



Fiddleheads and Feathers



The Newsletter of the Melinda Gray Ardia Environmental Foundation, Ltd.

Winter 2014

Greetings!

I hope everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season with their families and friends. In your busy lives, time to reflect on our blessings is critical. In this newsletter, we think we provide more fodder for reflections as the wisdom and passion of Melinda spreads out among the world and close to home. This year, the MGAEF Board met at the Clarence Nature Center where we were generously hosted and inspired by the passion of Jim Marshall and Ken Schnobrich. We thank them for all they do to for nature education in Clarence. The Foundation has also been active in environmental education across the globe as you can read here. Your support for these endeavours is always appreciated and goes straight to endowment to benefit future generations.

Daniel Ardia, President

Four new curriculum grants awarded

The MGAEF awarded four new curriculum grants for 2013 providing important funds to support innovative environmental science education worldwide. Two grants were international, a consistent outcome for the MGAEF, as we have found our funds leverage more change overseas.

The first grant went to the Wildlife Alliance in Cambodia. Funds will be used to prepare and deliver conservation lessons to both students and teachers in village surrounding a rural National Park.

Our second international grant went to the Corcovado Foundation. In their words:

"The Corcovado Foundation has run an environmental education program since 2003, teaching environmental education classes in 14 schools in Drake Bay and Marino Ballena Bay, and running five extra-curricular activity children groups in local villages... The objective of this project 'Conserving Osa Rainforest' is to raise awareness of the importance of conserving natural resources within the children living

in the four communities most negatively affected by over-exploitation of their resources. For the long-term we aim to foster a new generation of local people that will be motivated to manage the sustainable development of their communities in the future."



Students on the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica working towards forest restoration with the Corcovado Foundation.

Within the USA, our funds went to support an innovative after-school environmental program in a disadvantaged school district in Colorado. The "YES Club is a 13-week, award winning,

science based after school program that engages 4th-5th graders in hands-on investigations of the natural world. YES members discover the wonders of environmental science while using technology for experimentation and developing personal and group leadership qualities. Through guest speakers



Catamount Institute's YES club members inspired by the outdoors in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado

and field trips, YES Club students interact with active professionals working in environmental fields."



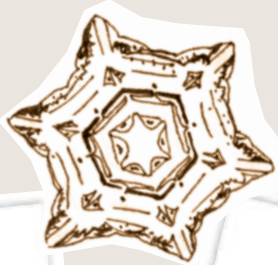
The fourth grant went to a dedicated teacher in Duluth, Minnesota who reminded us of Melinda. In her words: "The focus of this project is to involve 6th grade students in a real world investigation of how to stabilize the streamside study sites at Schmidt Creek in North Shore Community School's school forest. Students will research different methods of streamside stabilization and consult and collaborate with local experts to come up with the best method for Schmidt Creek. Students will then create and implement a plan for stabilizing the study sites".

We thank our many loyal supporters who enable us to sponsor these worthwhile projects.



Letters from Camp...

Last summer MGAEF sent six middle school students (from Buffalo, Clarence, and Newark, NY) to DEC Camp Rushford for one week. We would like to share two letters with you, our sponsors.



ms. Gray,
I would like to thank you for sending me to Camp Rushford, I had an amazing time and a lot about nature. While I was there I learned how to canoe, fish and I played new games that were very fun. But my favourite thing I did while I was there was shoot a bow and arrow. I've always wanted to do that! It was really neat. I made a few friends while I was there and I learned so many new things. Summer camp was a new experience I never even thought of doing but I really enjoyed it! Thank you so much for sending me and allowing me to have a new fun experience. I hope the next person that goes has as much fun I did!

Thank You So Much!
Abigail Belliveau

Abigale Belliveau is from Newark Middle School

Dear Mr Gray,
I just wanted to: thank you for sponsoring me to go to camp Rushford this summer. The camp was beautiful and really taught us all to appreciate nature. Some of my favorite activities were hiking, canoeing, fishing, and camping out under the stars. We also learned the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling. Thank you for providing me with this experience.

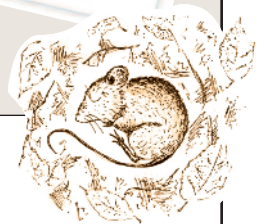
Sincerely,
Bobby O'Brien
CMS Grade 8

Bobby O'Brien is from
Clarence Middle School

Send a Meaningful Gift

MGAEF Wildlife Notecards – A perfect gift, each 12 notecard set features 6 different color photos of African animals taken by Melinda while in Kenya with the Peace Corps. These beautiful cards can be used for any occasion. Cost is \$10.00 per set, plus \$1.00 shipping. Please order using enclosed order form, or online at www.mgaef.org.

Gift "In Honor or Memory Of" – A meaningful way to honor or remember a special person! Make a contribution in their name to MGAEF, where your gift will advance environmental education, and we will send an acknowledgment letter to the honoree or family. Perfect for holidays, birthdays, and remembrance. Please indicate honoree or family name and address so we can send them an acknowledgment letter.



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