



Anniversary Story

“Nebraska Children’s Groundwater Festival”

By Jessica Wheeler, The Groundwater Foundation

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The Groundwater Foundation founded the Nebraska Children’s Groundwater Festival in 1988 as a one-day event that focuses on hands-on learning for fourth and fifth grade students from across the state. For 16 years The Groundwater Foundation sponsored and coordinated the festival. Then in 2004 the Central Platte Natural Resources District based out of Grand Island, the home of the festival, took over organizing the event.

I participated in the 2015 Nebraska Children’s Groundwater Festival in May to present The Groundwater Foundation’s Awesome Aquifer kits to students from across Nebraska. The students learned groundwater vocabulary, aquifer geology, groundwater’s connection to surface water, how pollution moves through groundwater, and practiced pumping water with “wells.”



I was inspired by the sheer size of the festival – the attendance (over 800 students and 243 volunteers/presenters!) and all of the different kinds of activities. I was thrilled that students came to the festival with an understanding of groundwater and were eager to learn more. Educating youth about our groundwater resources is so important, especially for an agricultural state where 85% of people get their drinking water from groundwater.

The fact that this festival has been teaching and inspiring students for 27 years is a testament to The Groundwater Foundation – the dedication and passion of the staff members that have worked to create a lasting difference. I am proud to be a part of this organization and its commitment to educating and inspiring action to protect groundwater!

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