



‘Spring Pond’ author visits Waubesa

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A little more than 15 years ago, Pamela Quinlan and her son released his pet turtle at the pond at Durward’s Glen Retreat Center in Baraboo. As an outdoor tour guide at Durward’s Glen, Quinlan would share the story about releasing the turtle at the pond. Many people would ask if the turtle was still in the pond; she would respond that she believes the turtle is still at the pond.

It was the inquiries about the turtle and the beauty of Durward’s Glen that led Quinlan to spend six weeks writing the Spring Pond series about animals who live at the pond in Durward’s Glen.

“It’s very beautiful and it’s also a national historical place that people can come and experience,” she said, adding people can also stay overnight at the Glen.

Waubesa Intermediate School students had the opportunity to hear Quinlan speak about her books and even meet one of the Spring Pond characters on Wednesday.

“Kids are just more interested and more receptive to their surroundings,” Quinlan said.

Each of the Spring Pond books offers a positive message to children such as change is not bad, never jump to conclusions, not play with matches, teamwork, always be aware of their surroundings and there is no place like home.

“These messages came about sort of subconsciously,” Quinlan said. “It was really when other people read them that they pointed out the messages that were in each book. I did not set out to have the books have a central message.

“I just imagined the animals’ conversations and actions in my writing and the messages just kind of came forth,” she said.

The books are also a way to connect children with nature. The books all feature photos of Durward’s Glen and the animals that inhabit the space. One of the characters, Chorizo the miniature dachshund, was on-hand to visit with the WIS students.

“All of the experiences I had volunteering at Durward’s Glen are definitely in my mind and subconscious. Between my life and my time at the pond, I had a really good basis [for the series],” Quinlan said.

Currently nine of the 41 Spring Pond books have been printed. Quinlan is not the only person responsible for getting the series into the hands of readers. Chris Dreyer provides the graphic designs, Gene Hynek prints the books and Mary Uhler serves as the series’ publisher.

Quinlan hopes more people continue to read her books and families with children will visit Durward’s Glen to see where Herman the Turtle and his friends live.