

What we don't know

By Tessa Rhodes
Greenville Middle School eighth grade student

Alone a girl walked through the woods wondering what had pushed her to come here when she clearly did not belong. She looked ahead and the trail she stood on seemed to stretch on for forever in front of her, lonely and unappealing, but yet she continued on.

As she walked she saw nothing wonderful. The only thing noticeable was the dull, boring color of green. It was in the slumped flowers, crushed grass, and weeds. The only place it wasn't was in the rotting, dead wood of the branches of broken trees. This was not the way the earth was supposed to look. This was untrimmed, messy, not the orderly, freshness she has always seen of parks in the city.

Slowly she trudged forward, her head hanging. Eventually, a pair of lively hikers passed by chatting quietly. She heard some of their conversation and was amazed by what they were saying. They described scenes of richly colored flora and lively plants. They passed by and as she raised her head she thought about what the ladies had been saying. Then, all at once she saw what they were talking about. As the sun slanted through the trees striking her face and as the wind caressed her cheek she saw it. Her head swung around as she took in the array of flowers from large to small swinging around lazily in the breeze, the graceful arch of the grass, the sheer cliff face, dangerous and imposing, yet still gorgeous. The flutter of leaves high overhead

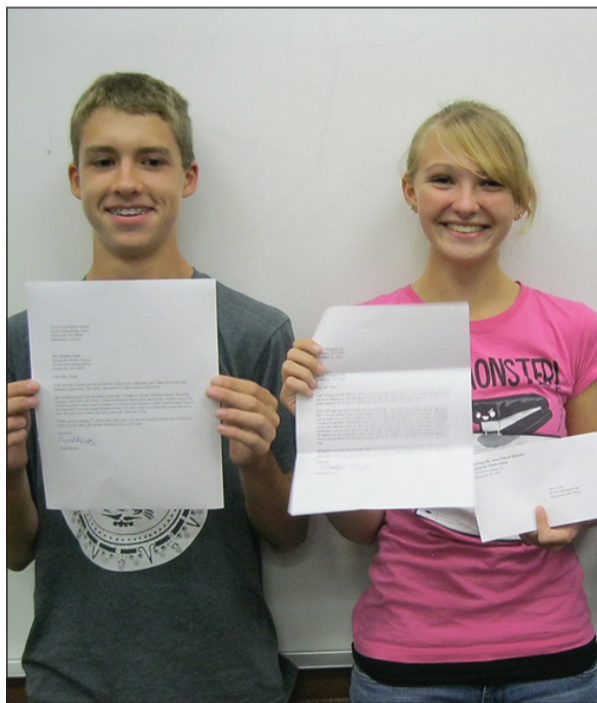


Tessa Rhodes and her friends are shown at Mosquito Hill attending a recent writer's workshop. Tessa's essay won and was read Oct. 1 at the Fenlon Memorial Speaker Series.

and the hum of unseen critters in the shrubs. She saw a vast display of a bunch of individual parts coming together to become one giant, natural, piece of art.

All of a sudden a bug buzzed by her ear, breaking the spell, and she raised a hand to swat at it but something told her not to. Slowly she lowered her hand, opened her ears, and just listened. Instead of the annoying buzz that sounded just like any other bug that she would usually

hear, she heard a melody. A song of dancing legs and whirling wings, a soft rhythm that reverberated through her head. At last she finally understood what had compelled her to come to this wonderful part of the world. It was the fact that she knew nothing about it. She had come hating it which had been wrong but now she knew that even if you do not know about something you can, and should still care and love it.



Noah Rhodes and Brooklyn Tews show the letters they addressed to someone who was a positive influence on them.

Letter assignment goes much further

By Cari Eggen
Greenville Middle School Technology Teacher

Have you been a positive influence in a child's life? At Greenville Middle School (GMS) the eighth grade students worked on writing personal business letters.

One of the assignments was to pick someone, besides their parents, who has been a positive influence in their life. The project went much further than teaching them how to correctly write a letter. It made them think about the people in their lives who have made a difference and why.

The lesson proved to not only be a positive experience for the students, but it warmed the hearts of many adults. One world languages teacher who received a letter commented, "It reminded me of why I teach, to make a difference in the life of a child. It made my day." Others shared that it brought tears to their eyes, was uplifting, and just reassured them that every time you talk with, work with, help or just hang out with a child you are making a difference.

New tool to assess student health

By Cindy Berndt
Greenville Middle School Physical Ed. Teacher

The devastating news is that childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years. The prevalence of obesity among children aged 6 to 11 years increased from 6.5 percent in 1980 to 19.6 percent in 2008. The prevalence of obesity among adolescents age 12 to 19 increased from 5.0 percent to 18.1 percent. Students can lower the risk of becoming obese by making healthier eating and physical activity choices.

At around 1 p.m. on Sept. 30, the New York Post reported, "Michelle Obama has made promoting healthy eating a priority during her tenure as first lady, launching the "Let's Move!" campaign to combat childhood obesity and cultivating a garden at the

White House to encourage children to eat fresh fruits and vegetables." The article goes on to explain how one member of the Jonas Brothers, a popular band, and Disney are now getting on board.

Attention to children's health is nothing new. In 2005 the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation teamed up to create the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Their goal was to connect to place that can have an impact on children health like schools, doctor's offices, homes and communities. Locally, our schools are already on board.

The good news is that Greenville Middle School physical education teachers, Cindy Berndt and Mark Reinemann, along with their colleagues in the Hortonville Area School District heard the calling loud and clear. For several years now,

Berndt and Reinemann have been adding components to their teaching, their equipment and their lesson plans. One of the most current and exciting is the FITNESSGRAM.

The FITNESSGRAM is a research based health assessment that was created more than 20 years ago by the Cooper Institute. This tool provides teachers with the ability to assess student's health as related to "Healthy Fitness Zone" components: aerobic capacity, body composition and muscular strength, endurance, and flexibility. Not only do the students begin to understand their role in making healthy living choices, but communication with parents is made easy and so they too can support their child's wellness.

To learn more go to this website: <http://www.fitnessgram.net/faqparents/>

Butterfly journey



One of Erin Edward's fifth grade Spanish classes joined in the annual "Symbolic Monarch Butterfly Migration" this fall. Over 60,000 students in the United States and Canada created symbolic butterflies and sent them to Mexico. United by the monarch butterfly, children across North America learn authentic lessons of friendship, conservation, cooperation, and ambassadorship. This is the 15th year the program has been in place. To join in their learning you can visit the web site at: http://www.learner.org/jnorth/maps/symbolic_fall2010.html