

MIDDLE school

MS eCybermission Awards Presented

Harker students were recognized Nov. 3 for their efforts this spring as members of four Harker eCybermission teams. The Silver Fireflies, one of last year's Gr. 8 eCybermission teams, with freshmen **Namrata Anand, Victor Chen, Jeanette Chin** and **Connie Lu**, placed first in the Southwest Pacific region contest, then went on to compete nationally in Washington, D.C., where they were finalists (see the October Harker News for details).

"The week spent in D.C. was one of the most memorable weeks for the team," said team adviser **Vandana Kadam**. "They got to see real-life applications of math and science in an army setting. The team spent many days during summer in preparation for the national judging,

and it was worth every minute of their time."

Harker had a second Gr. 8 team and two Gr. 7 teams, and all 16 Harker students received savings

bonds from eCybermission representatives in the assembly. The stu-

dents collected a total of \$44,000 for regional wins and the Silver Fireflies team earned an additional \$3,500 each for being national finalists. That makes the Harker winnings \$58,000 in all! To date, Harker students have won 60 percent of eCybermission prizes awarded in the state of California.

Raji Swaminathan, founder of the

program at Harker, noted students get to apply their efforts to real-life issues. "When kids do eCybermission (projects), they are doing projects which help the community directly," she said. "They research on these topics, find and interview experts in the field, learn to design an experiment, analyze data and come up with a solution."

"They also learn to communicate well with each other and work as a team. These are things they may not get from just sitting in a classroom," Swaminathan said. The best part? "Kids realize that they can make a difference in their community," she noted.

Harker eCybermissionaries are hard at work on this year's projects. The seventh graders are



working on projects including studies on cholesterol, the West Nile Virus and E. coli contaminations under the guidance of Swaminathan.

The Gr. 8 teams are working with Kadam on projects related to radiation, alternate energy, nutrition issues and multitasking. For the first time Harker freshmen will be working on an eCybermission project, and will be guided by Kadam. The teams will compete for prizes at the end of the school year, each hoping to qualify for the national competition in June. **MS**



MS Halloween "Spooctacular!"

MS students got into the swing of Halloween this year at the "Spooctacular Middle School Halloween Festival" on Oct. 31. The hour-long gathering of costumed characters included a costume contest and parade, faculty costumes and plenty of chow, including Sno Cones, popcorn, cookies and drinks. Entertainment included a D.J. and games, and "a group of incredible fortune tellers to amaze and stupefy our students with their predictions," said organizer **Bill Bost**.



kudos

■ **Arko Mukherjee**, Gr. 8, has been selected by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation for their Young Scholars Program. The foundation selects high-achieving students and "provides them throughout high school with individualized educational opportunities and support that will enable them to develop their talents and abilities." Mukherjee is one of only 63 students of the 750 applicants to receive the scholarship. "Arko is blessed to have an enriching environment like Harker," said his mother, **Uttara Mukherjee**.

■ **Paulomi Bhattacharya**, Gr. 6, placed in the top 10 in the Gr. 4-6 bracket in the 2006 Summer Poetry Contest sponsored by Creative Communication. For her winning poem, which she wrote in school and submitted last spring, she received a free copy of a book containing the best entries and a savings bond.

Students Head to Shanghai

At press time, 18 Harker students and four Harker chaperones were heading to Shanghai for Harker's annual China exchange program. Watch the January edition for details!



Day of the Dead

Spanish classes constructed shrines to honor the Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead in classrooms and the library.