

- Use insect repellent,
- Walk in the center of trails, avoid high grass and brush at trail edges;
- Check for ticks daily on yourself, your children and your pets;
- Carefully remove attached ticks (fine-point tweezers work best);
- Shower soon after being outdoors.

So while you're out and about this summer and fall, take these warnings seriously. Lyme disease is not something you want to bring home with you.

. . .

Members of the Times' editorial board include Publisher Paul Barrett, Executive Editor Mike Cutillo, Managing Editor Chuck Schading, News Editor Alan Brignall and Chief Copy Editor Mary Schoonover.

LETTERS

■ Continued from Page 1D

stations and factories. They even give tours and turn methane into energy.

I know there are others out there

who agree with me but who may not feel comfortable saying it out loud for fear of losing friends or neighbors. So I will say it for all of you. Thank you Seneca Meadows for all you do; thank you Waterloo for letting them do it.

TAMMY SPINA
Waterloo

What's on your mind?

Mail: Letters to the Editor, Finger Lakes Times, P.O. Box 393, Geneva 14456

E-mail to: opinion@fltimes.com or go to the letters link at www.fltimes.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FingerLakesTimes

Guidelines: Include your full name, address and daytime telephone number. Submissions should not exceed 400 words. We edit for length and clarity.

■ Continued from Page 1D

standardized testing, or wish that it didn't exist. What it did do was put steel in my spine and make me determined to match, accomplishment for accomplishment, my better-pedigreed classmates. Competition is good, and finding out I'd been chosen "despite" my less-than-impressive test scores made me grateful for the opportunity to shine. This Tarzan was not going to be limited to vine swinging.

My reaction was, apparently, unique. A lot of people oppose standardized tests because of some general (and vague) sense of unfairness. I've been told that the SATs are essentially useless relics of an elitist past, one that rewards affluence and cultural homogeneity, not to mention the ability to memorize facts and numbers.

And now, sadly, my exalted alma mater has decided to agree with them. Effective immediately, Bryn Mawr will no longer consider SATs in admission decisions.

Miss 1240 thinks this is a big mistake.

While I've heard the old canards about standardized tests being prepared by people who don't "get" the realities of underprivileged or minority kids, that doesn't wash with me for two important reasons.

First, a brain is race neutral and bank-account blind. Sure, some kids have the benefit of a better education than others because of money or the lack thereof, but standardized tests are designed to see our aptitude for learning, not what we've already been taught. I was a teacher for five consequential years in three affluent private schools, and the quality of the brains I taught varied, but never because Sloane had more money than Susie or Grayson lived in Merion and Jerome came from Mantua.

Second, and more importantly, telling a student that objective standards don't matter is

shouldn't. This is the classic "give everyone a trophy" mentality, the idea that you deserve an award just for showing up.

While it's good to encourage kids to diversify and appreciate their special, native skills, there is something extremely important in holding them to specific standards of performance (hence the "standardized" in "standardized test").

It was good that the academic counselor at Bryn Mawr recognized I was not the sum total of my numerical scores (and thank God she didn't see my LSAT scores a few years later). I very much appreciated hearing that I was one small fish in a pond with some swimmers who were more naturally gifted than I was. The message was: You have to earn this, Christine.

Of course, you might say that the message I should have gotten was the exact opposite, namely, that I was more important than some standardized label and that the Bryn Mawrtys (cute, eh?) were right to look beyond the objective metrics and accept me for my more unique attributes.

But the fact is that colleges will always look at those attributes because they only have a limited number of spaces and you have to somehow decide between blonde lacrosse player with perfect SATs and brunette debating society president with perfect SATs. There is always room for the things that make us as exceptional and irreplaceable as individual snowflakes in an otherwise monolithic drift.

But measuring up to someone else's standards has some value in a world where trophies are ubiquitous. Because there's a reason Billy Joel was a great songwriter and not an admissions director.

Christine M. Flowers is a lawyer and columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. Email at cflowers1961@gmail.com.

Distributed by MCT Information Services

Make yourself heard

Here are the local addresses, phone numbers and websites of federal and state representatives who serve the Times' readership area. The best way to contact representatives is by going to their individual websites and clicking on Contact for further directions.

House of Representatives

Tom Reed

23rd Congressional District
Republican
433 Exchange St. Geneva, NY 14456
Phone: 759-5229
Fax: 325-4045

Geneva) and much of the Southern Tier.

Dan Maffei

24th Congressional District
Democrat
24 State St., Auburn, NY 13021

State Assembly

Robert C. Oaks

130th Assembly District
Republican
10 Leach Road
Lyons, NY 14489
Phone: 946-5166

assembly.state.ny.us
Includes Ontario County and Varick and north in Seneca County

Philip Palmesano