

PTA helps launch geography quiz Web site

It is Geography Awareness Week, and to support the subject, the National PTA, along with National Geographic and 24 other organizations, has sponsored and created a Web site — www.MyWonderfulWorld.org.

There is no category for geography on the STAR tests, but play one of the games available on the site, and maybe your kids will surprise you. Eleven JLS students have qualified for the next level of the National Geographic GeoBee. Mr. Leonel Argumede, who teaches sixth-grade math and science, spearheads the GeoBee effort, aided by Shanna Rockson, a sixth-grade English and social studies teacher.

Last Friday was Diabetes Awareness Day, and to help that cause, selected kindergarten classes made posters about diabetes that will be on display at 25 Churchill Ave. for two weeks. Joan Hobstetter's class at Addison School made one, and according to Katie Bramlett, the Addison PTA president, they did it partly to show solidarity and sympathy for children in the school who have this disease. Linda Lenoir, district nurse, coordinated the effort.

Last Wednesday, the Palo Alto PTA Council honored the school district staff with a warm and wonderful brunch to



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recognize their efforts throughout the year. Attendees included bus drivers, traveling teachers, maintenance staff, landscapers, administrators and school board members. Nearly 50 parents participated and there was no shortage of warm homemade dishes including frittatas, various egg recipes, baked goods and fresh fruits. The PTA Council has been showing its appreciation through this brunch for more than 10 years.

The brunch was a huge success, thanks to hospitality chairs Sunny Dykwel and yours truly, ably assisted by committee members Anna Thayer and Edita Donnelly. The green theme of the brunch was health and ecology, and the centerpieces — miniature kitchen herb gardens — were given to the traveling music and PE teachers who could not attend, since they are always moving between campuses.

"We were all so pleasantly surprised today when we met at the office and found these beautiful herb garden pots were actually for us. We often feel left out since we don't belong to a single campus, so your thoughtfulness is so appreciated," said Karen Dolkas, elementary PE teacher.

PTA Council President Dan Dykwel gave a warm welcome and spoke briefly of the PTA's mission while a slide show on

PTA activities and accomplishments was displayed on a screen. District Superintendent Kevin Skelly acknowledged the work of the district staff and the PTA Council to a full house of more than 120 district personnel. Testimonials of extraordinary service and dedication of district personnel were shared from the management team, parents and school classified staff.

Jeremy Sakakihara, a mechanic and welder who works in the corporate yard building handrails for ramps and repairing playground equipment and other things, is a former Marine who has worked for the district for three years. He summed up his feelings about working for the district. "When you work in the private sector, like at a car dealership, everything you do is about turning a dollar. Here, you are delivering a service."

For information on the PTA Council and future events, visit the Web site at www.paloaltopta.org.

School Matters is happy to hear your feedback. Please e-mail any comments to schoolmatters@paloaltopta.org to reach Preeva Trammiel, who is writing the column this year. Look on the PTA Council Web site, www.paloaltopta.org, and pull down the leftmost menu, and click on "school matters" to see submission guidelines for press releases.