

Geography Awareness Week

November 14-20, 1999

Florida Geographic Alliance

THE HISTORY OF AWARENESS WEEK

> What has the National Geographic Society accomplished?

The geographic alliances have trained more than 108,000 teacher-consultants through summer geography institutes since the program started in 1987.

- NGS has provided advanced training for 14,000 dedicated teachers, working with the best geography minds in the country, to bring more and better geography to classrooms. Each of these teachers has in turn trained 10-20 others.
- 5 million students in grades 4-8 participate in the National geographic Bee.
- More than 100,000 teachers teach geography with NGS materials each November during GAW.
- 46 of 50 governors are supporting our program with a financial commitment in their states.
- 11 states have begun endowments so that geography education will be a priority into perpetuity.
- Also in 2001, for the first time ever, high school seniors can take an advanced placement course in geography before entering college and if they pass, credit hours and tuition costs for the credits will be waived.

> What other progress has been made in geography education?

- Geography content standards are in place or are being developed in more than 80% of the states.
- In 1986, 13% of U.S. students received a geography course; by 1994, that figure had doubled to 26%.

- At one school, the University of Tennessee, 5% of freshmen who signed up for a geography course in 1986 had studied geography in high school. Today, 75% of Tennessee's students take a geography course in high school.
- From 1986 to 1994, the number of geography majors grew by 47% and Ph.D. candidates by 60%.
- Business geography is hot! It's now recognized in many career guides as one of today's top 20 career choices.

IDEAS TO MAKE AWARENESS WEEK ACTIVITIES EFFECTIVE

1. Book sessions at your state Alliance conference and also your state social studies conference. try to book time at any other educational conference held in your area or state. Set up workshops at your school, within the district, and other sites in your area.
2. Work with the local newspaper on publishing a geo-education supplement. NIE contacts might help you here. Depending on your local paper, it might be helpful to have some materials camera-ready for them. Small town newspapers for example, may not have the resources to produce extensive graphics.
3. Take students on field walk around school then play Stop, Drop, and Map where students map the immediate area.
4. Poster Contests; local and state level. Decide levels (example: Grades K-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, or 9-12.) Provide clear guidelines as to size of poster board, materials to be used, theme and dates of GAW need to be on front, student info on back, etc. Provide a guideline for judging---- get outside, independent judges with a set of criteria. Arrange for nice prizes at top level. Display non-winners in stores, at the administration building, highway rest stops, and other places where they might be seen during GAW. You also might use more specific themes for the poster contest as Foods or Places of the Heart.
5. Wear-In Wednesday. On the Wednesday of GAW, have everyone in your school wear T-shirts, depicting various places in the world. have students find their place on a world map. Students might want to use Tripquest (www.tripquest.com) to figure how many miles from home their T-shirt is. Give prizes for the T-shirt from the farthest place. You might also have students choose their T-shirt ahead of time and prepare clues about the place their T-shirt represents. The students could then trade clues. Offer prizes for winners. If your school has a uniform policy or doesn't allow T-shirts for some reason,

you might have the students BRING their T-shirts then just proceed with the activities from that point.

6. Radio Show Questions: Contact your local radio stations EARLY about running a GeoTrivia contest during GAW. Provide the stations with copies of possible questions and answers. Try to arrange for a spot on a local talk show to discuss GAW during that week. Perhaps an interview with your city poster winner could be arranged.
7. Try to arrange with a local bookstore to do displays or story-times or other activities particular with GAW. Borders Bookstore and Barnes & Nobles have been very willing partners in the past.
8. Invite a local politician or local celebrity to teach a geography lesson in your classroom. This should generate a great deal of free publicity.
9. Hold daily geo-contest in your school with questions going out over the PA system. Petition local businesses for inexpensive prizes to give out.
10. Have a postcard contest where students use blank index cards they have decorated with a landmark from their area. Cards should be sent to GAW Coordinators. Devise a rubric for judging. It is always best to have judges who are disassociated with your school.
11. To obtain mayoral proclamations, contact your City or County Manager and they will direct you to the right department.
12. Keep a photo album showing pictures of all your GAW activities.
13. USE YOUR LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALIST. He or she can be your best friend for GAW. Ask the LMS to make displays of geography-related books.
14. Target your public library in the same way as your school librarian.
15. Video explorer of the day. Video teachers pretending to go exploring. Teacher will present clues as to what place he/she is exploring. Students use maps to research and try to discover what place is being explored.
16. Puzzle name tags might be made for students to wear during GAW. Then make a great big puzzle of students, teachers, and administrators' names. Another idea is to make puzzle packs of local maps so that classes can put their piece of the puzzle together with others from their school to make one big puzzle per school. Information on the maps might be population or other information.

17. Postcard collection: have students bring in postcards they have received. Have students find the location of the postcard on a world map.
18. Ask your local mall to display GAW posters or other GAW material you devise.
19. Try to arrange GAW related events with: *grocery stores * utility companies- ask them to insert print the GAW theme and enclose it with the bill. * Meals On Wheels or Meals for the Elderly-have students decorate brown or white lunch bags with the GAW theme then deliver bags to meals programs for use with the lunches.
20. Contact your local travel agencies to see if they will provide any additional help with GAW. They might be able to run GAW promos in their own advertising.
21. If you have a military base in your town, contact the education division and find out if they have a list of guest speakers who would be willing to make classroom visits.
22. Conduct a "Make Cents for Geography" campaign. Provide gallon milk jugs for every classroom and have students bring pennies. provide ice cream for the class that raises the most money. Use the money to purchase a tree or other natural item for your school. Depending upon the amount of money raised, you might be able to purchase some geographic educational items or make a donation in your school's name to an environmental organization.
23. Conduct a bumper sticker contest. Students should come up with a catchy slogan or phrase about GAW that would fit on a bumper sticker.
24. Contact your local television station and ask that they feature GAW posters on their nightly newscasts. Many stations feature children's artwork as background during newscasts.

EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE COMMUNITY

The activity below is adapted from the 1999 Teacher's Handbook prepared by the Society for Geography Awareness Week. What do you consider to be your community? Is it the homes right around yours? Is it your neighborhood? Your town? Your city? Your state? Try to define "community." See what a dictionary says. Do dictionary definitions jibe with yours?

What criteria did you use in defining your community (Physical, cultural, emotional, familial?) For example, is a relative who lives far away a member of your community? Has any development in technology in recent years changed how often you communicate with a relative?

Is it important to be a member of a community? If so, in what ways? (Answers might include safety, security, companionship, cultural richness, quality of life, availability of public services.)

How does modern communications technology (e.g., mail, the Internet, cellular phones, faxes) in general affect the extent of your community?

Do you use e-mail? If so, how far away are your e-mail correspondents? Do you find yourself communicating with people with whom you formerly were out of touch? Do you now use e-mail to communicate with people you used to contact by telephone? If so, why? When might the telephone be more appropriate than e-mail, and vice versa?

While technologies such as cell phones and pagers may be old hat to youngsters, adults in 1999 recognize these devices as relatively new from a historical perspective, and that they have changed the way we operate in an extremely short time. Ask children to interview several of the adults in their lives, asking questions such as: How recently have you started using cell phones or email? What was your reaction to them when they first became available? How quickly-if at all-did you start using them routinely? What technologies existed for communication when you were younger? How has each of these forms of technology affected how you communicate and transact business? Do you see any disadvantages to the new technologies? Discuss with the children what they find out.

FUNNY QUOTES ABOUT TECHNOLOGY

1. "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." --Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943
2. "Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." --Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949
3. "I have traveled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last the year." --The editor in charge of business books for prentice Hall, 1957
4. "But whatis it good for?"--Engineer at the Advanced Computing Systems Division of IBM, 1968, commenting on the microchip
5. "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." --Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977
6. "This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us."--Western Union internal memo, 1876

7. "The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?" --David Sarnoff's associates in response to his urgings for investment in the radio in the 1920's
8. " The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible."--A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)
9. "Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible."--Lord Kelvin, president, Royal Society, 1895
10. "Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value."--Marechal Ferdinand Foch, Professor of Strategy, Ecole Supérieure de Guerre
11. "Everything that can be invented has been invented."--Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899
12. "640K ought to be enough for anybody."--Bill Gates, 1981

GEOGRAPHY QUIZ QUESTIONS

> Group 1

1. To visit the gold-domed capitol in Caracas and see the Orinoco River, you would travel to what country? **Venezuela**
2. The Danube River flows for about 1,800 miles before emptying into what sea? **Black Sea**
3. Many Native Americans live on land set aside for them by the U.S. government. What is the term for this land? **reservation**
4. Chinese are the largest ethnic group in a small island country at the tip of the Malay peninsula. Name this country. **Singapore**
5. What is the term for a stream that flows into a larger river? **Tributary**

> Group 2

1. To see the Parthenon, on the Acropolis, and other ancient ruins, you would travel to what country? **Greece**
2. Which continent in the Western Hemisphere produces and uses the most paper products? **North America**
3. Slovakia and which other present-day central European country became independent in 1993? **Czech Republic**
4. The Parana River forms part of the boundary between Argentina and what other country?

Paraguay

5. What Norwegian word is used for a narrow, steep-sided inlet of the sea that was carved by a glacier? **Fjord**

> Group 3

1. To see lions, gazelles, and zebras in Nairobi National Park, you would travel to what country? **Kenya**
2. Romance languages developed from Latin on which continent? **Europe**
3. Many people practice voodoo in which country on the island of Hispaniola? **Haiti**
4. In July 1998 a tsunami killed about 2,000 on an island that lies across the Torres Strait from Australia. Name this island. **New Guinea**
5. What is the term for the regular rise and fall of the water level in the ocean caused by the gravitational attraction of the sun and moon? **tide**

> Group 4

1. To see pagoda-shaped temples in Kathmandu and climb Mount Everest, you would travel to what country? **Nepal**
2. What mountain range is just east of Seattle? **Cascade Range**
3. In August 1998 terrorist bombings occurred at the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, which is the capital of which East African country? **Tanzania**
4. What South American desert is considered the driest desert on Earth? **Atacama Desert**
5. What is the term for the heat energy within the Earth that can be used to generate electricity? **geothermal energy**

> Group 5

1. To see the running of the bulls in Pamplona and visit the Prado Museum, in Madrid, you would travel to what country? **Spain**
2. The St. Lawrence River flows out of the easternmost of the Great Lakes. Name this lake. **Lake Ontario**
3. Ginza is a well-known shopping and entertainment district in which Japanese city? **Tokyo**
4. In May 1998 nuclear tests conducted by India and by which neighboring South Asian country caused international concern? **Pakistan**
5. What is the name of the winds in the tropics that blow from the east? **trade winds**

