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## Austin Hawks Is AE/MS Geographic Bee Champ

By Jane Slayton  
AE/MS Principal

Austin Hawks won the school-level competition of the National Geographic Bee on Tuesday, November 25. The school-level Bee, at which students answered oral questions on geography, was the first round in the 21st annual National Geographic Bee. The Bee is sponsored by the National Geographic Society.

Austin is a sixth grade student. Austin is the son of Bruce and Barbara Hawks and big brother to Hunter Hawks. Austin is a very good student and a well-respected member of the Andover school community.

The kickoff for this year's Bee was the week of November 10, with thousands of schools around the United States and in the five US territories participating.

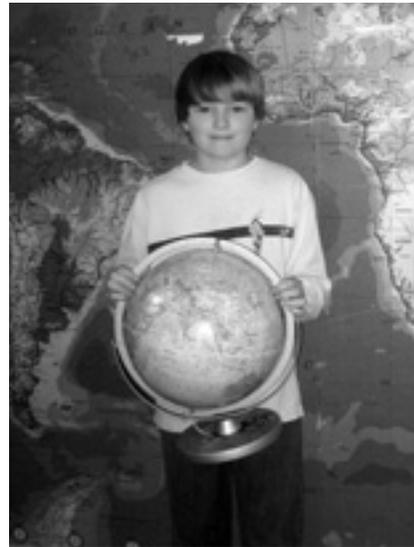
As the school-level winner, Austin

will now take a written test. The top 100 scorers in each state then move onto the state level Bee on April 3, 2009.

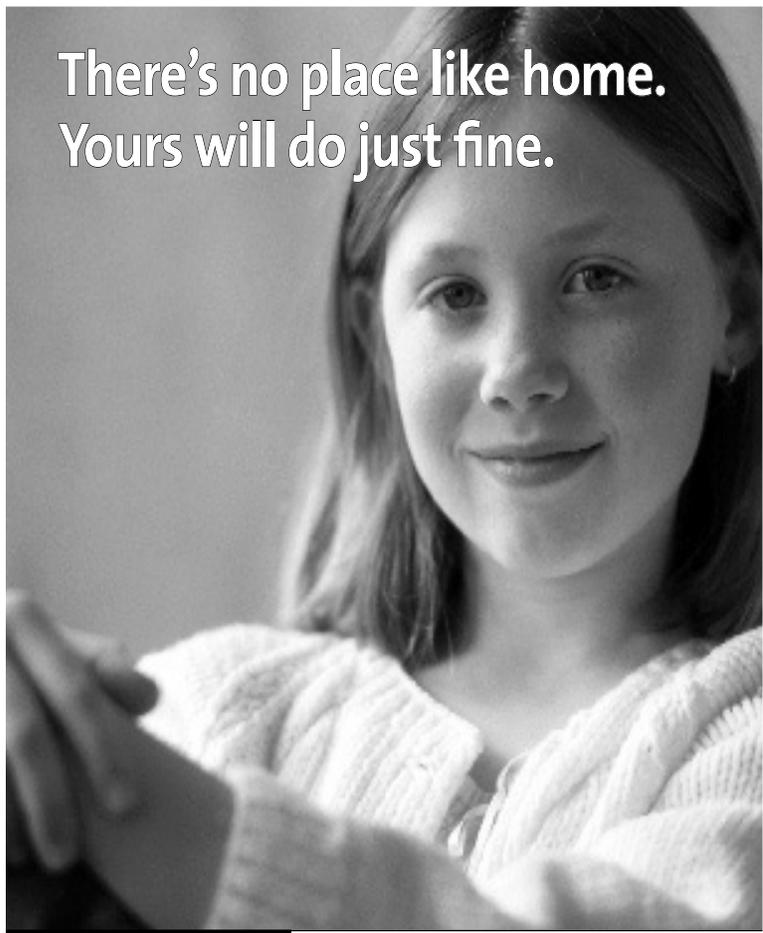
The National Geographic Society will provide an all-expense-paid trip to Washington DC for state champions and teacher-escorts to participate in the National Geographic Bee national championship on May 19 and 20, 2009. The first place winner will receive a \$25,000 college scholarship and a lifetime membership in the Society.

The National Bee is televised. Check local listings for dates and times.

Everyone can test their geographic knowledge with GeoBee Challenge, an online geography quiz at [NationalGeographic.com/geobee](http://NationalGeographic.com/geobee), which poses 10 new questions a day and allows players to e-mail their score to friends and challenge them to do better.



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other better, discover what they have in common, and learn to appreciate their differences.

Students often choose to hang out with only those people who have the same interests, beliefs, and backgrounds that they have. This can make it hard for people to understand each other and can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, teasing, and bullying.

Mix It Up at Lunch Day is a way to bring people together. "It was fun," said Carl Hubbard, a fourth grader. "We got to get together with people and get to know them better."

"It was fun *and* funny," said first grader Shaelyn Hanlon, "because we had to sit at tables with numbers." At AE/MS when students came to lunch, they were each given a number. The tables in the cafeteria were numbered one through 10, and you had to sit at the table that matched your number.

Each table had a paper with conversation starters, such as:

"Who is the youngest at your table?"  
"What kind of pets do people have?"

"Who at your table has traveled?"

During the first and second grade lunch, Mr. Jensen and Mrs. Bent entertained everyone by demonstrating how to start a conversation. Staff and teachers joined in the fun, and during all lunches, grades one through eight, you could hear lively conversation and comments such as "Hey, we both play hockey!" and "I just found out we live near each other!"

Mix It Up at Lunch Day is a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center as part of their ongoing efforts to educate and promote tolerance. Although it is a once-a-year event, it was such a big success at AE/MS that we are planning to have more Mix It Up at Lunch Days throughout this school year. Staff and students have lots of ideas to make these lunches interesting and fun for everyone!

We know you've been meaning to support the *Beacon*, but you just haven't quite gotten...

Well, now you've got one!

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