

Thoreau Matters

Thoreau Matters is published every two weeks by the PTA and the Thoreau administrative staff to inform parents of important information about school life at Thoreau Middle School.

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Thoreau Web Page: www.fcps.edu/ThoreauMS

PTA Web Page: www.ThoreauPTA.org

February 09, 2012

1. Thoreau's Visual Arts department is proud to announce the following students who received Regional Scholastic Art Awards:

- Ellen Blackburn received a Silver Key Award and Certificate of Merit in drawing.
- Audrey Van Winkle received a Certificate of Merit in sculpture.
- From more than 1,800 entries from FCPS students.

Winning artwork will be on display at Northern Virginia Community College's Ernst Community Cultural Center in Annandale from Friday, February 10, through Thursday, February 23. An awards ceremony for Gold and Silver Key winners is planned for Tuesday, February 21, at 7:30 p.m.

2. Important Dates at George C. Marshall High School

- **International Baccalaureate (IB) Information Night at Marshall High School:** February 15th 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Orientation program for students in grades 7-10 and their parents, featuring current and past Marshall IB Students, Parents, Principal, Director of Student Services and IB Coordinators. Location: Auditorium
- **International Night at Marshall High School:** February 15th at 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Join us in the cafeteria for an evening of fun with food, exhibits & entertainment from around the world.

3. Writing Standards of Learning (SOL) tests will be administered to eighth-grade students on March 5th and 6th.

- On March 5th, eighth-grade students will take the multiple choice portion of the writing test.
- On March 6th, eighth-grade students will take the direct writing component of the test where they will be asked to respond in writing to a prompt.
- It is very important that all students take these tests. Students should be absent only in extreme emergencies. Please make sure your child gets plenty of rest and a good breakfast on these test days.

4. After-school SOL Review Sessions to begin soon. 8th Grade Writing Reviews have already begun.

- Core academic teachers are reviewing assessment data and student samples to determine which students need a review of the Standards of Learning for their respective course. Individual teachers will contact home (via email or phone) for students who are recommended for these review sessions.
- Start dates will be announced by teachers and will be posted on the Thoreau Activities Blackboard site.
 - 7th Grade Reviews will meet after-school as follows:
 - 8th Grade Reviews will meet after-school as follows:

Monday	History
Wednesday	English
Thursday	Math

Monday	Civics/Science
Wednesday	English
Thursday	Math

5. PTA Parent Education Program: Stressed Teens? How to Help Your Child Manage Middle School March 12 at 7:00 pm in the lecture hall.

Middle School can be a pressure cooker filled with power struggles, conflicting impulses, physical growth and strong emotions. Stress, anxiety, and depression can be common, and have an impact on our child's emotional, physical and mental well-being. Learn what to look for and how to help your child manage the middle school years.

Dr. Peter Robbins, MD, Medical Director of Child & Family Counseling Group

6. Telephone Parent Information Line Available in Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese

- Parents who speak Korean, Spanish, or Vietnamese can call a telephone information line to help them learn general information about FCPS and to receive support if they are having difficulty communicating with their child's school due to a language barrier. The Parent Information Line numbers are:
- Spanish—571-423-4950.
- Korean—571-423-4951
- Vietnamese—571-423-4956.

A parent may call at any time, leave a message in his or her language, and receive a return phone call in that language from an FCPS staff member within 24 hours.

7. New After-School Activity! Girls on Track is a curriculum based program for girls in grades 6-8. For more information, please see the attached flyer!

PTA NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Capitol Steps**, the quick witted multi-faceted congressional staffers, will be performing their popular fast-paced musical political satire live **on Sunday, 25 March at 4:00** at the James Madison High School Auditorium. Proceeds to benefit the Class of 2012 All-Night (*Drug Free, Alcohol Free*) Grad Party. To pre-order ticket(s), include your **name, telephone, address & e-mail and mail your \$25 (per ticket)** check payable to: **JMHS All-Night Grad 2500 James Madison Drive Vienna, VA, 22181** or purchase now online <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/214477> or (if available) on the night of the performance will be \$30. (Additional donations for the event will also be accepted). Contact us for additional info here: madisoncapitolsteps@gmail.com.
2. **PTA membership and No-Fuss Fundraiser**- Thank you to all the families who have shown your support of TMS by joining TMS PTA and participating in the No-Fuss Fundraiser. It is never too late to join- there is a full semester of great programs and events ahead. Just go to www.thoreaupta.org and complete the One-Stop membership and No-Fuss fundraiser form.

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Welcome Ms. Mandy Freeman

It is my pleasure and Thoreau's good fortune to introduce Ms. Mandy Freeman, our new assistant principal. She began her career in Fairfax County Public Schools in 1992, as a teacher of Special Education and English, and also served as an Administrative Intern. Mandy is very excited about meeting and getting to know the students and continuing Thoreau's excellence. When you see Mandy around Thoreau, please join me in giving her a warm welcome.

Technology Connected Learning Project

In keeping with Thoreau's continuous drive toward being on the cutting edge of educational best practices that support student achievement, Thoreau has been given a great opportunity to participate in a grant funded Technology Connected Learning Project. This innovative project will allow us to issue each student on the Duck team a Netbook for use at home and at school. As you know, electronic devices and information access are embedded in our students' lives, therefore, we believe it is critical for us to also help students learn to navigate, acquire, discern, and use these tools to support their learning. We are very excited to be moving forward with this project and it has been great to see the enthusiasm of the students.

MAKE THE CUT - Thoreau Students to Cut Their Hair for Others!

In conjunction with preparations for the Spring Musical, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* – set in the 1920s when young women cut and bobbed their hair – The Drama Department, the SCA and the PTA will be sponsoring an exciting charity event here at Thoreau: a hair-cutting party. They will be partnering with Pantene Beautiful Lengths, a charity campaign in association with the American Cancer Society, which encourages people to grow, cut and donate their healthy hair to create real-hair wigs for women who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment. More specifically, this event is being held to honor 8th grader and musical cast member Lija Lusia, who is currently battling Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

The goal is to sign up at least 50 (hopefully more!) Thoreau students to cut and donate their hair in support of Lija and thousands of others. The event will take place on Friday night, March 23, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in Thoreau's cafeteria and gym. To be eligible to donate, hair must be:

- at least 8 inches long (no maximum length) – if curly or wavy, measure when straight;
- Free of permanent color, bleach, or other chemical treatments

Hair will first be ponytailed and cut by a family member or other adult sponsor; it will then be styled for free by volunteer stylists recruited from area hair salons (or donors may choose to visit their own salon after the event for finishing). Pledging will begin in the next week or so during lunches; students must have a permission slip to participate signed by a parent/guardian, and guidelines for preparing one's hair in the coming weeks will be handed out. Each girl who "makes the cut" will receive a t-shirt for their generosity.

Volunteers will also be needed to help recruit stylists from area salons and to help run the event and post-event donations. If you would like to offer your time and services to this worthwhile endeavor, please email Mr. DeLeo at Bernie.DeLeo@fcps.edu or Jill Hecht at President@ThoreauPTA.org.

For a longer, moving look at one of these events, please watch this video at

<http://www.pantene.com/en-US/beautiful-lengths-refresh/Pages/beautiful-lengths-story.aspx>

Please encourage your daughters to participate if they are eligible. We hope to make this a teachable moment for our female students here at Thoreau. With a little personal sacrifice, they can make a huge difference for many young girls like Lija currently battling cancer. Stay tuned to Thoreau Matters for more details in the coming weeks.

IMPORTANT DATES

Week of 2/12 Random Acts of Kindness Week

Mon 2/13 Rising 9th grade course selection sheets due

Thurs 2/15 IB Information evening at Marshall HS-6:30pm

Mon 2/20 President's Day Holiday – No School

Tues 2/21 Band Pre-Assessment Concert at Madison HS-7:00pm

Tues 2/21 School Art Awards Ceremony at NOVA -7:30pm

Thurs 2/23 8th grade Spring Pictures

Fri 2/24 7th grade Spring Pictures

Tues 3/6 SOL English 8 Writing Test (Multiple Choice)

Wed 3/7 SOL English 8 Writing Test (Essay Prompt)

Mon 3/12 PTA Parent Education Program – Lecture Hall 7-9PM

Join Girls on Track NOVA!

An FCPS PTA-Sponsored Program



For more information and to register please go to:

www.gotrnova.org

Girls on Track is a curriculum based program for girls in grades 6-8. Practices combine an innovative and fun curriculum designed exclusively for pre-teen girls addressing specific life skills through the use of games, warm-ups and workouts. The goal of the program is to encourage positive emotional, social, mental, and physical development.

Registration starts 2/21/12 through 2/27/12. If there is space available, late registration is 2/29/12 through 3/4/12. The program begins during the week of 3/12/12, and culminates in a 5K at George Mason University on 5/20/12.

Thoreau GOT will practice on Monday and Wednesday from 3:00-4:00 pm. Head coach is Janice Ware and assistant coaches will be Bill Bell and Mindy Fellows. Please contact Janice Ware at jx3ware@yahoo.com with any questions concerning the program.

Program Fee

Standard fee: \$165

Fee for Financial Aid qualifiers: \$70

Fee for Financial Aid qualifiers (with income under \$30,000): \$17

Financial Assistance - Financial assistance is available for those qualified registrants who can demonstrate eligibility based on financial need. For more information, please go to the GOTR website at www.gotrnova.org