



Thoreau Demonstration Academy PTSA NEWSLETTER

The Value Of Middle School Athletics

By Tom Padalino

Recently, our sixth grade boys basketball team won their second tournament and the city championship. Our competition cheerleading squad traveled to Dallas to participate in a national competition. And finally our girls volleyball team, both varsity and junior varsity, have begun their season defending their city championships for both squads. With this in mind, I wanted to take a few moments to address the

value of middle school athletics. For some time now, Tulsa Public Schools has taken a supervisory role in the athletic program offered to our students. This means that we provide certified teachers as coaches, financial assistance for equipment, scheduling of games, as well as a whole host of associated responsibilities.

This month I would like to talk about the value for our students of such

an undertaking. Co-curricular activities have long been recognized as providing additional support for students in academic and non-academic areas. "Co-curricular pursuits are integral to the educational program...they underpin the goal of teaching students to be responsible and fulfilled human beings with opportunities that develop

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The Value of Middle School Athletics

character, critical thinking, social skills and talents.” (NASSP, 1996) “Co-curricular activities also provide students with a network of peers and adults who have interests and talents similar to their own. Students who participate have the chance to excel individually, be part of a group, and gain real-life lessons about the importance of teamwork, responsibility, commitment, and hard work. They not only do better than students who do not participate, but also develop other facets of their personalities such as self-esteem, self-confidence, social cooperation, and leadership skills,” (Allison, 1979) (Educational Research Service, 1999).

Of course the notion of “NO-PASS/NO-PLAY” takes on an additional meaning because we have adopted the Oklahoma Secondary School Athletic Association eligibility requirements. I serve as the monitor of student eligibility along with the individual coaches and sponsors. This ensures that your children are truly “student-athletes.”

The requirements for OSSAA are stringent and important. I have personally been a witness to the many benefits that happen for children when co-curricular activities are properly introduced and managed. Not only do students learn a lot about themselves and others through team sports, but research indicates that, “Students who participate in activity programs tend to have higher grade point averages, better attendance records, lower drop out rates and fewer disciplinary problems than students who do not participate,”

(National Federation of State High School Associations, 1999).

Weekly grade checks are conducted according to OSSAA rules and every student is expected to maintain their grades according to those rules. We will continue to offer our extended day program, where students can enroll in daily study halls for a variety of subjects that should provide additional assistance for ANY student who is in need.

While winning competitions, championships and tournaments is special, I also want to stress that it is the attempt to excel that brings real meaning and value to a program. Giving 100% in the effort, becoming a team member, and living the ideals that we want athletics to teach make a program strong and valuable. I am proud of any team, player or coach who can help us achieve that. The lessons learned in trying to win are more important than the actual winning.

I want to share one final quote with you that really sums up what we are attempting to accomplish with this philosophy, which also works very well with our philosophy at Thoreau. “The co-curricular program can be viewed as a training ground for adolescents for participation in fundamentally similar organizations as adults,” (Helbowitsh and Wraga, 1988).

We look forward to hearing from you on how we have conducted our athletic program over the last several months and especially to having your children participate in this very important program. See you at the games.



18th Annual Oklahoma Celebration of Reading Happy 100th Birthday, Oklahoma! Make it a Celebration of Reading

By Carol Anderson, Library Media Specialist

Thoreau Demonstration Academy is joining the Oklahoma Celebration of Reading Association, the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the Oklahoma Reading Association are participating in a 100th Birthday Oklahoma Celebration of Reading. These groups are challenging Oklahoma children to read more by sponsoring the 18th annual Oklahoma Celebration of Reading. This year's theme, "Happy 100th Birthday, Oklahoma! Make it a Celebration of Reading" will give readers unlimited opportunities to explore books and expand their reading capabilities.

In conjunction with Oklahoma's Centennial Celebration of Reading being held in Norman on Friday, April



27, Thoreau will hold its own reading celebration. Thoreau's Celebration of Reading event will include parents, local celebrities and other community members sharing their favorite book with small groups of students during MicroSociety on Friday, April 27.

Volunteers will read to students during Micro, share their favorite book

and discuss reading with the students. Students will need to bring their favorite book to the session and be ready to tell the guest reader why they like the book they selected.

If you know of anyone who might like to be a guest reader, please let me know as soon as possible so I can invite that person to read with us. I will be putting up signs next week announcing the event. Students will receive paper book cut outs to write the title and author of their favorite book. These will be displayed throughout the school. Bookmarks will also be given to the students. Please let your Tribe know about this upcoming event. More information will be distributed later.

Thank you

Technology Student Association

On February 9, 2007, the Thoreau Academy TSA chapter departed from the Service Center yet again for the Arnett Regional Conference in Arnett, Oklahoma. After a lengthy drive, they arrived at their destination and immediately began entering their work in the many available events. A few of these were: Challenging Tech Issues, by Yuliya Shyrokonis and Brooke Cramberg, Prepared Speech by Brooke Cramberg, Problem Solving by Andrew Tollison and John Yuan, and much, much more. The Thoreau chapter did their best to represent their school at all of these competitions.

One of Thoreau's more successful

events was Tech Bowl Test, entered by Paige Westmoreland, Yuliya Shyrokonis and April Gordon. These three students first completed a written test to examine their knowledge of modern and ancient technology. They took second place, and moved on to Tech Bowl Oral, where they competed against another middle school – Mooreland – in a head-to-head round in which the facilitator read various questions to both teams, who then had a specified time to answer the questions by buzzing in. After the twelve questions were read and the score was counted up, it appeared that both schools were tied, and so a thirteenth tiebreaker question was given.

Unfortunately, Thoreau lost the point, and did not move on to the next round. However, they are still proud to have achieved second place in the Tech Bowl Test.

Finally, Thoreau took 4th through 7th place, as well as 10th, in Challenging Tech Issues; 4th in Communication Challenge; 5th in Prepared Speech; 10th in Graphic Design Challenge; 9th in Problem Solving; 2nd and 9th in Tech Bowl Test; and 4th through 6th and 8th through 10th in Technical Design. The Thoreau TSA chapter is immensely proud of their success.



Where Are They Now?

“Where Are They Now?” will spotlight the current status of past Thoreau students. We are very proud of our graduates and want to share their successes and accomplishments with everyone. Each month we will select a few members from past years and bring them back into focus for everyone. If you would like to contribute and have someone highlighted, please feel free to email me at padalto@tulsaschools.org and we will get your graduate placed.

Bradley Seibert

- Senior at Booker T. Washington High School
- Plays on the B.T.W. baseball team
- Plans to major in Engineering
- Wants to attend either Oklahoma State University or Rose-Hulman College in Terre Haute, Indiana
- Received the Eagle Scout Award
- Is a 2007 Oklahoma Academic Scholar

Henry Agnew

- Graduated from Booker T. Washington High School
- Was a National Merit Scholar
- Sophomore at Yale University
- Majoring in Environmental Studies
- Spent spring break 2007 in Bulgaria working in an orphanage teaching

- computer skills and mentoring
- Plays with the Yale University Soccer Club
- During his freshman year rowed for the Yale University
- Crew Team (he was a walk-on)
- Has been selected to intern with Conservation Minnesota where he will assist the state with conservation efforts
- Is a research assistant for a Psychology graduate student

Helen Agnew

- Junior at Booker T. Washington High School
- Is on the Varsity cheer squad
- Member of Key Club
- Met Miss America and the picture will appear on the Tulsa Public Schools website on May 9th.

- Thinking of attending either Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma or Oklahoma Central University

Tiffany Provenzano

- Graduated from Memorial High School in top 5% of her class
- Attending the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida
- Majoring in Public Relations
- Board member of the Concert Committee at the University of Miami
- Majoring in Economics at the Miami School of Business
- Minorng in Music Business at the Frost School of Music
- Works part-time for the Festival Miami concert series
- Hopes to work in the Music

- industry after graduation
- Presently enrolled in the Semester at Sea program through the University of Virginia. Attends classes while aboard the ship MV Explorer as it travels around the world. Will spend 2 to 7 days in each of 12 designated countries. Has visited Puerto Rico, Brazil, South Africa, Mauritius and India. Will visit Malaysia, Viet Nam, Hong Kong, China, Japan and Hawaii. Met Archbishop Desmond Tutu and attended private mass with him during this trip. The semester at sea will end May 14th in San Diego, California.

(For additional information on Semester At Sea visit www.semesteratsea.com)

T-wolves Cheerleaders - 2nd Place at the COA Lone Star Nationals

By Heidi Weber

I am so proud if all of the Thoreau T-wolves cheerleaders! Thank you to everyone for making our first National competition trip a great success and thank you to the parents and girls for all the fun as well as the keepsakes from the trip. We will get some pictures together soon as well as a DVD of the competition! The girls took 2nd place at the Cheerleaders of America (COA) Lone Star Nationals in Dallas, Texas. They are also being considered for the Grand Champion honor for Middle School and

Stunt and individual Awards:

Amy Campbell,
COA National
Individual
Champion

Stunt Groups COA National Champions

Madison
Warren
Deanna Allen
Jessica Murphy
Taylor Duke

First Runner Up

Mary
Greenough
Kelsey Wade
Payton
Stockstill
Ali Peter

2nd Runner Up

Catherine
Ridgeway
Danielle Palmer
LaToya Duhart
Lauren Smith



MAKE THE
RIGHT CALL...
JOIN US FOR OUR

2007 SPORTS BANQUET!

THURSDAY, MAY 17TH @ 7PM
THOREAU CAFETERIA
COST: THOREAU ATHLETES FREE
PARENTS & GUESTS: \$6.00

Please RSVP no later than May 4th. Mail the attached RSVP card to the following address or return it to the front office:

Thoreau Athletic Association
7370 East 71st Street South
Tulsa, OK 74133

Please make sure that you RSVP so we can have enough food for everyone.

We'll have Ricardo's Mexican Dinner, so bring your appetite!

6th Grade Boys take City Basketball Championship

Congratulations to Coach Kristy Hutton and the 6th grade boys' basketball team. The boys are City Champions and went undefeated in the post season tournament, beating Monroe Middle School in the finals. The record for the team was 17-3. That includes winning the Lone Star Tournament. Great job 6th grade boys basketball!





2006-07 PTSA Officers

President

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bcantrell@ecslok.com

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Rhonda Ernst 628-7777
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Deborah Johnson
Deborah.johnson2@att.net

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Carla.kirk@okdhs.org



Valerie Evans Named Volunteer of the Year at Thoreau

Congratulations to Mrs. Valerie Evans the 2006-2007 “Volunteer of the Year at Thoreau!” The PTSA Board along with the faculty and staff are proud to have Mrs. Evans represent our school by virtue of her dedication and commitment to our students and our program. Valerie has worked numerous hours preparing students for their participation in the “Reflections” contest sponsored by PTSA. Her efforts have paid great dividends. Under her leadership, three students received awards in visual arts, three students

received awards in literature, two students received awards in photography, and two students received awards in music. This made a total of ten awards for the school population, a new school record. Mrs. Evans also arranged for these student presentations to be showcased, for the first time, as a part of our Winter Program. In addition, each of these student projects has advanced to the state competition which will be held in April. Great work Valerie, we are proud of you!

Teachers’ Agendas

Teachers’ weekly agendas, calendars, and other useful info are posted at the school’s official website:
<http://tulsaschools.org/schools/thoreau/>

YOUR PTSA NEEDS YOU!!

If you would like to serve PTSA for the 2007-08 school year, in a Board or Committee role, please contact the Nominating Committee: Valerie Evans at vjevans1964@yahoo.com, Jamie Boyd at jamie@keeneroil.com, or Julie Factor at juliefactor@sbcglobal.net.



Foundation Grant Brings WeatherBug to Thoreau

As spring rolls into Tulsa Public Schools, so will a new WeatherBug. However, this epidemic is not like a flu bug. It will not cause any sickness to the staff and students of Thoreau. In fact, this event will enhance student learning and achievement for all students at Thoreau for many years to come.

Joey Newsom, the 8th Grade Mathematics teacher, submitted a Special Project grant proposal to the Foundation for Tulsa Schools in January. The proposal included the purchase of the WeatherBug weather station equipment as well as the Achieve software that teaches a multitude of math and science lessons related to the weather. In early March, the Foundation approved the proposal.

On March 27th, Rachel Maze, Executive Director of the Foundation, proudly presented Mr. Newsom with the \$12,500 check. "We are extremely pleased to fund this project and excited to expand the learning opportunities for the students," said Mrs. Maze. She also commented that the Foundation has contributed over six-million dollars to fund projects, grants and staff development activities for the students and teachers of Tulsa Public Schools.

The WeatherBug tracking station at Thoreau will join the largest weather network in the world. More than 8,000 schools across the United States operate this equipment to integrate live, local weather data and technology into classroom learning. This is accomplished through WeatherBug Achieve, an online teaching tool that automatically embeds live weather readings and images from any station in the network. These interactive lessons enhance the current curriculum and activities that teachers already use in their classroom.

"In the classroom of 2007 we as teachers face students who are



Left to right: Mr. Joey Newsom, Mr. Tom Padalino, Ms. Rachel Maze, Dr. Michael Zolkoski and Mrs. Ruth Ann Fate at the presentation of the check to Thoreau for the Weatherbug program.

constantly bombarded with technology designed to entertain and stimulate their minds. WeatherBug and the interactive lessons will bombard our students with technology designed to increase their knowledge and understanding," Mr. Newsom commented. He and the staff of Thoreau have many creative and exciting activities planned for the implementation of the WeatherBug activities.

Mrs. Kelly Byrd, a Thoreau 6th Grade Math/Science teacher, said, "Having this technology available to our students will be a great addition to the current weather lessons that we already teach. It will spark and interest in learning." The Science and Math teachers have discussed plans for developing a WeatherBug curriculum that can be used in the Extended Day program as well as used to help students master the PASS objectives in their classrooms.

The WeatherBug tracking station at Thoreau will be a part of the Channel 2

weather network. Chief Meteorologist Dan Threlkeld said, "The addition of Thoreau to our weather network will provide the Tulsa community another access point of live weather readings and images of current conditions. We gladly welcome Thoreau." Upon complete installation, internet access to the readings from the Thoreau station will be available to people across the country and people right down the street.

Many people have played a big part in this WeatherBug epidemic. Mr. Newsom expressed, "The Foundation and its many members who provided the funds, Mr. Padalino and the administrative staff at Thoreau who supported and encouraged the idea, as well the teaching staff that have taken on this project are jointly responsible for the success of this project. Thanks to all who have contributed and those will contribute in the future."



Who: Friends and Family of Thoreau Academy

What: Fundraiser for the French Department

When: 4 Wednesdays In April

4 • 11 • 18 • 25 – 4pm to 9pm

Where: Johnnie's Charcoal Broiler's two locations: 8104 S. Sheridan and 5001 S. Harvard

Why: To support our French students' exchanges to France

Just tell your cashier that you are supporting Thoreau Academy and they will credit our account a portion of the meals served that day!

If you have further questions, call Cynthia John (Thoreau Immersion Parents Society) at 808-4538 or Cynthia.John@Cox.Net

Thank you for helping the French Program excel at Thoreau Demonstration Academy – TPS Middle School Of Choice!!

Thanks to your contributions, thoreau ptsa supports new initiatives. Thoreau pledges are helping fund several new initiatives this month. The first is an exciting new after school program, to be announced this spring. Pledges also helped purchase camera equipment for Coach Leyva's outstanding theater program. Finally, thoreau pledges are making possible an important internet safety seminar in conjunction with the Tulsa Police Department on march 5.

Thoreau Pledge

Send your pledge now! Make checks payable to: Thoreau PTSA

Parent name: _____

Student's name: _____

Thoreau pledge: Yes, I pledge \$90 _____ or \$10 month _____

Enclosed: \$90 for the year or \$10 per month for the following months (please circle):

Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec. Jan. Feb. Mar. April May

Return to the school office at Thoreau Demonstration Academy, 7370 E. 71 St., Tulsa, OK 74133



Thoreau Begins Archery Program

The arrows are flying and hitting the target at Thoreau these days. Joey Newsom, 8th Grade Math teacher, saw a television program last spring about the National Archery in Schools Program. Several months later a grant titled, “Bullseye: Reaching the Youth of Tulsa with Archery”, was written and submitted to three potential funding partners. All three partners jumped at the opportunity to fund such a program. The first and largest contributor was the PTSA of Thoreau. Second was the Dollar Thrifty Auto Group with their “Neighbors Together” grant program. The third supporter was the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife and Conservation. The archers of Thoreau currently shoot in a weekly Extended Day class. Plans are in progress for more classes in the future. The program teaches Olympic style target archery with compound bows. Mr. Newsom commented, “The students have learned

quickly about the equipment and most importantly the safety procedures for successful shooting. And, some of them are really talented archers.” Thanks to

all three partners for their interest in reaching kids and putting their support behind this unique to TPS program.



Dear Thoreau Parents

Thank you for your extraordinary participation in Brotherhood Fest. The students had a wonderful time trying all the different foods from various cultures. As an administrator, I miss seeing that “twinkle” in students’ eyes that I experienced as a teacher. During Brotherhood Fest, I had the pleasure of seeing those “twinkles”. Thoreau educators, like me, can dare to try new ideas because parents like you help it happen. Thank you, sincerely.

Audrey Doctor





DATES TO REMEMBER

- April 5 - Tennis @ Jenks
- April 9 - LaSalle group arrives from Amiens
- April 9 - Girls Volleyball @ Edison
- April 10 - LaSalle group starts at Thoreau
- April 10-12 - OCCT Test all grades
- April 10 - Girls Volleyball @ Cleveland
- April 13 - Student Led Conferences 3:30-7:00 p.m.
- April 18 - End of Instruction Test; Algebra I
- April 19 - Tennis @ Lacy Park
- April 20 - Student Led Conferences 3:30-7:30 p.m.
- April 22-26 - OCCT Test; Geography 7th grade
- April 23 - Girls Volleyball @ Edison
- April 24 - 8th grade trip to Ft. Gibson
- April 26 - Tennis @ Riverfield
- April 26 - Archery shoot contest
- April 26 - All City Band Contest
- April 26 - 7th grade trip to Port of Catoosa
- April 26 - Girls Volleyball
- April 27 - Thoreau Tromp 7:00-9:30 p.m.
- April 27 - 6th grade Tour of Tulsa
- April 27 - 7th grade trip to Port of Catoosa
- April 30 - Tennis @ Sapulpa
- April 30 - LaSalle group returns to France
- May 3 - Tennis @ Holland Hall

“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one’s definition of your life, but define yourself.”

- Harvey S. Firestone

“The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.”

- Vince Lombardi

CONTACT INFORMATION

Thoreau Telephone	833-9700
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Attendance	833-9700
Ms. Vick	833-9704
Mrs. Moore	833-9707

Please contact the school office for the next newsletter deadline. Email address for the Trailblazer: thoreaunewsletter@cox.net. Please e-mail your article as a Word attachment.

Thoreau Demonstration Academy – Blazing the trail to academic excellence

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Tulsa, OK 74114

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