EDUCATION

Getting involved Joining a PTO helps parents

contribute to child's learning experience

arents are often quick to criticize and point fingers of blame when they are dissatisfied with their children's education. They get upset and concerned with the lack of quality learning experiences. Unfortunately, some notoriously complain, whine and expect the work of others to remedy the situation.

Actions speak louder than words. Instead of moaning and groaning, get involved. Be a part of creating positive learning experiences by participating in the Parent Teacher Organization of your child's school.

Parent Teacher Organizations ... THEIR PRO-ACTIVE

INVOLVEMENT CREATES MORE OPPORTUNITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO AND ENHANCE A CHILD'S **EDUCATION.**

(PTO) are created for the sole benefit of the students. Parents volunteer their time to work together with teachers in an effort to raise funds for programs that would normally be unable to exist, due to lack of available educational money. Those who dedicate themselves to the betterment of education do not allow the non-existing funds to destroy opportunities in learning. Instead, their proactive involvement creates more opportunities that contribute to and enhance a child's education.

Fund-raisers are the focus of PTOs. Events are created to be fun, worthwhile, and involve the local community. The whole concept of a community is to help each other by collaborating on important issues that benefit those at need. The work of a PTO directly affects each child as all the money from fund-raisers goes right back to the kids. Together, parents, teachers and



community members raise money for language programs, assemblies, athletics, arts and other enrichment curriculum. This spring, the Tahoe Lake

PTO put together a swim program for the kids in first through fifth grade. The Dollar Point homeowners allowed the use of their pool, where Water Safety Instruction-trained teachers, led by Marijane Rees,

taught boat and

pool safety, life jacket use and swimming technique. This program teaches group problem solving, allowing students to experience each other in a different light. The teachers tie in this information with what is being learned in the classroom. The water safety program keeps the students active by promoting physical movement. The Tahoe Lake PTO raised between \$4,000 and \$5,000 to cover the costs of involving teachers in creative ways to learn about the environment and surroundings of Lake Tahoe through a valu-

able water safety program. "You get out of school what you put into it." This is the philosophy behind Karen Roske's involvement as president of the Tahoe Lake PTO. She wants to be more informed and involved with what her children do in school. Despite the busy hours with her position as Director of Squaw Kids, Squaw Valley's

children ski school programs, Karen dedicates her time to getting information out to parents about the fund-raisers: what they are and what they pay for. According to Karen, most parents are willing to participate in the organization. The difficulty is getting the information to them. Once they know what's going on, parents are willing to partici-

Tahoe Lake's PTO has about two major fund-raisers per year that finance Spanish, water safety, and numerous assemblies. PTOs require active participation by both teachers and parents to be successful. In addition to her responsibilities with Tahoe Lake, Karen Roske participates in Task Force and helps other schools organize their Parent Teacher Organiza-

Parents who are active participants know their contribution to local education makes a difference in the lives of all students. Bridging PTOs and other community members together toward the common cause of Tahoe's students results in positive learning experiences. For more information on how to get involved with Tahoe Lake's PTO or other local PTOs, contact Karen Roske at kjroske@msn.com

— Vicki Isacowitz is a Secondary English teacher who has been educating students since 1996. She is co-founder of Clever Minds Educational Services, providing tutoring for students in grades K-12. For more information, or to comment on her column, please call (530) 584-1791 or e-mail: vicki@cleverminds.org.



Wheels for wheels

The INTERACT Clubs at **North Tahoe and Truckee** High Schools are jointly sponsoring "Wheels for Wheels," a mountain bike ride on June 26 at the Tahoe City Nordic Center. This fun community event will offer participants:

■ Three different courses to ride (5 mile-easy, 10 mileintermediate, 15 mile- difficult). This is a "casual ride." not a race.

■ "Poker run" entry for all participants. Winner gets a two night stay at the Resort at Squaw Creek with two dinners for two. ■ A delicious BBQ lunch after the ride

■ Commemorative T shirts and raffle prizes ■ A "short track" race for competitive riders. This will be spectator friendly so everyone will be able to watch the racers.

The goal of this event is to raise enough money to send 150 wheelchairs to lowincome children and adults in a developing country through the Wheelchair Foundation.

Please visit our Web site at www.ntinteract.org to register and learn more about our event and the foundation.

If your schedule won't allow you to attend, please go to our Web site and donate to this cause. If you donate \$75, you will know that your contribution provided one wheelchair to a someone who couldn't afford one otherwise.

In fact, the Wheelchair Foundation will send you a picture of your recipient in the chair you donated. Register now to ride and have fun with us, or donate if you can not attend. If you have any questions about the event, please call Amanda, Joe or Patti Kimmey at (530) 581-2141.

Tahoe Lake students help fellow fourth grader

Kelsey Robinson, a fourth-grader at Tahoe Lake Elementary School, has been diagnosed with leukemia. She lives with her grandmother and sister and undergoing treatments at UC Davis. To help her family, Tahoe Lake's student council members are organizing a spare change

The community can help by bringing in their spare nickels, dimes, quarters and dollars. The council would like to raise as much money as possible in the next two weeks. The student council is also asking the community to bring in any books at the second to fifth grade reading level for Kelsey to enjoy this summer.

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Carson City 267-6677

Tahoe City Rotary awards three scholarships

The Tahoe City Rotary Club and Foundation awarded three scholarships last week to graduating seniors from North Tahoe High School David Naughton was awarded a four-year scholarship, and will be attending UC Berkeley this fall. David Rich was awarded the Sloan-Kilner Memorial Scholarship and will be attending San Francisco State. Garrett Rosman was awarded the Rotary Vocational Scholarship and will be attending Santa Barbara City College studying culinary arts.

Tahoe City Rotary congratulates the three recipients and wish them well in their academic pursuits.

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