



*Tanya Waskey, seventh grader, and teacher Carl Addington, read a letter from author Barthe DeClements.*

## 7th grader gets author's attention

MOUNTAIN VILLAGE — Tanya Waskey, a seventh-grade student in Mountain Village, approached her teacher with a special request recently.

She wanted to know whether it would be possible to write to one of her favorite authors.

Waskey's teacher, Carl Addington, was able to locate the address and phone number of Barthe DeClements, author of several books, including *No Place for Me*, *Five Finger Discount* and *The Sixth Grade Can Really Kill You*.

When he contacted the Washington-

based author by phone, DeClements replied that she would be delighted to correspond with the young reader.

Waskey drafted a letter to DeClements and sent it off. Within about two weeks, Waskey received a two-page hand-written letter from the author, along with two autographed books.

Waskey was very anxious for silent reading period to begin that day.

"The whole thing just fell into place," Addington said about the turn of events. "Ms. DeClements was extremely gracious when I talked to her

on the phone. I explained that when a student out here takes the initiative to make a special request, it is crucial to try to follow it up.

"She replied that, having been a teacher herself for many years, she wholeheartedly agreed."

Waskey's good fortune has sparked an interest among her classmates to try to contact other people in the public eye. Addington is now busy trying to gather addresses of celebrities, ranging from author Judy Blume to basketball player Michael Jordan to the pop group, The New Kids on the Block.