LaGEA has received its giant traveling map of Louisiana, and the map has already begun making its rounds across the state. On September 24, the map made its inaugural trip, for the Louisiana 4-H Volunteer Leader Association (LA4-H VLA) in Pollock. LaGEA’s Assistant Coordinator Sara Ates handles the map’s schedule. Interested schools, businesses, and community event planners should visit LaGEA’s website http://lagea.ga.lsu.edu for map details and reservation information. LaGEA also thanks Steering Committee member Charla Duhe for the wonderful personalized homemade props accompanying her creative lesson plan for the map on Louisiana’s natural resources.

LaGEA at Professional Conferences

July: LaGEA Steering Committee member Charla Duhe represented Louisiana at a workshop in Denver, Colorado, for developing Giant Traveling Map lesson plans. Charla brought several strategies back home, and these are being used with the map as it travels around the state. LaGEA Steering Committee members Sandra Goldich and Susan Keith attended the NCGE meeting in Tampa. The meeting highlighted many facets of geography in the classroom, but one important area of emphasis was AP Human Geography.

September: Sara Ates and volunteer Nazia Bushra represented LaGEA at the Louisiana 4-H Volunteer Conference at Camp Grant Walker in Pollock and displaying the Giant Map of Louisiana.

October: Robert Rohli and Sara Ates will represent LaGEA at the joint meeting of the Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics / Louisiana Science Teachers Association, in Baton Rouge.

November: Sandra Goldich, Susan Keith, and Robert Rohli will attend the Louisiana Council for Social Studies conference.

Free Annotated Student Atlas of Louisiana Available

LaGEA recently became one of about 20 states to have completed an atlas of their home state for use in the state’s classrooms. The Annotated Student Atlas of Louisiana contains almost 350 maps, along with graphs, charts, images, and accompanying “text blocks” that direct the reader to the relevant part of the map linked to each text block.

Processing visual information is an important component of learning. In fact, recent MRI-based cognitive research confirms that the combination of visual information in the form of maps, charts, and photographs, along with small blocks of textual data, can reinforce learning more effectively than either the visual or textual information acting alone. With its many forms of visual and textual information, geography is an ideal subject for practicing this type of learning and transferring it to other subjects. The “back and forth” between the visual and textual information gives a more interactive and active-learning approach to understanding geographic principles. LaGEA was the “featured state alliance” shortly after the map was introduced.

Please download the atlas at http://lagea.ga.lsu.edu/atlas. Feel free to make copies or have students work exercises from the atlas. LaGEA appreciates the financial support of National Geographic Society’s Education Foundation in making this project possible and available for our students.

Don’t Forget Geography Awareness Week: November 13-19!

Join LaGEA! If you know anyone who would like join LaGEA and receive our newsletter and other updates, please contact Robert Rohli at lagea@lsu.edu. Membership is free!
Geography and the Election

With one month to go before a bitterly divided country chooses its next President, teachers may find themselves in the delicate position of teaching civility along with civics in their classes.

The Geography Teacher, a journal of the National Council for Geographic Education, has just published a special issue: “Support for Teachers During a Challenging Electoral Season.” The journal’s publisher, Routledge, is pleased to offer FREE ACCESS to the entire issue at http://tandfonline.com/toc/rget20/13/3?nav=tocList&

Reflections From Anthony Lewis, LaGEA’s Second Coordinator

Along with Bill Miller, Phil Larimore was the co-founder and co-Coordinator of LaGEA and later served as Coordinator. Phil was also the original Director of the State Finals of the National Geographic Bee. His long-term involvement in LaGEA included organizing and conducting workshops and summer institutes for Louisiana geography teachers. His many LaGEA Teacher Consultants (TCs) loved, admired, and respected him. He mixed well with Louisiana’s K-12 teachers and has done more than anyone to raise the awareness of the need for a strong geography curriculum and to teach the teachers what they needed to know to strengthen geographic education in Louisiana. It was obvious to everyone involved with “the Bee” that Phil supported the 100 young competitors, feeling the joy of the winner and the pain of the 99 who didn’t advance to the national finals. It was also evident that fair play and a level playing field were paramount to Phil during these Bees.

In addition, Phil gave to his community by his active involvement in the Boy Scouts of America in Baton Rouge. He remembered many times about taking the scouts camping and canoeing and was especially fond of telling about the time some of his scouts took his artificial leg and hoisted it up the flagpole. He was a stern disciplinarian and strong advocate of Southern politeness but also enjoyed a good joke even if it was on him. Just two weeks before his death Phil spent the entire day with his scouts, ushering the football game in Tiger Stadium.

More important than anything above, Phil was a loving husband to his wife (Maxine) and a devoted father to his four boys (Walter, William, Phil, and Rick) and, of course, a committed grandfather. He gave to his family and was rewarded a hundredfold for his gruff kindness.

Phil’s death was personal and so I would like to remember him in my story. Just hours before I received word that Phil had died, I was talking to a former cartography student of his about a map that the former student was making, and during the conversation I mentioned that maybe he should change his legend. He responded with “Mickey Mantle is a legend.” When I asked what was that all about, he told me that that is what Phil Larimore would say to students asking what to do with their legend. If the student followed up with “OK, the key,” Phil would retort, “Keys are to unlock doors,” leaving the student dumbfounded. “So what did Phil want you to call the legend?” I asked the former student. He just smiled and said, “He would never tell you.” I smiled to myself thinking that I would enjoy chiding Phil about mistreating his students, not knowing that I would never talk with him again.

I went to many LSU basketball and baseball games with Phil. He expressed his friendliness to everyone we met, to the point of being irritating to me. Even though he had great reserved parking spots close to the stadiums, it still took us an hour to get from the ticket taker to our seats. He stopped and talked to ushers, police, students, cheerleaders, and many others. I miss those excruciatingly long, often-interrupted walks in and out of the games with my friend Phil.

Many thanks to LaGEA’s Sara Ates for continuing to build LaGEA’s social media presence and keeping the LaGEA webpage up to date (http://lagea.ga.lsu.edu). The website, Facebook, and Twitter pages will be used to provide news and updates. Consider posting your geography-related activities on the Facebook or Twitter page. “Like” LaGEA on Facebook and follow us on Twitter by connecting from LaGEA’s website. Also, notice that our e-mail address has changed: lagea@lsu.edu. Let us know what you think!

Facebook, Twitter, Website, and Email

National Geographic Bee 2017

National Geographic Bee registration is open! Help spread the word. Louisiana’s school participation rate has increased for the past two years. Let’s keep the momentum going! It’s a fun way for our students to learn geography, build poise, develop social skills, and master the art of competing gracefully, all at the same time. Find details, including eligibility criteria, at http://nationalgeographic.org/bee. Early bird registration ($100) ends Thursday, December 22, 2016.

Please learn more about LaGEA at http://lagea.ga.lsu.edu