than \$50,000 was awarded to JMS through the grant. The primary goal of Pennsylvania's Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) competitive grant program is to improve student academic achievement through the use of technology in the Commonwealth's elementary and secondary schools. The EETT program consolidates the current Technology Literacy Challenge Fund and the Technology Innovation Challenge Grant programs into a single state educational technology program.

Banner Night: Johnstown Middle School overwhelmingly won first place in the Johnstown Chiefs' first Banner Contest held at Cambria County War Memorial Arena. The middle school banner hung in the arena with other schools' banners, and fans had an opportunity to vote on their favorite banner at the arena or on-line. The JMS banner received about 85 percent of the votes in its category. The winning banner depicted Johnstown goaltender Morgan Cey and had the words "Johnstown Defense" above the netminder and the Chiefs logo below him. JMS student Tabatha Custer dropped the ceremonial first puck on April 1 while representing the Trojans banner artists.

Photos Courtesy of Carrie Andraychak



Chelsea Jones, Jenna Lindrose, Amanda Palmer, Karissa Grossman & Tabitha Custer helped design the winning banner for the Johnstown Chiefs first Banner Contest. They received an overwhelming 85% of the vote!

SPECIAL REPORT FROM YOUR SCHOOL BOARD

New Campus, New Programs Hailed; Successes Achieved Without Tax Hikes

In a special "End of the Year Report," Richard Unger, president of the Greater Johnstown School Board, cited district achievements, calling this year's record "a fine example of a district that meets academic goals and achieves high standards while, at the same time, maintaining fiscal responsibility. We didn't raise taxes this year; in fact, we have not raised taxes in seven years."

The special report was prompted by another special achievement: This year's JHS graduating class entered high school in 2003 and is the first where members were on the new campus from their freshman year.

Unger also praised the administrative staff, the faculty and the pupils for "quickly adapting to the new system that went into effect when the high school opened —providing an academic academy for the ninth grade students and academy wings for the various disciplines for 10th, 11th and 12th grade students, another school first.

"We have had our critics from time to time, but our record speaks for itself," Unger said. Then he pointed to that record:

- The district has received \$106,000 from the State Department of Education to create a high school here that is student-centered, results-focused, data informed and personalized in the delivery of services to

the students, thus fulfilling a standardized high school reformed agenda that the state hopes will raise academic levels throughout Pennsylvania.

- JHS already has 29 sections of the Gifted/Honors and Advanced Placement classes, with approximately 300 students in Advanced Placement.

(Continued on reverse side)

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



GJSD's 2006-07 Board — Sitting, left to right: Kim Murray, board director; John Berzinsky, vice president; Richard Unger, president; Barbara Parkins, superintendent, and Deborah Crowder, secretary. Standing, left to right: Doris Todorich, Edwin Mikesic and Kevin Price, directors; Thomas Kalinyak, business manager; Gene Pentz, Raymond Arcurio and Vincent Arcurio, directors.

Varied Programs Created to Help Students

(Continued from front panel)

■ A Dual Enrollment Partnership with Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, where students earn college credits. Thirty-seven students are involved in this program.

■ 650 JHS students are enrolled in 16 career oriented programs, with a number of vocational students earning Pennsylvania Skilled Certificates.

■ 19 students are involved in "job shadowing," a co-op work program that allows the junior class students to go to a work site of their interest, where they spend time learn-

ing what the jobs are about. As seniors, they get an opportunity to work part of the school day for wages.

■ Our students are involved in anti-tobacco programs, the American Red Cross blood drives, American Cancer Society's fund raisers and Goodwill Partnerships.

■ That Middle School students built a rock garden to be used as an outdoor classroom. They built it with \$5,000 they earned through student fund raisers conducted over a seven-year period. Their efforts were acclaimed in a Tribune-Democrat editorial.

■ Nine JHS football team members have announced they will play football at various colleges this fall. In the past five years, 31 players have gone on to play at the college level; baseball players have won scholarships and honors have been heaped on our students in other sports.

"I have only highlighted certain programs; there are more," Unger concluded. "But, in reading them over, I fully believe—I know—what a fine job is being done at Johnstown High and in our entire district. Students and parents can take great pride in their schools."

State Forces Tax Referendum on Your Local Ballot

The state's Act I—named that way because it was the first bill passed in last year's special session of the General Assembly—is grabbing a lot of local attention.

That's because the bill mandated, that is, required, the school districts to put the tax referendum on the ballot. The Greater Johnstown District, like other school districts in the state, must ask the voters if they want to raise local income taxes

and, in return, see property tax reductions.

In our district, the referendum proposes a 0.4 per cent earned income tax. Monies raised from the tax, along with \$1 billion in revenue from the state's new casinos and gambling parlors, would be used to help lower taxes paid by property owners, especially senior citizens.

It has been called a landmark tax reform by the Rendell administration. Opponents

call it a complicated mess of legislation.

To all our citizens, the board of directors of the Greater Johnstown School District does not take a stand on the referendum.

"We were forced, by state legislation, to put it on the ballot. Now is up to the voters to decide what to do with their tax money," Richard Unger, board president, said.

Seeing Green: JMS students joined students throughout Pennsylvania in the "Go for Greens" program that encourages healthy eating habits. The March 14 event took place at East Side Elementary, where students learned about the benefits of making healthy food choices while striving to stay fit and active. Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA) organized and sponsored the third annual event that includes 1,677 schools. Giant Food Stores, The Nutrition Group, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and Pennsylvania Department of Health also help fund the program.



Board member Eugene Pentz helps Ethan Hasselbaur put the finishing touches on his bird house.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

School Board Members

Greater Johnstown School District's Board of Directors took a hands-on approach to a project that benefited students and the area's wildlife. The board members teamed with Johnstown students to build birdhouses as part of an outdoors community project. Lowe's Corp. presented a \$5,000 grant to Greater Johnstown School District for the project in which students, board members and Lowe's employees built birdhouses together. The birdhouses were distributed throughout the area. Johnstown teacher Mr. Mike Dadey wrote the grant application as a way to foster support of wildlife among elementary, middle and high school students. Saturdays in March, April and May were set aside for students, staff and school board members to work with Lowe's employees to construct the boxes. All of the board members received birdhouses at the board meeting, including President Richard Unger, Vice President John Berzinsky, Debra Crowder, John Kuzmiak, Edwin Mikesic, Kimberly Murray, Eugene Pentz, Kevin Price, Doris Todorich, Vincent Arcurio and Raymond Arcurio.

IT'S GAME TIME

Southern Exposure: The Trojans baseball team participated in its 10th annual spring trip from March 31 to April 6 at the Walt Disney World Tournament in Orlando, Fla. Coach Dee Dee Osborne's program has made a tradition of showcasing the Johnstown baseball team throughout the country. In the past decade, the Trojans have traveled three times to San Diego to play in the Mike Morrow Lions Tournament, twice to New Orleans, and once each to Nashville, Tenn.; South Carolina and Pensacola, Fla. This was the team's second visit to Orlando. The trips are approved by the Greater Johnstown School Board, and the baseball team raises the

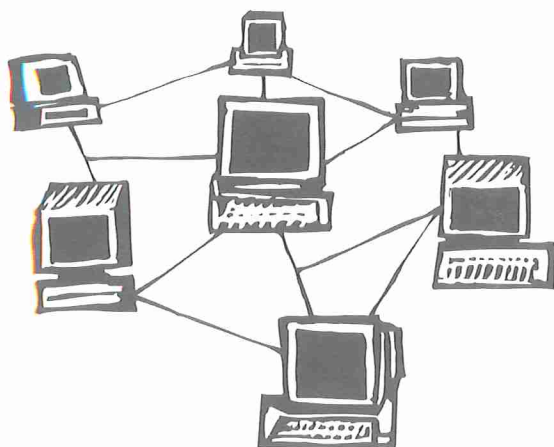
money necessary to travel throughout the country. This season's captains are seniors Nate Pearce, Jarod Lear and Jake Hodus, and junior Bobby Helman.

Taking the Next Step: Greater Johnstown's girls softball team won its first six games and was poised to build on last spring's milestone season. Coach Randy Romesberg's 2006 Trojans went 17-3 and advanced to the District 6 Class AAA semifinals. Most of that team consisted of underclassmen, and 14 letterwinners are ready to take another step. Sophomore pitcher Megan McMillen tossed a perfect game against Windber early in the

season, and freshman Kassandra Sabo hit the first home run over the fence at the recently renovated Trojan softball field. The roster includes seniors Lateia Jefferson, Ashley Mirkovich, Jessica Montgomery and Amanda Solomon; juniors Lauren Carosi, Nikki Melendez and Danielle Shrift; sophomores Katie Golby, Melissa Johns, Katelin Lindrose, Lindsay Lovrich, Kristin Mangus, Megan McMillen, Kaitlin Smith and Stephanie Szczur; and freshmen Danielle Garman, Lindsay Rogers, Kassandra Sabo and Michael-Ann Tyrrell.

Continued on page 8

TROJAN TRIUMPHS



High-tech Classrooms: Greater Johnstown students will soon benefit from a new program that will transform their education from the traditional textbook, chalk and blackboard experience to one that utilizes computers, the Internet and enhanced technology. Greater Johnstown High School was selected among the first 103 schools in Pennsylvania to participate in "Classrooms for the Future." The program's goal is to increase student achievement and success by providing state-of-the-art equipment and enhanced teacher development. "We are constantly seeking ways to best prepare our students for success, certainly in the classroom, but for life beyond their days in school," Greater Johnstown Superintendent Barbara Parkins said. "That's why we are extremely excited to bring Classrooms for the Future to Greater Johnstown High School. Our students will have the types of tools necessary to enable them to increase their current rate of achievement and provide them a solid foundation to build upon while pursuing a college degree or a well-paying, high-tech job." Classrooms for the Future is Governor Edward Rendell's initiative to put a laptop computer on every high school English, math, science and social studies desk and to provide teachers with a multimedia workstation and intensive training to enhance education. Governor Rendell's 2006-07 budget provided \$20 million for the first year of Classrooms for the Future. Greater Johnstown School District has been awarded an

\$117,000 grant in order to transform its core academic classrooms through the project. In the 2006-07 school year over 100 students will benefit from the initiative.

Reaching Out: Greater Johnstown School District is assisting area parents who speak English as a second language,

helping them to better communicate with their children and school staff. Johnstown hosted the first county-wide English as a Second Language (ESL) Workshop on April 20 at the Greater Johnstown School District office on Broad Street. The state requires all school districts to provide a program for students whose main language is not English. The workshop will serve as a way for parents to become more involved with their child's learning experience. Greater Johnstown has 30 students enrolled in its ESL program, the largest in the county. Presenters included Udayashree Nune, an ESL parent and native of India, and Natasha Klekovkin, a native of Russia. Mrs. Amy Polakoski, an ESL instructor and adoptive parent in the Berlin-Brothersvalley District, and Mr. Leonard Shurin, staff and curriculum developer of Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8, also will participate.

Learning Incentives: The Wal-Mart in Richland Township presented a \$625 check to Johnstown High on April 13. The funds were granted as part of an initiative to provide achievement incentives for the high school students who put forth their best efforts on the PSSA's this year. The incentives made an impact on the overall testing atmosphere and student commitment as well as attendance during the week of testing. The grant was used to purchase iPods and other incentives. GJHS Principal Dan Resenic, Mike Vuckovich, Rob Heinrich and Melissa Cabo accepted the grant.

JHS Hosts Regional Orchestra:

Greater Johnstown High School's Cochran Auditorium was filled with talented musicians from across Pennsylvania during the Western Region Orchestra Festival on March 3. A total of 165 high school students representing 60 schools from the Ohio border to Williamsport and the Maryland line to Erie converged on Johnstown as the area served as a host site for the first time since 1989. Following two days of rehearsals, a concert was presented. Winsome Garland, orchestra director at Richland High, and Jodi Meyers, Johnstown's orchestra director, coordinated the event that included top musicians selected from district competitions. JHS alumni (class of '75) and world renowned conductor David Rudge served as guest conductor. The program included compositions from Wagner, Williams, Dvorak and Tchaikovsky.

Training Session: GJSD held a training session for parents of students with disabilities on Feb. 16 at East Side's Parent Resource Center. A discussion of extended school year services and services for students with Autism was held.

District Hoops Rivalry: The East vs. West Basketball Game was played on April 26 at Stofko Gymnasium. The High School and East Side faculty played against the Middle School and West Side faculty in a game that benefited the American Heart Association.

Best of the Best: One of the district's own received special recognition as Johnstown Magazine readers voted Mr. Brad Janidlo as Best Teacher in the annual Best of Johnstown edition. Mr. Janidlo teaches first grade at East Side Elementary and has been part of the Greater Johnstown District for four years. He also is an assistant coach in football and basketball for the Trojans.

Greater Johnstown
School District's

1,000

POINTS OF LIGHT

The 1,000 Points of Light spotlighted in this issue of Trojan Times have shined brightly for decades while influencing thousands of students in the Greater Johnstown School District. Thirty-eight educators will retire from the Greater Johnstown School District upon the completion of the current academic calendar. These teachers have molded young minds in our district for more than 1,000 years combined! This group has truly helped shape the world through the time and effort spent in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, auditoriums, band rooms, playing fields and gymnasiums throughout the Greater Johnstown District. The 38 soon-to-be retirees have combined for 1,177 years of teaching. That translates into an estimated 1,694,880 hours overall and 42,372 teaching hours for each educator! Greater Johnstown School District appreciates the dedication of these teachers (listed below) and truly thanks them for making our school a special place.

Kathy Carpenter
Barbara Farra
Mary Agnes Gisler
Vincent Golden
Carol Gresh
Doris Gritzer
Jeanne Hockensmith
Beverly Holbay
Ernest Jaber
Wanda Keller
Charles Kist
JoAnn LaPlaca
Rena Lipuma

Virginia Lunko
Patricia Marshall
Rebecca Mayes
Walter McClelland
Janice Mertz
Stephanie Mihalic
Mary Kay Milavec
Denise Mowry
Linda Orlidge
Barbara Poglein
Joseph Ramirez
Deborah Rivero
Joan Rocco

Gerald Simon
Linda Singleton
Linda Speicher
Janice Stewart
Nicolett Stofko
Lyle Stoner
Diane Taylor
George Tighe
Mary Urbas
Josephine Wasylovsky
Maxine Wilkins
Donald Yokitis

If you have an idea for GJSD's 1,000 Points of Light, submit it to thousandpoints@gjbsd.net.

IT'S GAME TIME

Continued
from page 5

National Spotlight: Trojans senior defensive end Aaron Brezovic was featured in The USA Today newspaper as one of 50 National Old Spice Red Zone Player of the Year recipients. The national award recognizes those high school football players who elevate their play and that of their teammates in the Red Zone while also displaying leadership and skill. Brezovic was selected from a large pool of nominees from more than 4,500 high school football teams.

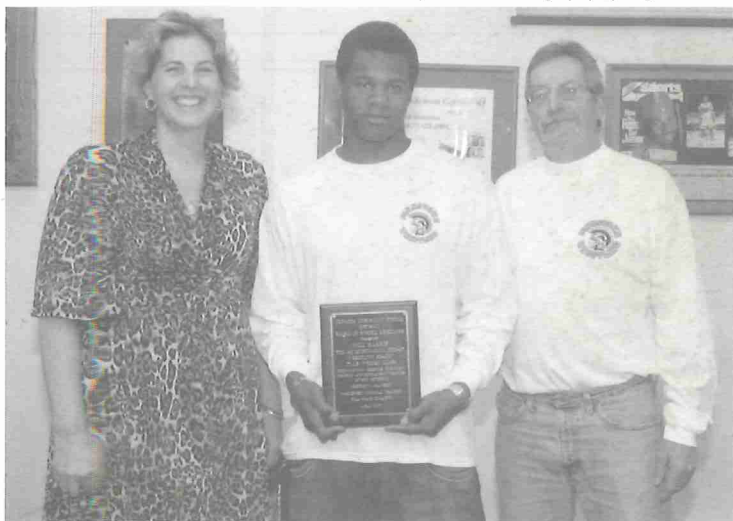
The 50 Red Zone Player of the Year recipients appeared in a full-page congratulatory announcement in the Feb. 8 USA Today. "Aaron gives 100 percent in both practices and games," Trojans coach Bob Arcurio said. "In practice, he led each drill and encouraged all players to give their best." Brezovic had 29.5 sacks during his final two seasons, including 17 as a junior, when he ranked among the state's best. He had 104 tackles as a senior.

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



Aaron Brezovic was featured in The USA Today as one of the 50 National Old Spice Red Zone Player of the Year recipients.

Photos Courtesy of Burns Photography by Roger Kerekes



Will Harris, shown here with Barb Parkins and Coach Gary Radnoti, was given a plaque courtesy of the Board of Directors recognizing his outstanding 2006-2007 wrestling season.

Greater Johnstown
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Will Power: Greater Johnstown junior 171-pound wrestler Will Harris won the District 6 Class AAA title, claimed a Northwest Regional crown and made his mark in statewide competition. "He made it look easy," Johnstown wrestling coach Gary Radnoti said after Harris won the 6-AAA gold. "He wrestled real well." Harris followed his back-to-back district and regional championships with a trip to the state meet in Hershey's Giant Center. Harris pinned Penncrest's Vince D'Ortone in 4:53 in the first round at states. He advanced to the quarterfinals and wrestled in the consolation rounds before concluding a stellar 30-5 season. Along the way, Harris was named Outstanding Wrestler at the Conemaugh Township Holiday Tournament. He won 15 consecutive regular-season matches entering district competition and won another seven in a row during the postseason.

Triple Threat: Johnstown senior track standout Adonis Jackson has been ranked in the top 20 among Western Pennsylvania "jumpers" in Rise Magazine. Jackson placed second in the triple jump at last year's District 6 Class AAA with a 44-4 leap. He also was second at districts in the long jump with a 22-4. Jackson is out to earn gold and a trip to the state championship meet this spring.

Trojan Tennis: Coach Joe Ramirez is in his 30th season coaching Trojans tennis. His boys spring team consists of Ben Mayer, Jonathan Ward, Dan Branagan, Zachary Cacia, Joe Landis, Andrew Wilcox and Nelson Gosnell.