

## PTG Announcements

Published by the Thoreau School Parent Teacher Group, February 10, 2011

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### **FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

Greetings! First, please allow me to extend my appreciation and gratitude to all the students, staff and family members of Thoreau for your patience and understanding as we have been trying to effectively manage the challenges that have come with all the snow this winter season. We greatly appreciate the additional time and effort made by the district maintenance team, as well as our building services workers, Debbie, Mario, and Bill, for providing the ongoing shoveling, salting, and plowing required around our school grounds. I also want to assure all of you that we have been carefully monitoring and inspecting the school roof, which has been deemed safe by the facilities management team. It was necessary to remove excessive snow/ice buildup from part of roof at the front entrance. We will continue to monitor the snow/ice conditions to ensure and maintain safety requirements. I also respectfully ask for your assistance in helping us remind all students not to climb on the snowbanks, as it may lead to additional safety hazards.

Well, I thoroughly enjoyed my first opportunity to be the master of ceremonies at Bingo Night. It was wonderful to see so many families in attendance and everyone having so much fun! Thank you to all of the parent volunteers who organized this event and arranged for the pizza dinner beforehand. Great time had by all! Last week we also had a terrific Hobby Fair set up in the school cafeteria, which I hope many of you were able to attend. There were many different student displays that included baseball card and coin collections, ski racing, homemade machines/electronic devices, musical instruments, drawing and painting, crafts, sports memorabilia and much, much more. If you didn't get a chance to see these creative displays, please ask your children about them. Each class signed up for a time to visit the Hobby Fair.

This past week our School Advisory Committee met. The SAC committee members and I agreed to introduce a school-wide spirit theme each month for all students and staff. Our first theme will be held on the 1/2-day Tuesday, **March 1**. I will send out a notice to students and staff with more details on the dress code criteria as we get closer to the date. The theme for March will be *Summer Day* – students and staff will be encouraged to wear their favorite t-shirt, shorts, flip flops, sunglasses, or beach hat. We hope this is a fun and creative way to add to our school spirit. We also spoke about holding more all-school assemblies, as Thoreau has done in the past, and thought about other ways to do this with our staff and students' input. More information will be forthcoming on this. Last, we talked about the informal buddy programs that currently exist at Thoreau between different classrooms. Some classrooms use this as a time to read with one

another while others may choose to do other kinds of learning activities. There was interest expressed in looking at ways to ensure that all students have an opportunity to experience the buddy program.

Did you know that this **Saturday, February 12** is the Thoreau Spelling Bee? I am very excited to participate as a judge in the Third Grade portion of this event. We hope that many families will come out to support our students as they take part in this fun and challenging event.

As of **Monday, February 14**, we will require all students to enter through our front door entrance. The side doors will be locked at 8:45 AM. This procedure is being implemented to provide greater safety and security.

Next **Wednesday, February 16, 8:15 – 8:45am**, I will be hosting a Principal's Coffee in our school library. I hope many of you can join me. Fondly,  
*Kelly Clough*

### **MCAS SCHEDULE – SPRING 2011**

March 22	Gr. 4 Long Composition
March 23	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 ELA
March 24	Gr. 4 ELA
March 25	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 ELA
March 28	Gr. 4 ELA
May 9	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 Math
May 11	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 Math
May 12	Gr. 4 Math
May 13	Gr. 4 Math
May 18	Gr. 5 Science
May 19	Gr. 5 Science

Please be mindful of these dates, and make every effort to have your child(ren) in school on time. Thank you for your cooperation in this effort.

### **FROM THE PTG CO-PRESIDENTS**

It looks like we will make it a full week without a snow day! Thanks for bearing with us and all of the blasts we have been sending about rescheduling events. Despite the snow, Family B-I-N-G-O Night was held last week and a fun time was had by all. Thanks to Erin Duggan and Ann Sgarzi for organizing such a great event, and thanks to everyone who braved the cold to attend the evening event. We would also like to thank Trish Siefer for coordinating the staff breakfast last Friday morning.

If you haven't checked out the new PTG website, [www.thoreauptg.org](http://www.thoreauptg.org), please do. While you are there, subscribe to the Thoreau Announcements. We will be eliminating our

current e-mail process and moving to using the website as our exclusive tool for communicating with the Thoreau community. Don't wait; it only takes a few minutes.

Please keep in mind that the Thoreau Auction is right around the corner. Everyone should have received an information sheet in your child's backpack. Please consider donating to this important PTG fundraising event. If you are looking for more information on the auction, visit [www.thoreauptg.org](http://www.thoreauptg.org) and click on the "auction" link. You can get information and ideas on donating, and can also purchase tickets for the event. Have a great weekend!

*Karen & Melanie*

### **S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G B-E-E**

Come and cheer on your classmates at the *Thoreau Spelling Bee* this Saturday, **February 12**. Third Grade Bee starts at 3:30 pm; Fourth Grade Bee at 5:00 pm and Fifth Grade Bee at 6:30 pm. Demonstrate your pride in the Thoreau community's eager spellers by attending the Bee!

### **HAS YOUR FAMILY FINISHED ITS QUEST?**

The round-the-world journey to collect the ingredients to make an apple cake has ended! Please return your completed Geography Quests to the box in the Thoreau library. If you'd like to volunteer to review the Quests, please contact Carla Macy ([cm\\_em@yahoo.com](mailto:cm_em@yahoo.com)) or Anne Mullaney ([anne.mullaney@gmail.com](mailto:anne.mullaney@gmail.com)).

### **METCO MESSENGER**

REMINDER! Our February late bus Family Friends Tuesday is **February 15!** Time to arrange for a play date if you haven't already. Please remember that for play dates each family (Concord and Boston) should send a signed, dated note to the school office at the beginning of school on the Tuesday of the late bus. The notes should include the plans for the afternoon and the names and telephone numbers of both families. Boston children can ride Concord children's bus with a note from Boston parents granting permission. To catch the late bus, please have students at the Alcott School playground by 4:20 p.m. for the 4:30 bus to Boston.

*Your Thoreau Family Friends Team: Gretchen Nelson, Laurine Verrilli, Meg Alexander*

### **REGISTER FOR THE MARS ROVER PROJECT**

The "Mars Rover" project is an educational outreach project designed and run by Space Physics faculty at the University of Houston. The project aims to integrate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) into the curriculum of students from grades 3 to 8. I will be using the help of my Houston colleagues as well as that of Dr. Caroline Lamb from MIT Lincoln Labs to apply and run this project in our school.

The project has been funded by the Concord STEM Academy for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade in the Thoreau school. Interested students will form teams of 4 acting as NASA engineers and scientists that will participate in the design and construction of a Mars Rover model to carry out a specific science objective on the surface of Mars. The models will be solar-powered and art supplies and recyclables will be used as construction materials.

The Mars Rover Project will commence during the first week in March. For the 3rd grade, two initial lectures will occur during the class time. The construction of the model rovers will happen as an after school activity that will last four additional weeks, with final presentations of the models by the student teams in class. The 3rd grade after school portion will run on Mondays at 3:30-5:00 pm.

For the 4th and 5th grade the project will run as an after school activity for the whole 6 weeks. We will hold one final Mars Rover celebration day with the opportunity for all student teams to display their models. The 4th and 5th grade teams will meet on Fridays at 3:30-5:00 pm.

To sign up, email [ezesta@atmos.ucla.edu](mailto:ezesta@atmos.ucla.edu) no later than February 18. 4th and 5th graders can also sign up with Jonathan Campbell ([jcampbell@lwda.com](mailto:jcampbell@lwda.com)) or Natalie Gekle ([ngekle@comcast.net](mailto:ngekle@comcast.net)). Consider volunteering to help. Email the addresses above if you have questions.

*EftyhiaZesta, Grade 3 Parent*

## **OUR SOLAR SYSTEM FAMILY MATH NIGHT**

Please join us on Friday, **March 4, 6:00-8:00pm** for Thoreau School's seventh annual Family Math Night. This year's theme is Our Solar System. We will journey through our solar system in search of math problems. This fun-filled PTG-sponsored evening will feature a variety of math games and activities for the whole family to enjoy! In addition to fun math games, test your skills at the estimation jars, enjoy stories with Mrs. Pettyjohn and hit the concession stands for pizza, snacks and beverages. We need volunteers! If you're interested in volunteering for an hour at a math table (5:45 – 7:00 or 6:50 – 8:00) or can help with set up/clean up, please contact Cathy Chadwick ([cathy.chadwick@gmail.com](mailto:cathy.chadwick@gmail.com)) or Amy Hoey ([athoey@gmail.com](mailto:athoey@gmail.com))

## **“HIGH FIVE” AUCTION 2011**

Calling all donations! Please help us by making a donation to the 2011 Thoreau School Auction! The event will be held on **Friday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m.** at the Concord Elks Club. Many items are needed to make the auction a success, especially those donated by Thoreau families. Need help with ideas? Visit the High Five Thoreau Auction website at [www.thoreauptg.org/auction](http://www.thoreauptg.org/auction) where you'll find suggestions for auction donations along with a Donation Form that you can print out and submit to the auction committee. Don't forget to purchase tickets too. They are \$20 per person and available

at [www.thoreauptg.org/auction](http://www.thoreauptg.org/auction). This is a fun event that helps bring the Thoreau community together and supports our school! Get thinking...get involved...get those donations in! Questions? Call Chris Economos Paillet 978-318-9589 or [chriseconomos@gmail.com](mailto:chriseconomos@gmail.com) or Jean Easterday 978.369.8009 or [easterdayfamily@comcast.net](mailto:easterdayfamily@comcast.net).

## **THOREAU ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The PTG is transitioning to a new delivery system for the Thoreau Announcements. In order to continue receiving the Announcements via email, you will need to subscribe to the Thoreau PTG website. Simply go to [www.thoreauptg.org](http://www.thoreauptg.org) and enter your email address in the Subscribe box (located on the right side of the page), and then validate your subscription by following the directions in the confirmation email you receive. Please note that your subscription will not be verified until you click the link included in your confirmation email. We hope you'll subscribe as soon as possible, as the current method of distributing the Thoreau Announcements will be phased out soon. Please be aware that for a short time after subscribing, you may receive two copies of the Announcements until we get your email address deleted from the old email distribution system. Don't worry, this won't take too long. If you have any questions, contact Marcy Shipe, PTG Webmaster, at [webmaster@thoreauptg.org](mailto:webmaster@thoreauptg.org).

## **PTG FUNDRAISING UPDATE**

Thank you to the following families for their donations this past month to the Annual Appeal: Katz, Burt, Francini, Scichilone, Tustin, Xu, Lehmann, Lilly, Rohaly-Medved, Tubbs, Moore, Paillet, Maguire and Keefe.

Our current participation of families is only at 22%. Let's see if we can reach at least 50% participation. No amount is too small! If you have not had a chance to send in your donation, you can contribute by check or online with your credit card by clicking the "Donate" tab at [www.thoreauptg.org](http://www.thoreauptg.org). Please donate today.

*Natalie Gekle and Maria Scichilone, Fundraising Co-chairs*

## **ART ROOM REQUEST**

The art room is in desperate need of plastic egg cartons to use as paint palettes. If you have any to donate please send them in with your child. Thank you for the support,  
*Kate Hiltz, Art Teacher*

## **LICE SCREENING**

A thank you from all of us to the following parents who willingly came in to screen our children for lice: Melanie Bettencourt, Karen Brown, Jillian Donovan, Debbie Duggan, Fiona Fitzgerald, Joanne Gervais, Kate Kaplan, Carla Macy, Diane Randall, Eileen

Robichaud, Holly Rothermel. Thank you to Peggy Wargelin for organizing parent volunteers.

There was a bit of a challenge because of the snow day, but parents came in on Friday and Monday to help complete all the classes except for 1 1/2 fifth grades. I am trying to complete the rest of the classes and those students who were absent. We really could have used more help! Please think about chipping in at the next all school Lice Screening in April-May. Another way you can help is to be sure your child is coming to school with hair that is clean and combed or brushed so that it is easier to check. In the meantime, please plan on checking your own child's hair on a regular basis so that you could identify and treat an infestation early. Thank you,  
*Nicki Morina Richards, RN, MS, Thoreau School Nurse*

### **LUNCH MENU Week of February 14-18**

Monday: Steak & Cheese Sub  
Tuesday: Early Release  
Wednesday: Homemade Mac & Cheese  
Thursday: Chicken Patty  
Friday: Calzone

### **AROUND TOWN**

#### *Our Town, Our Schools, Our Money*

As Concord prepares for the spring Annual Town Meeting, thoughts turn to town and school budgets. Voters want to know how current economic challenges affect our community and its finances. The League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle (LWVCC) invites all residents to attend an open forum, "Our Town, Our Schools, Our Money: Facing Concord's Financial Challenges," on Wednesday, **February 16, 2011, at 7:30pm** in the Town House hearing room. The forum's panel discussion will feature Chris Whelan, Town Manager; Tony Logalbo, Town Finance Director; Diana Rigby, Superintendent of Schools; and John Flaherty, Deputy Superintendent of for Administration and Finance. All members of the public are welcome, and there will be an opportunity for audience questions. Refreshments will be served.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, issues-oriented political organization of women and men of all ages and backgrounds. For more information, visit [www.lwvcc.org](http://www.lwvcc.org) or call 978-254-1598.

**The next issue of Thoreau Announcements will be edited by Anne Mullaney. To submit an item, email [announcements@thoreauptg.org](mailto:announcements@thoreauptg.org). You will receive an e-mail acknowledgment that your submission has been received. Submissions must be school or community related and not commercial in nature.**

**Submissions should be brief, with minimal formatting – no bullet points or underlining, please!**

**Deadline: 9 pm, Monday, February 14, 2011.**

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This message was sent to the Thoreau mailing list.

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For support contact [thoreau-owner@lists.ptg-concord.org](mailto:thoreau-owner@lists.ptg-concord.org).

Thoreau School: <http://thoreau.colonial.net/>

Thoreau School PTG: <http://www.thoreauptg.org/>