Meet the Author of “Walden”

A ‘Thoreau’ Life

“Nothing is so much to be feared as fear.”
— Henry David Thoreau

Our own fears can make things much worse than they are.

Early hardships

After college, Henry began teaching. But he quit after two weeks when he was told to hit the students who misbehaved. He started his own school. He and his brother, John, ran it together. However tragedy struck after about three years. His brother died of tetanus after cutting his finger. He died in Henry’s arms. Henry was so upset that he developed symptoms of tetanus himself, even though he did not have the disease. He could not get out of bed for a month, and his family thought he was going to die too. It took him a year to get better.

Rookie Cookie’s Recipe

Bananutty Muffins

This makes a healthy breakfast treat or afternoon snack.

You’ll need:
1 cup whole-wheat flour
1 cup white sugar
1/4 cup fat-free sour cream
1/3 teaspoon baking soda
1/8 teaspoon salt
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1/8 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup mashed ripe bananas
1/3 cup mashed bananas
(3 medium bananas)
1 cup chopped pecans

What to do:
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange muffin liners in muffin pan.
2. Mix flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, combine mashed bananas, sugar, sour cream, egg, and vanilla.
4. Stir banana mixture into flour mixture until just combined. Add chopped pecans. Spoon into prepared muffin pan.
5. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes until done. Makes 10 to 12 muffins.

*You will need an adult’s help with this recipe.*
Meet Morgan Taylor

Morgan Taylor is an illustrator, songwriter and singer. He created an animated character, Gustaf Yellowgold, that he uses in videos. Morgan has also made several CDs.

He grew up in Dayton, Ohio. By the time he was 13 he was getting jobs making art. When he was a teenager, he also began singing in several different music groups.

When he was out of school, he drew his character Gustaf Yellowgold for a picture book he was working on. Gustaf is a creature who came to Earth from the sun.

Morgan ended up turning the character's story into a video. He showed it when he performed with his band. He wrote the music to go along with the video. He now plays with different bands. He lives in New York City. He teaches music to kids and presents animation and music workshops in different schools.

Goldie Goodsport’s Report

Supersport: Danielle Scott-Arruda

Height: 6’2"  Birthday: 10-1-72  Hometown: Baton Rouge, La.

For Danielle Scott-Arruda, the Olympic flame never seems to flicker out. Neither does her competitive fire. The 36-year-old USA volleyball team veteran will be competing in her fourth consecutive Olympics in 2008 after helping the Americans qualify once again this year.

Scott-Arruda joined the USA International team in 1994 and became one of the premier middle blockers in the sport. In the 2007 World Cup she also led the USA in attack percentage (.464).

Before launching her distinguished international career, Scott-Arruda was a three-time All-American and a national Player of the Year at Long Beach State. Her pre-match ritual includes listening to inspirational music and eating some chocolate!

Away from the court, and when she isn’t traveling around the world, Scott-Arruda likes to check e-mail, read, and spend time with her husband.

After completing her athletic career, she wants to develop her foundation, Believer in You, to promote education, arts and sports. On and off the court, her motto is: “Whatever you do, give 100 percent, find something positive in each situation, and smile through the difficult moments.”

Walden Pond

“Life in the Woods”

Henry David Thoreau’s book “Walden; or Life in the Woods” became one of the most important books in American history. In “Walden,” Henry described the beauties of nature. He realized nature is a creation in itself and it does not center around humans.

In “Walden,” he urged people to act as individuals, to be independent. He criticized the importance people place on material things.

One of Henry’s earliest memories was of a picnic he went on with his family when he was about 4 years old. They had picnicked at a pretty area about a mile from Concord called Walden Pond.

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“The question is not what you look at, but what you see.”

— Henry David Thoreau

Seeking balance

Henry did not become a hermit at Walden. His cabin was right off the main road, and people visited often. He wrote that he always tried to be a good neighbor. He also visited his mother.
Thoreau’s Influence

"Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison."
– Henry David Thoreau

If a country is killing innocent people, then good people will protest this, even if they end up in jail too.

Civil disobedience

Henry was part of a group of people who wrote about their belief that there is more to human beings than our bodies. There is a human spirit, too.

He believed that being a good person was more important than being a citizen. He thought that people should disobey laws that they believe to be wrong. But he also realized they could be punished for this disobedience.

To protest slavery, Henry refused to pay one of his taxes for years. Finally, while he was living at Walden Pond, he was arrested, and spent a night in jail.

He was protesting against a human and civil rights problem. He did not say people should use these methods, for example, to protest against homework!

Henry went on to write about fighting peacefully against bad laws. This essay was called "Civil Disobedience."

Henry later supported the actions of John Brown, who fought slavery with violence.

Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes.
– Henry David Thoreau

Henry had a sense of humor, too. Part of his belief in keeping things simple was to avoid anything he did not really need.

After Walden Pond

Henry was not able to make a living by his writing. He supported himself by lecturing and by surveying land, or taking measurements of it. His surveying allowed him to work outside, which he loved. He wrote about nature throughout his life.

His work about how forest trees grow became one of the most important writings about nature.

Look at the stories and ads in your newspaper. Do you believe Thoreau would think people are too worried about material objects today? Why or why not?

This statue shows Henry David Thoreau walking near a replica of his cabin at Walden Pond. He walked about four hours every day.

The world rests on principles.
– Henry David Thoreau

It is people's beliefs in right and wrong that allow humans to get along in the world.

His work lives on

Henry David Thoreau's writings have influenced some of the top leaders of the world. U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. designed his nonviolent protests after reading the work of Thoreau.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy both wrote that Thoreau had guided them.

Experts call Thoreau the father of the environmental movement. John Muir, a founder of the Sierra Club, an environmental group, was moved by Thoreau's words.

Site to see: www.thoreausociety.org

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