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Del Rey Hoops for Guinness World Record

By Cathy Dausman



Photo Tod Fierner

Orinda's Del Rey Elementary School student body attempted to set a Guinness World Record Monday for the largest hula hoop workout. Given the 418 student body enrollment, the kindergarten through fifth grade Dolphins could easily topple the previous record held by Allen Elementary School, of Hutchinson, Kan. That record was set May 21, 2012 with 290 participants.

The challenge originated when school parent and event organizer Eric Menke and his daughter read the Guinness book at Christmas. Menke realized the current hula hoop record holders were elementary school students, and thought it would be a perfect fit for Del Rey School, allowing students to dream big and be part of something special. Menke purchased the hoops himself and donated them to the school, pitched the idea to Principal Kirsten Theurer, and followed up with a visit to each of Del Rey's 20 classrooms.

"Raise your hand if you thought you'd ever be a world record holder," he challenged.

Not one hand went up.

Theurer said the application process "went like a roller

coaster," with rules and regulations to follow, affidavits to complete and officials to recruit to oversee the event.

The students practiced their routine for a month with PE teacher Cheryl Collins, who choreographed a five-minute workout set to the song "Let's Go." Collins even donated time during her days off to include the kindergarten classes, and Theurer said one family re-booked a flight to Japan so their student could participate. Both Collins and Theurer were pleased with a dress rehearsal held on site March 22.

After the event, the hula hoops were donated to a Bay Area charity. Now the students must wait for official word from Guinness that they're the new record holders. "It usually takes a few weeks, after we submit all of the paperwork and video footage," Menke said.

The online link for the current largest hula hoop workout is available at www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/7000/largest-hula-hoop-workout.



Photo Tod Fierner

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