

# Thoreau School PTG Volunteer Booklet

Revised: Spring 2007



Thoreau School  
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# Volunteer Opportunities at Thoreau School

Parent volunteers are the key to providing extracurricular activities, school programs, generating school spirit, community services, and providing the major communication link between school and home. The Parent Teacher Group (PTG) organizes the volunteer activities at Thoreau School. The following pages list the various activities, services, and fundraisers sponsored in whole, or in part, by the PTG. The PTG encourages all parents to become actively involved in their child's learning experiences at Thoreau by volunteering.

Please review the volunteer opportunities and find the ones that overlap with your interests and time availability. While it is recognized that the parents and families of school age children are driven by the many demands of raising healthy, well-rounded citizens, we hope that you will find a volunteer role that suits your schedule and provides the vital assistance that the school relies upon to bring the many programs, speakers, activities, equipment, and services to your children and the Thoreau community.

Another way to be involved is to attend the PTG meetings that are held the second Wednesday of every month at Thoreau school. The meetings provide a link between school administrators and parents. They also include school committee and finance committee reports within the Thoreau School. The Thoreau PTG budget is discussed and requests for funds are voted on at the November and March meetings. This is a great place to ask any questions regarding administrative decisions and proposals. The principal and a teacher representative are usually in attendance at these meetings. The PTG meets with the Alcott and Willard School PTGs for a joint program once a year.

The PTG welcomes any and all offers to help. The sign up for PTG Board positions and committee coordinators takes place in the spring for the following school year. Volunteers for activities are usually arranged closer to the activity. If you would like to learn more about or to volunteer for the opportunities sponsored by the PTG, please contact any of the PTG board members that are listed in the school directory.

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## **Announcement Board Coordinator**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

The Announcement Board is an A-frame that is placed in front of the school. It is intended to increase the awareness of our community to school events. Announcement requests may come from other PTG committee heads or by consulting the PTG calendar and creating related messages.

The AB Coordinator may wish to oversee the Board throughout the school year or form a group of volunteers to rotate the responsibility of posting the announcements.

## **Art Room**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

The main responsibility of the **Art Room Coordinator** is to collect volunteer forms and publish a quarterly schedule of weekly parent volunteers for kindergarten and first grade art classes. Also the Coordinator collects and maintains a list of volunteers for 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades to support the Art Teacher for any special projects including the 5<sup>th</sup> grade art retrospective.

**Art Room Volunteers** assist the Art teacher as directed with your child's class. Often it is helping the children with their projects, helping them clean up and preparing materials. It is a fun way to get to know a class.

### **Time Commitments:**

**Coordinator:** Approximately 8 - 10 hours at the start of the year and 2 - 4 hours mid-year.

**Volunteers:** One-hour time slots during the school day, usually once every 5 weeks.

## **Auction**

## **PTG Fundraiser**

Duration: one evening for adults in the winter

The Thoreau Auction is a fun filled fundraiser and is a combination adult social and auction. In the past we have held the event at the Concord Elks on a Friday evening in late January. Pick a theme and decorate and serve food within the theme. Cash bar is available at the Elks. Solicitations have been done within the Thoreau community (i.e., parents and staff) and not the community at large. Many of the best auction items were the classroom projects created by Thoreau children (one project per class done as a group).

The Steering committee does all the major planning, coordinates the volunteers, coordinates the solicitations, writes the program, hires the caterer, manages the budget, and takes care of all communication with the Thoreau community regarding details of the evening, participation, and attendance.

The Steering committee also organizes committees to take care of classroom projects, auction item organization, decorations, set-up and clean-up, check-in and check-out, and the live auction.

The timeline is as follows-set a date and reserve the location before school ends the previous year. Start setting up the committee and set the theme at this time.

In the early fall, start advertising the date of the event and any pertinent details through fliers and/or Thursday Announcements. Continue to gather any interested volunteers. Begin soliciting for auction. Begin organizing classroom art projects.

Continue to advertise and ask for items throughout the fall, with announcements more frequent a few months before the auction. Make sure all committees are on task.

The month before, complete the program. Take reservations for all those attending. Confirm details for decorating, food, and auction items. Keep up the communication with committee members.

The week before, button up all the details. Try and decorate the evening before. Set up auction items that day. Have fun!!

Do not forget to write thank you notes to all the donors on the Thoreau PTG stationary stating the value of each auction item. This is both to express our appreciation and as a tax receipt.

Steering committee: 3-4 people

Committee: 10-12 people

## **Back to School Night**

## **School activity**

Duration: Usually the third Wednesday after the start of school

This is a night for **parents only** to visit their child's classroom(s) and to meet the teachers. Each teacher gives a brief overview of the goals and expectations in his/her classroom. The evening runs from 7:00-9:00 and includes a brief presentation from the PTG and the Principal.

The room parents provide the refreshments and coordinate with the teachers and the PTG. It is important to clarify the location of the refreshments in advance as some teachers prefer to have food in class and others do not.

**Coordinator: Room Parent Coordinator**

**Volunteers: Room Parents**

## **Birthday Books**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School Year

The PTG buys a selection of books at discount for the Thoreau School Library's Birthday Book Program and then sells them at retail – the profit goes to purchase additional library books. Parents can choose to buy a book from this Birthday Books Collection that the librarian manages. A bookplate is included so that the donation can be made to honor someone special, to celebrate a birthday, to remember a loved one, to thank a teacher, etc. Parents can also donate books to the library that they have purchased elsewhere.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** In September check in with librarian for details, and maximum two hours each month to write a thank you list for Thursday Announcements.

**Volunteers:** None

## **Book Fair**

## **PTG Fundraiser**

Duration: Family Night and 3-4 days in fall

This major annual fundraiser and community event gives students and their families the chance to purchase new and used books, a percentage of which supports Thoreau's annual fundraising efforts. Families can also purchase books to donate to the main library or to classrooms through the Wish List, which contains book titles requested by Thoreau staff. Usually held in October, the Book Fair is open to families one evening for Family Night, and during three school days for classroom visits (parents are also welcome with their children's classrooms). Both new and used books are sold at the fair. Used books are donated by Thoreau families one or two weeks prior to the fair, and unsold used books are donated to charity.

The Book Fair committee is made up of traditionally hard-working, dedicated Thoreau parent volunteers who are willing to invest a lot of time and energy over a concentrated period of time. The committee consists of two New Book Chairs, two Used Book Chairs, a Volunteer Coordinator, a Wish List Coordinator, an Auction Coordinator for Family Night, and a Publicity/Decorations Coordinator. New Book Chairs begin planning at the end of August

**New Book Chairs** are responsible for working with and attending merchandising sessions for Scholastic books (or another vendor), overall planning and scheduling of events (including Family Night), overseeing volunteers to staff the book fair, creating publicity, Wish List development, customizing books and other merchandise for Thoreau, re-ordering books, and daily and final accounting of sales

**Used Book Chairs** are responsible for publicizing used book collection in conjunction with new books, and for coordinating the volunteers to sort and price the used books. They also provide tables for book display, coordinate cash boxes each day for change, provide a tally for daily sales, and finding a recipient to collect unsold used books after the fair.

**The Auction Chair(s)** solicit donations for the silent auction held on Family Night, in coordination with other PTG fundraising efforts. The list of auction items is ready a week or two before the auction so families can bid by proxy, if they wish.

**The Volunteer Coordinator** solicits and schedules volunteers to help set-up, run, and clean up Family Night; man sales tables for new and used books; and provide “customer” help during the fair. She/he also makes necessary schedule changes and provides updated volunteer lists before and during the fair.

**The Wish List Coordinator** holds a “Staff Preview” of new books before the Fair begins, prepares and updates the “Wish List” board before and during the fair, and informs families new to Thoreau about the Wish List program.

**The Publicity/Decoration Coordinator** provides imaginative decorations and “advertising” for the fair, usually related to Scholastic’s annual theme. She/he may also create a special activity for children

**Volunteers:**

Sorting/Pricing	10 to 12 people to sort and price used books for about two hours a day for one week before the fair.
Set-up	3 to 4 people to help set up new and used book display the first day of the Fair.
Fair Duty	24 to 30 people to work at the used and new book table in groups and 6 to 8 during school and evening hours for the three days of the fair.
Clean-up	3 to 4 people to help box used books for charity and return tables to the vendor.

**Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) Family Concerts**

Duration: September/October and May

**Enrichment Activity**

Families may purchase tickets to attend a series of three Boston Symphony Youth concerts held on Saturdays in Symphony Hall, Boston.

Coordinator responsibilities include:

1. Receive ordering information from the Boston Symphony (usually in May).
2. Distribute a notice describing the concert season, dates of concerts, and ordering information.
3. Receive ticket orders and checks made out to the PTG
4. Forward checks to PTG Treasurer who then makes a check to the BSO.
5. Send the ticket order to the BSO.
6. When the tickets arrive (usually in late Sept./early October), distribute the tickets to families who ordered them.

7. Place a reminder notice in Thursday Announcements two weeks before each concert.

Time commitment: 6-8 hours for ordering; 2 hours to distribute tickets.

Volunteers: 1

### **Bottle and Can Drive**

### **PTG Fundraiser**

Duration: One Saturday in the Fall and on going

This is a simple and rewarding fundraiser. Joe Saia, the owner of the West Concord Liquor Store, will match our bottle/can returns, up to \$300, during a Saturday Bottle and Can Drive (usually from 9 am to 3 pm) in the fall. Joe will also continue to collect bottle/can receipts throughout the year for our school.

The **Bottle Return Coordinator** is responsible for contacting Joe Saia at the West Concord Liquor Store to set a date for the drive and for advertising the drive with flyers and an announcement to the Concord Journal. The advertising should be reviewed first by Joe Saia. Several announcements for the drive and additional year round returns should be placed in the Thursday announcements. If you feel truly ambitious, see if other area companies would consider taking their returns to the West Concord Liquor Store and donating the receipts to Thoreau School. Concord Chrysler Plymouth has let us pick-up their returns in the past, however this proved to be extremely dirty and time consuming.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Light work organizing up to 2 months prior to event  
**Volunteers:** 2-4 extremely hard working people, who don't mind touching, counting and sorting bottles and cans.

### **“Box Tops for Education”**

### **PTG Fundraiser**

Duration: School Year

Every family can participate in this fund-raiser. Each General Mills product contains a box top coupon, which can be removed and turned in for cash.

The **Box Top Coordinator** is responsible for a flyer explaining the fundraiser in the initial parent packet in September. A central collection location is established with the approval of the Principal and Assistant Administrator. A wrapped and decorated box is placed at the collection point and various blurbs in the Thursday Announcements indicate which product to collect and where to place the Box Tops. Twice a year, the Box Tops need to be counted, bound in groups of 50, and mailed to General Mills. The current deadlines for submitting Boxtops are 10/31 and 3/31. A check will be issued to our Principal, who will turn it over to the PTG. Checks are mailed on 12/15 and 5/15. (A maximum of \$20,000 can be made with this fund-raiser.)

A collection box/envelope is also located in the Fowler Library so the entire community can participate.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Light work through the school year

**Volunteers:** All families ☺

## **Cake Walk**

## **PTG Family Activity**

**Duration:** One afternoon

The Cake Walk is a Thoreau tradition that provides fun for the entire family. Part of the event is a carnival, part is a cake decorating contest and then of course, the cake walk – a distant relative of musical chairs where the person on the number drawn when the music stops, wins a cake.

The **Cake Walk Coordinator(s)** is responsible for planning the booths, refreshments, activities, soliciting and scheduling volunteers, and supervising the event.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Labor-intensive for 6 weeks prior to and up until the night of the Cake Walk. This is usually done by a committee of 3-6 people.

### **Volunteers:**

**Bakers:** 1 or 2 cakes per family

**Set-up:** 10-12 people to help with: carnival booths, tape the Cake walk, set-up cake table, and prepare refreshments.

**Clean up:** Willing hands to help dismantle the event, wash floors, return tables and otherwise “pick up the pieces”.

**Fair Duty:** Many people needed to work at the carnival booths, cake walk, refreshment area, and ticket tables.

## **CCPI**

## **PTG Service**

**Duration:** School year

CCPI is the parent subcommittee of the Superintendent's Community Advisory Council on Student Health (SCACSH). SCACSH's mission is to encourage and educate the community to help young people to make healthy decisions around: alcohol and other drugs, peer pressure, self-esteem, sexual behavior and personal safety.

Parent reps serve two year terms. They attend monthly CCPI meetings, share insights and information on the health-related concerns relevant to their school. CCPI identifies health issues and initiates parent education programming to address areas of concern. School representatives promote the role of CCPI as a forum for addressing health concerns to their parent community.

## **Chess Club**

## **Enrichment Activity**

Duration: Two 6 week programs – one in the Fall and one in the Spring

The chess club provides children with the opportunity to enhance their chess skills, while playing with other children of all skill levels. The chess club meets for one hour before school for 6 weeks in the Fall and the Spring. For the past number of years we've had a trio of coordinators share the administrative responsibility.

**Coordinator Time Commitment (3):** all sessions for 60 minutes per session and administration (2 pre-season administrative meetings; collection and maintenance of registration information; regular communication to families)

**Volunteers:** 5 to 7 people

## **Children's Program Committee**

## **Enrichment Activity**

Duration: School year

Each year, a large portion of the PTG budget funds a series of seven to ten enrichment programs for students. Examples of these programs include: a visiting author/illustrator demonstrating the craft of writing a children's book; a group of musicians performing multicultural music and including the children in a tribal music event; Mother Goose visiting the kindergarten classrooms in full costume reading her classic poems; an actress performing with multi-media presentation a significant moment and character in history; and a naturalist working with a class outside on school grounds to identify flora and fauna.

The Children's Program committee is made up of six to twelve Thoreau parents and one staff liaison. It has been traditionally a very cohesive and committed group who enjoy the opportunity to bring enriching and exciting events to the students and teachers.

The **Coordinator** facilitates monthly committee meetings, oversees the schedule of events, the production of the events and facilitates planning of next year's programs. The **Coordinator** works with Thoreau staff representatives to provide appropriate programs and to schedule use of the facilities. And the **Coordinator** works with the PTG to provide funding, inform parents of upcoming events, and report on the effectiveness of past programs.

The **committee members** preview and research programs for possible use at Thoreau; work with Thoreau staff representatives to provide appropriate programs and to schedule use of the facilities; produce a program at Thoreau (research individual/organization, contracts program, arrange for use of school facilities, notify teachers of program and be on site the day of event for any trouble shooting). One **member** is liaison to West Suburban Programs Organization, attends meetings to learn about programming opportunities and submits reporting paperwork required for membership. One **member** is liaison to town wide children's Programs group, attends meetings and exchanges schedules of programming. One **member** is a staff person from Thoreau school who provides access to faculty, knowledge of curriculum and

understanding of school policies. One **member** is secretary, or this function is rotated among committee members.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 10 to 15 hours per month

**Committee Members:** 6 to 12 parents rotating through 3 to 6 hour per month commitments (most Children's Programs committee members give a two-year commitment since there is a significant benefit to knowledge and experience built over time.)

### **Council on Aging Luncheon**

### **Community Service**

Duration: Twice a year

Twice a year, in the Winter & Spring, the Thoreau PTG sponsors a luncheon for Senior Citizens at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center. This is a unique opportunity for sharing between the generations and giving back to the community. We have incorporated bringing some children to the center to perform for the seniors and this has been very well received. The coordinator is responsible for arranging the luncheon and coordinating the 5<sup>th</sup> grade chorus visit with the music teacher.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Several hours to schedule the meal and arrange for volunteers.

**Volunteers Needed:** 20 people to help cook meals prior to the luncheon and 4-5 people to serve lunch.

### **Family Math Night**

### **School Activity**

Duration: One evening in the Spring

### **Family Partners**

### **PTG Service**

Duration: Beginning of school

Family Partners is Thoreau's version of the Welcome Wagon. Remember what it felt like to be a new member of Thoreau? A few minutes of your time added to your knowledge and experience can go a long way toward making new Thoreau community members feel at home. The coordinator pairs families who are new to Thoreau School with other families who have a good knowledge of the Thoreau community.

Coordinator time commitment: Labor intensive in August matching up new families with their "old-timer" partners, as well as in late Spring recruiting volunteers. Coordinator typically sends out a flyer in late spring asking outgoing kindergarten families to be family partners with next year's incoming kindergarten and new families. In August, Coordinator obtains a list of all new Thoreau families and matches each family with a family partner. Letters are sent to the new families with their family partner information. Letters are also sent to the family partners with their new family information so that they may call and "welcome" the new families and answer questions.

Volunteers: 1 family for each new Thoreau family to help facilitate communication regarding activities, PTG meetings, fundraisers, school services, and introductions to new faces on an as-needed basis. (Approximately 80 families enter Thoreau School each year.)

## **Family Photos**

## **PTG Fundraiser**

**Duration:** One weekend day and one night in the Fall, a few hours in the Spring and Summer

Family Photos is a fun fall fundraiser for the Thoreau School! This is an opportunity for the school families to have their picture taken by a professional photographer at a sight agreed to by the photographer and the committee. Typically an announcement for the Family Photos goes out in the September mailing to the parents from the PTG. Ideally a date is chosen in the late spring and a 'save the date' item is included in the last *Thursday Announcements*. Families commit \$25 (nominal fee) to reserve their photo shoot and have the option to order pictures at the review night. In the past, photographers have agreed that this \$25 will be donated to the PTG. They have in turn, donated their time to take the photographs.

In the spring, a volunteer is required to find the photographer and schedule a date with him/her. In the fall, a volunteer is required to schedule families, collect the reservation fee for the treasurer, set up picture-taking time slots, make reminder phone calls, be present the day of the photo shoot, and at the review night. The photographer reserves the photo setting, sets up any props, takes and develops the photos and handles the specific order and delivery of the pictures. Christopher Stockman of Acton was the photographer for 2005 and 2006.

**Coordinator time commitment:** One week

**Volunteers:** Five people

## **Field Day**

## **School Activity**

**Duration:** Usually held on a Friday in June

The Thoreau students are treated to a fun day of games, athletics and activities at the end of the year.

There are usually two **Field Day Coordinators** who work with the Physical Education teacher to schedule volunteers and refreshments. The coordinators order ribbons, Popsicles and other supplies for the event. They also solicit and manage volunteers for water and cup donations, water balloon filling, and supervisory duties at the event. Field Day Coordinators ask for Room Parent help with securing volunteers as appropriate.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** About 10-15 hours (April-June). Coordinators meet with the PE teacher to begin planning the event immediately following April vacation. The

coordinators divvy up responsibilities and request Room Parent help as appropriate. Supplies (ribbons, popsicles) are ordered in May.

**Volunteers:** Total of 10-15 volunteers.

## **Geography Quest**

## **Enrichment Activity**

**Duration:** January through February; coordinator also spring and fall

The quest is a non-competitive family-oriented educational activity for the town of Concord. This is a good opportunity for working parents to connect with their children on a school function.

The **Coordinator** responsibilities include:

1. **In the spring**, working with representatives from the Willard and Alcott schools choose a Quest from the existing file of old quests. Work through the spring and summer to revise the old quest, typically adding up-to-date questions. Work from a list of recommended question types. **One** person from the three-elementary-school committee should act as the **lead coordinator**. This person should be responsible for updating the revisions to the quest and distributing the new versions to the other school coordinators. This will require a significant time commitment. **In the fall**, each school coordinator will seek volunteers to test and proofread each draft version of the quest. Include the school librarians and principals in the testing phase. The lead coordinator will revise the quest as needed and also devise an answer sheet, create an answer key, a cover letter to parents, and create a student completion certificate. The lead coordinator will get the Quest, parent cover letter, answer sheet, and certificate copied at the CPS copy center at Ripley, enough for every student at each elementary school. The quests will come with the cover letter stapled to the front. The answer sheets can be three-hole punched to allow insertion of the pencil prizes. (More about that in #4.) Fewer certificates will be needed. Use the number of completed quests for the previous years to estimate the number of certificates needed.

2. Each school coordinator should communicate Quest expenses with the PTG Board, and be responsible for notices in the *Thursday Announcements*. They will also solicit a volunteer to create a poster or bulletin board decoration on the theme of the Quest. The poster is usually placed on a bulletin board outside of the auditorium, and is posted at the beginning of the Quest to help generate interest. The volunteer should check with the school secretary about exact poster placement. Solicit a volunteer to make a box to hold the students' completed quests. Art work from the quest can be used. The box is typically placed in the school library. The school coordinator will also create a cover letter to each classroom teacher that very briefly describes the quest and important dates.

3. Distribute the Quest in the 1<sup>st</sup> week in January to all students. Each student will receive a copy of the quest and the answer sheet. These need to be stapled together prior to distribution. A small group of volunteers makes this task go quickly. The volunteer group will:

assemble (staple) the quests, count the number of quests for each classroom adding one additional for the teacher, include a cover letter to the teacher with the pile, wrap the pile with a rubber band, and place the pile in the teacher's mailbox in the utility room. The correct number of students for each class should be obtained from the school secretary. Extra quests should be left with the school secretary and also the school librarian. One volunteer from the three-school committee should contact the town libraries and give them copies (several weeks in advance, if books need to be placed on reserve). Be sure to give copies of the quest to the principal and the elementary social studies coordinator. Quests are returned to a box in the library. Allow at least 3 weekends from when the Quest is distributed before the due date.

4. Organize 10-12 parent volunteers to read and correct the Quests. This is best done in a group, or "grading party", so that any questions that may arise during the correcting can be answered uniformly. Certificates of completion for each child are also filled out during the grading. Correcting can be done either daytime or evening. Once corrected, return the Quests to the children via the classrooms. Each child who attempts the Quest receives a certificate of completion and a small prize (i.e., a pencil). The target date for returning the corrected quests to the students should be before the February vacation week. One volunteer from the three-school committee can purchase the tokens for all three schools. Use the number of completed quests from the previous years to estimate the number of pencils to buy.

5. The lead coordinator will organize a wrap-up meeting for the coordinators of the three elementary schools. Coordinator will provide the number of students completing the quests and any factual, grammatical or typographical errors that are found in the grading portion of the quest. The lead coordinator will file this information with a copy of all materials used for that year in the geography quest archive binder. If possible, the final copy of the quest, the parent cover letter, the answer sheet, answer key and certificate should be downloaded to a disk for future use. The group will also select the quest to be used the following school year. The lead coordinator for the next school year will take over at this time.

6. For volunteers, there will be 2-4 meetings, plus distribution and correcting the Quests.

**Lead Coordinator time commitment:** 80-100 hours, divided between spring, early fall and mid-winter.

**Coordinator time commitment:** 30-40 hours, divided between spring, early fall and mid-winter.

**Volunteers:** 1-2 coordinators plus 10-12 volunteers to assist with testing, distribution and grading

## **Gift Wrap Sale**

Duration: A few weeks in the Fall

## **PTG Fundraiser**

The PTG sells a great assortment of gift-wrap, products, and chocolates and associated items using one of the companies that packages fundraisers. The Coordinator is responsible for the

distribution and collection of student order forms, the tabulation and ordering of the gift-wrap/chocolates, and the coordination of pick-up times for the wrap/chocolates in the auditorium. Also put notices in the Thursday Announcements and create a flyer for the Back to School packet.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** About 25 +hours.

**Committee:** 4-6 people to tabulate orders (3 hours) and another 4-6 people to distribute orders.

**Volunteers:** families and staff who wish to sell the products

## **Grounds for Learning™ Stewardship Committee      PTG Service**

**Duration:** Summer and school year

Grounds for Learning™ is Thoreau School's outdoor classroom. It encompasses native woodland and restored field habitat. This is an opportunity to manage a natural area, which is used by teachers and their classes for all kinds of outdoor experiences. Jobs will include keeping woodland trails open and free of debris, maintenance of a small man-made pond, control of invasive plants and monitoring the changes and effects of use and management on the classroom through photographs and writing. Members will be working with project designer on the site for the first year and then a management plan will be used as a guide for future care. The level of physical work is light to moderate depending on the areas needing attention.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Probably light. For the first year the project designer, Hasso Ewing, will coordinate the volunteers.

**Volunteers:** 3-4 people that enjoy working outside.

## **Hobby/Collection Fair**

## **School Activity**

**Duration:** Two days in late Winter

The Hobby/Collection Fair is an event sponsored by the PTG. The Fair provides an opportunity for students in the Fourth and Fifth Grades to share their hobbies or collections with teachers, classmates, and parents. The Fair takes place on a Monday evening when it is open to families and also during school on Tuesday for classroom visits. There are some times reserved for set-up and break down for the Fair and parents must accompany their children during this time.

The **Hobby/Collection Fair Coordinator** is responsible for recruiting 3 or 4 volunteers to serve on the committee sometime in late Fall. Organization for the Fair is started after the December break. The committee is responsible for helping with exhibit set-up and break down, and also staffing the exhibit during the time the Fair is open, or recruiting volunteers. The Coordinator is also responsible for assigning the committee members to assist with publicity, poster board distribution, and a bulletin board display.

**Coordinator time commitment:** Approximately 10 to 15 hours prior to the Fair and then a steady flow of work during the Fair itself, but not too labor intensive.

**Committee time commitment:** Approximately 3 to 4 hours prior to the Fair and then helping to staff the Fair on Monday evening and Tuesday morning (approximately 4 hours).

## **Ice Cream Social**

## **School Activity**

**Duration:** One afternoon in September

The Ice Cream Social is the first gathering of the school year, usually held on the first Sunday afternoon (2 – 4 pm.) after school starts. It is open and free for all families and staff. The **Coordinators** need to obtain volunteers, ice cream (donated or bought), toppings, whipped cream, bowls, spoons, napkins, tables, water and cups. Temporary awnings and signs are nice. In the past, tables have also been set up to explain the PTG and other volunteer opportunities at the school.

**Chair:** 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep

**Coordinators:** PTG Grade Level Representatives

**Volunteers:** 20 people for setup, serving and cleanup

## **Kindergarten Orientation**

## **PTG Service**

**Duration:** One afternoon in the spring

Each spring the incoming Kindergarten students come to Thoreau School with their parents to experience a classroom, meet the staff and new friends, take a school bus ride while the parents attend an information session in preparation for the fall. The **Kindergarten Orientation Coordinator** works with the Principal and his/her Assistant to schedule volunteers with registration.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 3 – 4 hours on the day of the event

**Volunteers:** 6 – 7 people to take pictures and register families

## **Library Volunteers**

## **PTG Service**

**Duration:** School Year

Library volunteers help children locate books and material and assist with shelving books and checking books in and out of the library. This is a great way to interact with your child and her/his class.

The **Library Volunteer Coordinator** is responsible for scheduling approximately 100 volunteers who assist the library staff. The coordinator must have access to a computer and calendar software.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Approximately 15 hours at the beginning of the year and 8 hours in mid-October and mid-February.

**Volunteers:** 4 or more from each class

## **Math Club**

## **Enrichment Activity**

**Duration:** Six-week program in Winter

Parent Volunteers work to make before school math games and activities fun for kids. First and second grade Math Club requires attendance by a parent of every child who joins.

The **Math Club Coordinator** is responsible for planning Math Club sessions.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Approximately 15 hours.

**Volunteers:** 1 Leader and helpers for each Math Club.

## **METCO**

## **PTG Service**

**Duration:** School year

METCO families enhance the cultural diversity and expand the sense of community at Thoreau School. Cooperating families from Concord furnish a vital link by acting as a resource for Boston families and providing a “home away from home” on late-bus and other days.

The METCO coordinator’s responsibility primarily falls into two areas: 1) coordinating the METCO program at Thoreau and 2) participating in town-wide METCO meetings and events.

Thoreau School:

1. The coordinator matches participating Boston families with cooperating families from the Thoreau community and follows the families throughout the year to provide support, consistency and harmony.
2. The coordinator communicates regularly with all cooperating families and advises them about upcoming METCO late-bus days, events etc....
3. The coordinator communicates with the Thoreau community as a whole via Thursday Announcements about METCO news and events
4. The coordinator maintains a METCO bulletin board within the school that contains information about METCO news, events etc....

Town-Wide:

1. The coordinator attends Family Friends Council meetings and works with other members of the Council to plan events throughout the year.
2. The coordinator also works with the other elementary volunteer coordinators to plan three annual elementary-wide events (Fall, Winter and Spring) for elementary-age cooperating families.
3. The Thoreau coordinator is responsible for monitoring three of the eight yearly late-buses back to Boston. This responsibility is shared with the volunteer coordinators from Willard and Alcott who are also each responsible for monitoring three late-buses.

It is recommended that the job of coordinator be shared by a committee.

## **Open Table**

## **Community Service**

Duration: Two weeks in the Fall and two weeks in the Spring

The Open Table is a community service where a hot meal is served every Thursday evening in Concord Center for any one who needs a meal. (Other communities hold their Open Tables on other nights of the week.) Groceries are also available to be taken home. The school PTG sponsors a food and paper bag collection for the Open Table twice in the school year. (An individual can contribute any time.)

The **coordinator** is responsible for advertising and writes reminders for the Thursday Announcements. The volunteers collect the food and bags from school and deliver to Open Table on Thursdays (2 each collection drive).

**Coordinator Time commitment:** 5 hours a year

**Volunteers:** Three people for two hours in the fall and two hours in the spring.

## **PAL (Parents-At-Lunch) Coordinator**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

PAL Helper Program (Parents-At-Lunch Helping): PAL helpers assist children during lunch period (1st - 5th grades) going from the cafeteria to the recess area safely. This is a great way to see your child and help out during this important activity of the day.

PAL Volunteer Coordinator: is responsible for scheduling approximately 50 PAL volunteers who assist in the cafeteria.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 10 hours in September, 5 in January, 5 in March.

**Volunteer Commitment:** Approximately 1 time per month in the cafeteria from 11:45 am to 1:10 pm. 2 to 3 volunteers in the cafeteria at a time, 4 days per week (except Tuesdays).

## **Personalization Committee**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

A group dedicated to the personalization of the school. The group acts as a liaison between the parents, students, teachers & PTG members to find ways to represent the school via such vehicles as Art work, photos & school necessities to be enjoyed by members of the Thoreau community. Each year, the committee, in addition to working on new projects, must work to maintain the projects of previous years (i.e. Wall of teacher photos).

Time spent each school year, depends on the projects voted on by the committee and okayed (budget wise) by the PTG for that year.

## **Photographer/Press Liaison**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

The position involves getting publicity exposure for various school activities. Teacher contact is important to receive advance notice of events so the press liaison has sufficient time to develop an outside interest in Thoreau school events. Various media are available, such as videotaping, photography and press. The **Coordinator** attends the PTG meetings, covers events and submits articles or photos to the Concord Journal or pitches the stories to the newspaper. Developing a matrix showing events is helpful.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 2 hours per month in addition to meetings

**Volunteers:** Up to Coordinator

## **Playground Committee**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

This ad-hoc committee may be asked to look into securing or maintaining structures or enhancements for the betterment of the playground. In the past this has included getting playground equipment and the painting of pavement (hopscotch, four-square, a US map).

**Volunteers:** 1-3 people

## **Room Parent Coordinator**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

The **Room Parent Coordinator** is responsible for coordinating classroom room parent activities in partnership with other volunteer committees including:

1. Back to School Night (September), coordinates with PTG
2. Turkey Trot parent volunteers (November), coordinates with Turkey Trot Coordinator

3. Field Day helpers (June), coordinates with Field Day Coordinator

Other responsibilities include:

1. Assign Room Parents to classrooms (usually 2-3 per class) based on class list and the volunteer forms collected in June. If there are vacancies the coordinator will either call potential parents to volunteer as Room Parents and/or place a notice in the first Thursday Announcements for the school year.
2. Start the Room Parent telephone chain as needed.
3. Assemble Room Parent packets and distribute via Thoreau mail or meeting.
4. Assist Room Parents throughout the year by answering questions about the Room Parent responsibilities.

## **Room Parents**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

Responsibilities are divided into two areas. The first includes the activities listed under 'Room Parent Coordinator' activities above. The second area involves coordinating with the classroom teacher to see what parent help is needed throughout the year. The level of volunteer activity varies with the teacher and the grade level; upper grades usually require less parent involvement.

**Volunteers:** At least two per class room

## **School Directory and Email List**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School Year with most time in August and September

The Thoreau School Directory provides the names, addresses, telephone numbers and parent names and email addresses of each Thoreau student by classroom. The directory also provides Room Parent names and important school telephone numbers. A great communication tool! The directory is usually distributed at Back to School night to those who have paid the PTG dues. The **School Directory Coordinator** maintains a database of student, family and other important information for inclusion in the directory and produces a camera ready-copy for printing. In addition, email addresses are maintained on a Thoreau PTG email list that is used for electronic communication from the PTG to families and staff at Thoreau.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Labor intensive during August and September with smaller amounts of time needed in an ongoing basis.

**Volunteers:** None

## **School/Finance Committee Observers Service**

**PTG**

Duration: School year

The School Committee and Finance Committee Observers help to keep the Thoreau community abreast of important issues and lets us know when lobbying efforts are needed. The **Observers** monitor the monthly school and finance committee meetings and report back to the PTG at PTG meetings or via written report.

**Observers Time commitment:** 3 hours up to three times per month for evening meetings.

**Volunteers Needed:** 1 or 2 regular observers for each committee.

## **School Pictures**

**PTG Fundraiser**

Duration: One morning in October

These are the classic school pictures of the children and their classes. The pictures will be taken during the school day in October, outside if the weather permits. The **Coordinator** is responsible for making the arrangements for the Photographer, obtaining the volunteers and attending the picture day to ensure that things run smoothly. One volunteer works with each of the 4 photographers to write the children's names for the photographer, prepare the children for the picture, and retrieve the next class.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** Some prep time in September, 5 to 6 hours on Picture Day

**Volunteers Needed:** 5 on Picture Day

## **SPEDPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory)**

**PTG Service**

Duration: School Year

Serve as a contact between the Concord SPEDPAC and Thoreau Elementary. Duties include staying in touch with the SPEDPAC online; occasionally checking the Thoreau SPEDPAC mailbox to see if there's any correspondence to pass along to the SPEDPAC chair; attending some SPEDPAC meetings throughout the year, particularly so that liaison can publicize SPEDPAC programs and workshops to parents at Thoreau; help principal set up a yearly coffee for parents who are interested in hearing about special ed services and support at Thoreau. Duties last throughout the school year.

## **Spelling Bee**

**PTG Service**

Duration: One Saturday night in February or March

This is a wonderful school event that depends on parents to happen. The students can choose to participate in this scholastic competition. The third and fourth grades compete in teams of

three and are encouraged to have themes and costumes. The fifth graders compete individually. The winner of the fifth grade Bee goes on to represent Thoreau School at the Lowell Sun Spelling Bee. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade bee make up the team for Thoreau at the Concord Ed Fund spelling bee in November.

One **coordinator** is needed for the event logistics and another **coordinator** for administering to the details of the competition. Volunteers are needed to assist with organizes the registration, food, costumes, decorations, publicity, auditorium setup etc. Volunteers also assist in writing 20 to 40 new sentences each, which comply with the national rules. Teachers are often volunteers for the pronouncer and judges.

**Coordinators Time commitments:** Up to 8 hours per week for each of the two coordinators from December to the Bee.

**Volunteers Needed:** 8 to 10

## **Staff Appreciation Luncheon**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: A Tuesday afternoon in May or June

The Staff Appreciation Luncheon is an annual event, conveying our appreciation to teachers and staff for their dedication to our children. In recent years, each luncheon has had a special theme (Mediterranean, Southwestern), with coordinated cuisine, music, decorations, invitations and favors. Parents prepare menu items at home and serve the meal at the home of a Thoreau parent. This event is a big favorite of all in the Thoreau community and many parents are willing to volunteer to help.

The **Luncheon Coordinator** is responsible for coordinating the luncheon committee members who oversee various aspects of the event: Food (usually split between main dishes and desserts), decorations, invitations, setup/cleanup, and favors. The **Coordinator** also facilitates selection of a theme, coordinates selection of date with school office, advertise event in Thursday Announcements and facilitate the sign-up of volunteers, find a Thoreau family willing to host the event and be the Host at the Lunch.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 12-15 hours in planning, 6 hours on the day of the event.

**Volunteers:** Luncheon committee members – 8-10 hours in planning, 6 hours on the day

- Coordinate volunteers and their contributions for a particular aspect of the Luncheon (food, decorations, etc.)
- Help to choose the theme
- Help to set up, serve and clean up the luncheon

## **Thursday Announcements**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School Year

The Thursday Announcements is a weekly publication produced by the PTG. It provides current communication about important dates, activities, fundraisers, and general information of interest to the Thoreau community. The deadline for submissions to the Thursday Announcements is each Friday at 3 pm.

The Thursday Announcements responsibilities break down into two large jobs – the **Editor/Typist Coordinator** and the **Distribution Coordinator**. The **Editor** acts as a typist and general overseer: training and scheduling typists, as well as editing copy, ensuring continuity of issues, and maintaining list of regular events. The **Distribution Coordinator** trains and schedules Distributors and generally oversees the distribution system.

**Coordinators Time Commitments:** 3 – 5 hours per week

**Volunteers:** Typists and Distributors

**Typists** retrieve submissions from the school folder or via email on Friday afternoon and type *Announcements* over the weekend/Monday morning. Completed copy is reviewed by the Editor, PTG President and Thoreau School Principal on Monday, and delivered by the typist to the printer at Ripley Bldg. on Tuesday morning. Printed issues are normally sent back to school via the Wednesday morning “pony”, but in the event of a printing delay, typists must coordinate with distribution staff to ensure that the *Announcements* shipment arrives at Thoreau by Thursday morning.

Typist will usually work in blocks of two or three weeks, and will be responsible for passing on any special instructions (ongoing notices, upcoming deadlines, etc.) that they have received. Work time ranges from one to several hours, depending on typing speed, need for revisions, familiarity with set-up, etc. Access to a computer and a general familiarity with word-processing programs (page layout, formatting, etc.) are needed. An email address is very useful, but not absolutely necessary. General knowledge of school events is also useful.

**Distributors** separate *Announcements* into packets for each classroom, attaching a list of student recipients to each packet. They also prepare *Announcements* mailings for second-home families, and post a copy of the *Announcements* on the library door. This work is done before noon on Thursday - either late Wednesday or early Thursday, and takes about an hour.

## **Turkey Trot**

## **School Activity**

**Duration:** Tuesday morning before Thanksgiving Break

This morning of fun encourages fitness before the Thanksgiving break when we all eat until we burst. The entire school runs (or walks) through the neighborhood on a prearranged course. Permission slips for this activity are enclosed in the student’s information packet at the beginning of the year. Look carefully!

The **Turkey Trot Coordinator** is responsible for scheduling volunteers, collecting all the permission slips and making sure each child has one. The **Coordinator** assigns crossing guards

to spots along the route and asks room parents to make sure sliced oranges and water are provided for each classroom.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 6-10 hours

**Volunteers:** 2 people from each class for about 2 hours

## **Webmaster**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

The Webmaster maintains the PTG portions of the school website, working with the Technology teachers who maintain the CPS portion of the site. This position also involves working with the School Directory person, sharing the job of administering the school electronic distribution lists. (This work could be separated out into a Postmaster role.)

Weekly tasks include posting to the web site the *Thursday Announcements* and Principal page updates. Monthly tasks include updating PTG Meeting Agendas, Minutes, Finances, and SPED PAC Notices. Bi-annual updates include Math Club, Chess Club, and Children's Programs. Some updates are made annually for events such as the Turkey Trot, Auction, etc. Some of this work can be delegated to volunteers.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 1-2 hours/week on average, sporadic, via e-mail

**Volunteers:** TA processing, 1 30 minute session/week.

## **Wish List**

## **PTG Service**

Duration: School year

Occasionally, a teacher or staff member finds a need to augment his/her classroom or office with an unusual article(s) by simply asking or "making a wish". The Wish List provides an opportunity for the Thoreau community to recycle article from home and at the save time, help our educators to stretch that budget dollars a little further. Watch for their wishes published as requested in the Thursday Announcements.

The **coordinator** published wishes and then matches the wishes with donations.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** One to three hours per month.

**Volunteers:** None

## **Year End Picnic**

## **PTG Activity**

Duration: One afternoon in June

We say good-bye in an informal manner with a picnic for the entire family on the school grounds. Bring your own dinner and blanket. Catered picnic meals of chicken, hot dog, or hamburger may be available to purchase at the picnic.

The **coordinator** arranges the provision of meals with the caterer and organizes volunteers.

**Coordinator Time Commitment:** 4 – 5 hours prior to the event.

**Volunteers:** 3 people to set-up tables and 3 people to sell food tickets.

## **PTG Board Positions**

### **Co-Presidents**

- Set agenda for and run monthly board meetings
- Set agenda for and run monthly PTG general meetings
- Attend monthly superintendent of school's PTG Presidents meeting
- Act as a liaison to town-wide PTG committees or events, if applicable
- Submit to Thursday Announcements regularly
- Organize the fall packets for the students
- Speak at the "Back to School" night to the parents
- Briefly speak at teachers' first faculty meeting (day before school starts)
- Oversee PTG Board functions as necessary
- Every 2-3 years, assemble a committee to review and update PTG by-laws
- Responsible for over seeing/editing of Thursday Announcements and creating the distribution list in August

### **Vice President**

- Coordinate the Annual Appeal letter and write the thank you notes
- Be responsible for PTG committees – liaison between committees and the PTG Board
- Support Presidents as needed
- Oversee plans for teacher retirement activities
- Maintain Thoreau School Volunteer Booklet

### **Secretary**

- Take minutes at board meetings and general PTG meetings
- Type and publish minutes for approval at soloing PTG meeting
- Charge of supplies

### **Treasurer**

- Handle all bank accounts and monetary activities of PTG
- Reimburse PTG members for expenses incurred
- Pay any incoming bill for vendors
- Handle finances for fundraisers
- Pay Staff gifts in fall
- Publish monthly update on budget/expenses for PTG meetings
- Act as 'watchdog' to keep PTG spending in line with budget

### **Fundraiser**

- Form and Chair the fundraising committee
- Work with PTG board, develop a plan for meeting current year fundraising goals
- Oversee or organize all PTG fundraising events

## **Grade Level Representatives**

- Organize Ice Cream Social in fall-4<sup>th</sup> grade chairs
- Bring grade level concerns, issues or questions for the PTG
- Assist the PTG committees to publicize children's programming events within appropriate grade levels
- Bring grade level events, activities or other exciting programming to attention of PR liaison or publish in the Thursday Announcements
- Assist Family Partners coordinator in welcoming new families at grade level especially mid-year arrivals
- Arrange a Grade level coffee once in the school year
- Act as the Nominating Committee for Board appointments in March/April
- Maintain the PTG Volunteer Opportunities Publication with Volunteer Coordinator
- Assist Art Room Coordinator with the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Art Retrospective