



**2009 LINDA JEWELL MEMORIAL ESSAY CONTEST
FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
IN THE
EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Seven \$50 prizes will be awarded for the best essay on one of the topics listed below.

Essays should be 500 or more words in length and will be judged on the basis of originality and scored according to the Edmonds School District Expository Writing guidelines.

Identify your entry with your name, grade, your teacher's name and the name of your school. All essays should be double-spaced and each page should be titled and numbered. Handwritten essays are acceptable if written in ink, are legible and are double spaced. Talk to your family, friends and teachers about these topics. Be sure to identify your sources when quoting facts or ideas. An essay can be disqualified if sources are not identified.

Deadline for submission to your teacher is Thursday, March 26, 2009. Winners will be announced Monday, May 25, 2009. Winners may be asked for permission to publish essays on the Peace Action web site.

Essays will be judged by a group from Peace Action of Snohomish County. If you have questions about the contest, you may call Mrs. Fiege at (425)481-4917, or Mrs. Singh at (425)483-1861.

ESSAY CONTEST TOPICS

- 1. Write a letter to President Barack Obama (www.whitehouse.gov) telling him what you think his three priorities should be. Explain why these three issues are important to you.**
- 2. Does the U.S. adhere to the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty? Do some background research so you can explain your answer.**
- 3. On the Olympic Peninsula of our state, community groups oppose random roadblocks conducted by law enforcement agencies under the umbrella of Homeland Security. The community groups cite invasion of privacy and unwarranted searches. How can we balance national security with civil liberties?**
- 4. Many individuals work to create a better world. Paul Farmer delivers medical care in Haiti and other impoverished areas (www.pih.org). Greg Mortenson builds schools in remote Pakistan and Afghanistan (www.gregmortenson.org), and Nicholas Negroponte works to provide laptop computers to Third-World children (www.onelaptop.org). These are only three good examples. Do you have a good idea to make the world better? Tell us about it.**

Young writers put future in sharp focus

BY Al Hooper

THE BEACON

The devastating effects of overpopulation are all too evident in the Puget Sound, according to two Madrona K-8 School 8th graders.

"Increased development has led to fewer forests, fields and streams," writes Amy Fair, winner of a first-place award in the 2008 Linda Jewell Memorial Essay Contest sponsored by Peace Action of Snohomish County.

"What can we do?" asks Amy. "For starters, people could pitch in to clean the beaches. People could be more aware of their surroundings, recycle instead of dumping trash ... Then maybe, just maybe, we could come up with a plan to help protect the Sound."

The 13th annual Peace Action essay contest offered a range of subjects for students to consider: (1) the history and contributions of immigrants to the U.S.; (2) the effects today of historical events of the Middle Ages; (3) the constitution and presidential signing statements and (4) the impact of population growth on Puget Sound.

And the winning entries were ...

College Place Middle School - Pascal Cloutier and Kirsten Pierce (first place); and Sydney Bennett and Krista Rutz (second place).

Madrona K-8 School - Amy Fair, Grace DeMun and Maryalice Weed (first place); Alan Carter, Abby Corner, Carson Lipscomb and Nils Odegaard (second place); and Brian Nguyen (honorable mention).

Amy Fair was not alone in choosing for her thesis the impact of population growth on the Puget

Sound.

"Clearly, the rise in population can't be stopped," writes her classmate Grace DeMun (both are taught by teacher Rachel Miller). "But there are things that can be done to help stop what is happening to the environment."

Grace's recommendation: join the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group or any organization dedicated to "keeping the Puget Sound as beautiful as it is today."

The other Madrona first-place finisher, Maryalice Weed (taught by Sharon Pollock), chose to focus her writing talent on another key issue: immigration.

"Immigrants have done many things to contribute to our traditions and cultures," Maryalice notes. "Immigrant men and women have taken low-paying jobs that most others would not take. For example, Chinese labor was instrumental in building railroads in the West."

Her conclusion: "Immigrants have invented things that have changed how we live today, and how we lived in the past."

Pascal Cloutier and Kirsten Pierce, two 7th graders whose essays earned first-place awards for College Place Middle School, brought their personal perspective to other vital topics.

"The founding of the Roman Catholic Church, the founding of Islam ... and the hyper-devotion of people to their religion are important events from the medieval era that have affected peace in the world today," writes Pascal Cloutier.

"Even though medieval events took place so long ago," he observes, "people should know that their actions may affect not just themselves but people thousands of years in the future."

Kirsten Pierce (both she and Pascal are taught by Carolyn Gross) chose as her theme "the constitution and presidential signing statements."

Kirsten shrewdly scrutinizes the intent of the fathers of the U.S. Constitution and concludes, "I believe it is illegal for the President of the United States to do a presidential signing statement on a bill presented to him by Congress."

And she supports her conclusion with a barrage of data and telling testimony.

Outstanding essays were also submitted by several talented runners-up: Sydney Bennett and Krista Rutz from College Place, and Alan Carter, Abby Corner, Carson Lipscomb, Nils Odegaard and Brian Nguyen from Madrona.

At a time when many fear the nation's literacy is in sharp decline, and the age of reason along with it, these students show that intelligent discourse is alive and well at Madrona and College Place middle schools.

First-place winners earned award certificates and \$50. Second-place winners received certificates and \$25.

Linda Jewell, a teacher assistant at College Place Middle School, was the inspiration for the first peace essay contest in 1996. After this marvelous lady died of cancer in 1999, the sponsors named the contest in her honor.

Peace Action of Snohomish County was formed in Edmonds in 1983. Its purpose is "to work for issues of peace and justice," says Phyllis Fiege, who chairs the essay committee and who presented the awards to the prize-winning students last week.

Winning essays will be published on the Peace Action website.

peace essay contest

Eleven Edmonds middle-school students recently were named winners of the 13th annual Linda Jewell Memorial Essay Contest sponsored by the Edmonds-based Snohomish County Peace Action group.

The five first-place winners received \$50 each. The six second-place winners received \$25 each.

Winners from College Place Middle School are: first place, **Pascal Cloutier** and **Kirsten Pierce**; second place, **Sydney Bennett** and **Krista Rutz**.

Winners from Madrona K-8 School are: first place, **Amy Fair**, **Grace DeMun** and **Maryalice Weed**; second place, **Alan Carter**, **Abby Corner**, **Carson Lipscomb** and **Nils Odegaard**. Honorable mention went to **Brian Nguyen**.

The essay contest was started by Linda Jewell, who was a teaching assistant at College Place Middle School. After she died of cancer in 1999, Peace Action named the contest in her honor.

Students wrote essays on the following topics: the history and contributions of immigrants to the U.S., the effects of Middle Ages historical events on today, the constitution and presidential signing statements, or the impact of population growth on Puget Sound.