STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Students receive various awards at district challenge

On Saturday, over 400 fifth and eighth grade students will be competed in the HOT Shot Havoc Lego League Competi-

The FIRST (For Inspiration Technology) sponsored event able to complete the challenge. will not only be judged on the competition, but in other areas other awards.

The top three teams in competition received medallions for their efforts.

Awards and the HOT (Heroes Of Tomorrow) Awards were given a plaque and a certificate (one for each team). The Team) awards were provided by EDS.

Walt Hickok and his staff from EDS to provide the awards for the event, said HOT team captain Rudy Cender.

Judges Awards Most Photogenic: Robotic Wizards of Highland Elementary, Lori Beach/Marty Neighbor's classroom. The award was given to the team that has a robot with the best "eye appeal." A robot that causes you to say, "Wow."

Oxbow Elementary, Phyllis Grant's classroom. The award was given to the team that has a robot with the craziest design or method of operation. This robot would contradict expec-

tations. Play of the Day: Lego Masters of Oak Valley Middle School, Lauri Rowley's classroom. The award was given to the team whose robot makes the most outstanding play of the day. It may be a recovery from certain disaster, or moving very swiftly to the end of

the game. Stone Cold Stunners of Brooks Elementary, Bob Lacey's classroom. This award was given to the team that expresses ingenuity and creativity in naming their team tions.

and/or robot.

Against All Odds: All teams at Baker Elementary. The award was given to the team that has a robot that appeared to be unable to overcome and Recognition of Science and numerous obstacles, yet was

Best School Spirit: All teams at Kurtz Elementary. The such as team work, spirit, award given to the school that sportsmanship, design and has shown the best school spirit during the event.

HOT Team Awards Best Logo: Brookbodies of Brooks Elementary, Bob Winners of the Judges Lacey's classroom. The award was given to the team that has designed and created the best logo for its team. (By Animation

> Best Robot Design: The Dragon Fighters of Johnson Elementary, Darlene Smith's classroom. The award was given to the team that has an outstanding design for its robot, showing real creativity and functionality, and good programming design. (By Robot

1998 Lego League All-Star Team Award: The Roadrunners of Kurtz Elementary, Chip Lutz's classroom. This Most Bizarre: The Spirals of team was presented a trophy for their overall excellence in teamwork, team spirit and robot design. (By Chairman's

> Other Team's Awards Sportsmanship Award: All teams at Johnson Elementary. The award was given to the team that was most encouraging to other teams. celebrating others' successes as much as their own.

In the competition, The Speed Deamons of Rod Bradsher's class at Muir Middle School took first place honors. The Stone Cold Stunners Most Creative Name: The were second, and the Roadrunners came in third.

> These awards are similar to those the high school robotics teams receive during their regional and national competi-

Lego Maniacs

HOT SHOTS raise havoc

By Courtney Sutherby

Muir Middle School Speed Demons were declared champions of the 1998 FIRST annual HOT SHOT Havoc Lego League Competition.

The team successfully built a robot made of Legos and programmed by computer to run a track designed by the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) organization.

With a total of 543 points in four rounds, the eighth graders in Rod Bradsher's class won the competition for fifth and eighth grade students in Huron Valley.

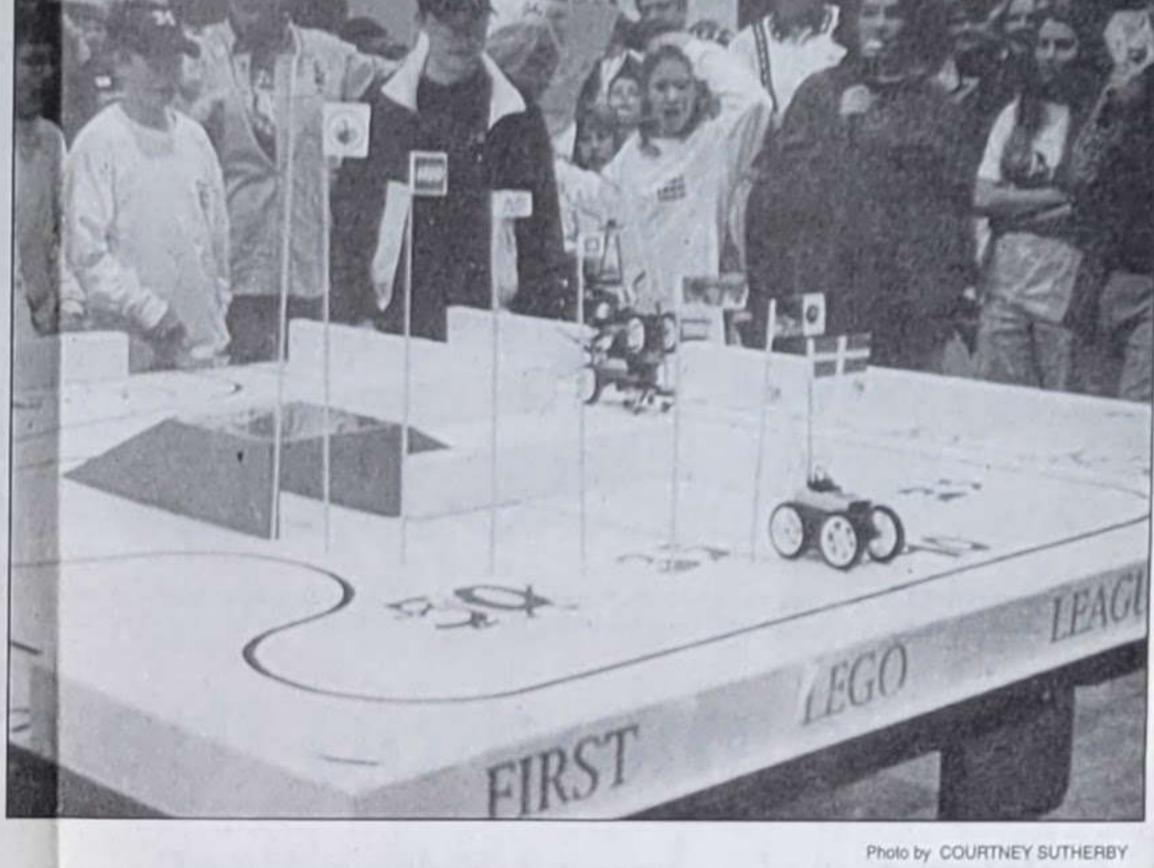
The district was chosen by FIRST as one of eight pilot programs in the nation, and has one third of the total number of students involved in the program.

Each team had two minutes to complete the 100 point track. If it to. If they completed the course advances in medical technology. in under two minutes, the team received one point for each second they were under.

Bob Lacey's Brooks Elementary class were second in the competition with 412 points. The Roadrunner's from Chip Lutz's class at Kurtz Elementary were third with and technology at a young age. 383 points.

Several other awards were given out, including honors for sportsmanship and spirit.

The event packed the stands at with celebrities such as former sisters working on projects at the us (the judges) are having the FIRST robotics competition.



Students watch their Lego robots during HOT SHOT Havoc last Saturday at Lakeland High School.

astronaut and president of FIRST. Andrew Allen.

Dean Kamen, founder of FIRST the team didn't finish, they would was also on hand at the event. receive the number of points for Kamen owns the Deka corporation, the point on the track they made and has won awards for his

"This program is going as well as I thought it would. The only disappointment is that it's unique. The Stone Cold Stunners from I hope in five years it won't be." Kamen said. He would like to see the Lego League spread to other young students to give them the opportunity to excel in science

> "If the rest of the country would do this, I'd feel a lot more comfortable about our future," he said.

The competition is based on a Lakeland High School with par- sports model to get kids interestents, siblings, students and other ed in science and technology. If

high school level, they will want to get involved as well. Kamen compares the Lego League to Little League sports.

"Why do we think that you have to be all grown up to be good at something like science and inventing," Kamen asked. He questioned how good football players would be if they didn't learn how to play until they were

John Knight, vice-president of the Huron Valley School Board. served as one of the judges at the program. The enthusiasm is terrific. Some of these kids are so intense, If something doesn't work, they go back and reprogram it," he said.

His job as a judge wasn't easy. Each robot and team was unique, he said. "All are equally good, and fans. They were able to interact they see their older brothers and it's hard to judge," he said. "All of the bridge to the high school

same problem."

"I think it's outstanding that this lends an athletic atmosphere to to a science program," said White Lake police chief and Lego judge Ronald Stephens. *Bring me back next year, because I can see this developing fast."

Anna Maenhout, who designed the Lego program for FIRST, said she'd like to see the program grow across the country. There are two million young kids in the U.S., and Huron Valley is helping the program to grow across the country," she said.

There are 1,400 kids involved in the pilot program, and she hopes to have 20,000 kids participate next year. The Lego League was also piloted in Denmark, and will involve Singapore next year.

The Lego League is considered

SCHOOL CALENDAR

November 12 Johnson Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences 4-7:30 p.m.

Kurtz Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences

Lakewood Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 13-15

Milford High School Musical

White Lake Middle School

November 18

Parent Council meeting, Room 307 (across from office) 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.

> November 19 Johnson Elementary Native American Tales Assembly

Eighth Grade Band Concert Gymnasium 7 p.m.

Muir Middle School

November 19-21 Lakeland High School Alias, Jack the Ripper Play

District receives excellence award

On October 29, 1998, Huron Valley Schools was awarded an Equity and Excellence Grant from the Oakland Intermediate School District in the amount of approximately \$205,000. This is the largest awarded amount that Huron Valley Schools has received from the Equity and Excellence Grant in years past. The district also received the second highest allowance in Oakland County.

The increase in grant funding is reflective of the district receiving more equitable treatment thanks to the assistance of Oakland Schools Superintendent, Dr. James Redmond. For several years, Huron Valley

Schools, Board of Education. Treasurer, Debbie Squires, has advocated increased funding from the grant. Her work has led to the way from he increase in funding.

The money received will be used to fund stronger literacy skills and staff development in Reading Recovery practices: teacher collaborative on curriculum design in high school: the expansion and support of Choice Theory in the classroom; the Technology Coaches Model for Professional Development, Sound-field Amplification, and support for the Southwest Alternative Middle School.

SCHOOL FORUM

Highland students have FIRST science lesson



Highland Elementary students prepare for the upcoming

By Ellen Cogo

Possibly the greatest feeling in the world comes from conquering an obstacle or reaching a goal. Some fifth and eighth grade Huron Valley students have been given the opportunity to do just that. They are participating in the junior FIRST lego League.

The Lego League us a younger

parallel of the high school FIRST robotics competition. Students have to program a Lego vehicle, that they design and build, to complete an obstacle course. The obstacle course consists of a track with a ramp and a tunnel as short-cuts. Students have a choice of using these shortcuts or trying to complete the track within the time limit given.

High school students from the HOT Team serve as mentors, teaching the children how to use the Lego Mindstorms programming system. These high schoolers enjoy working with the children and teaching them about the motors and gears of their vehicles and giving them the knowledge of how to make those components better complete their task. The program is a pilot. In this

first year of its existence forty of the school districts containing high school FIRST teams across the country requested the chance to test it out, five were initially chosen, our HOT Team being among them. Every Huron Valley school,

except Highland Middle, has at least one class participating. The other FIRST teams chosen are involving only one school. This district is the biggest part of the Lego League containing nearly one-third of the program. On November 7, in the gym of

Lakeland High School, the elementary and middle school students were able to obtain welldeserved recognition for their hard work in a district competition called Hot Shot Havoc. On hand for this grand event will be the president for the FIRST Organization, Andrew Allen, who is a Top Gun graduate, an astronaut and a shuttle commander. Also, inventor Dean Kamen, founder of FIRST. Many other notables from within FIRST and the community will be treated to this demonstration of students honoring outstanding technology and science.

Ellen Cogo is a Junior at Milford High School, and a member of the FIRST robotics team.

Robotics team plans Valentine's dinner dance fund-raiser

By Courtney Sutherby

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and the Heroes of Tomorrow (HOT) want to help you recelebrate.

The robotics team will hold their second annual Valentine's Day Dinner Dance on Saturday, Feb. 13 at Baker's of Milford.

A \$30 ticket will include a buffet F dinner and entertainment for the evening. A cash bar is available. in Tickets can be purchased from dany team member, or by calling a

Karen Brinker at (248) 887-7138. J They can also be purchased by p cash or credit card at Baker's.

Entire tables of 10 can be reserved for \$300.

Both a live and silent auction au will be offered again this year.

There was friendly competition Snon a lot of items last year," said His HOT parent booster Suzanne pur Fleming.

Some of the live auction items tril include his and her Seiko watches donated by Rottermond's Jewelers, au a piece of jewelry from McMartin's sai

Jewelry Arts Gallery, and a complete set of Teeny Beanie Babies by from McDonald's. (2)

Many area merchants have also contributed items for the silent auction, including Milford Glass, which donated a door mirror, and Small Business Consultants of Highland, which contributed computer software and accessories. Several businesses have also contributed gift certificates.

"Everyone went home with an auction item last year," Fleming Issaid.

Donations for the event can still tide be made by calling Fleming at Ox (248) 684-0727.

Entertainment will be provided may be Carl Strand of Rick Jefferies extended to the auction.

Entertainment, who also donated to the auction.

"People had a great time dancing last year," Fleming said. "It was a great success and a lot of fun."

The Dinner Dance is a fundraising event for members of the Huron Valley Schools/General Motors Milford Proving Ground team to travel to their competitions in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Orlando, Fla.

Other efforts the HOT team has made to raise money have included ed pop can and candy drives, opening a holiday craft store (the HOT Spot), and running a haunted fun house at Johnson Elementary.

Most recently the team has worked with Elias Brothers/Main Event Catering at the Pontiac Silverdome, where they ran concessions to earn money.

To give back to the community that has supported them for more

than two years, team members volunteer for a number of community events. These activities include adopting a stretch of Commerce Road, between Hickory Ridge and Hubble Pond Park, doing trash detail at Milford Memories Summer Festival, and participating in the Huron River Clean-

Construction on the robotics project officially began this week.
Their first competition will be held in Chicago, Feb. 25-27.

Robotics Competition Adds Little League Level

Hotshots Havoc Brings Science, LEGOs to Local High Schoolers

By Phil Foley Staff Writer

"It's neat. It's like a racing science team," Elizabeth Zieg said softly, amidst the din of the first Hotshots Havoc Championship at White Lake Township's Lakeland High School.

The Johnson Elementary School fifth-grader was one of more than 300 elementary and middle school students from Huron Valley Schools who gathered at the Oakland County school Nov. 7 for a spin-off of the wildly successful tertainment superstars "false he-FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) robotics competition.

H.O.T., the Heroes of Tomorrow, composed of students from the Huron Valley School District's Milford and Lakeland high schools and sponsored by the General Motors Milford Proving Ground, was selected to host the first-ever FIRST LEGO League Championship. The two-year-old H.O.T. team finished fourth nationally in only its second year of competition in Orlando, Fla. in April.

"We look to see (the LEGO League Competition) and FIRST just get bigger," said Proving Ground spokesman Gerald Wilson.

He said GM is interested in programs like FIRST and the FIRST LEGO League because they "feed the engineering and design community and company's like GM need to invest in the future."

This shows kids that, "hey, science is a lot of fun," he added.

Dean Kamen, a New Hampshire entrepreneur and founder of FIRST, said the problem with the average American youth today is "they spend more time dribbling than thinking."

Calling today's sports and enroes," Kamen said he set out in 1987 to graft those elements of sports and entertainment, that make them so appealing to students, on to a science competition. The idea behind FIRST, he added, is to generate the same kind of aura around academics.

On Dec. 13, FIRST's 1998 Championship round at Disney's Epcot Center in Orlando will be the subject of a one-hour ESPN special.

The Michigan FIRST competition, The Great Lakes Open, combines elements of a rock concert and an NCAA championship to create a three-day high-tech headbangers ball at Eastern Michigan University in March.

About the time Kamen decided that FIRST needed a league version, LEGO was preparing to roll out its Mindstorms Robotics Invention System. Mindstorms is a 727-piece LEGO kit that includes motors, light sensors, touch senors and a microcomputer that can be programmed through a PC. A Macintosh-compatible version of the kit is due out next year.

"These are pretty cool," offered Eric Simmons, a H.O.T. team member from Lakeland High School, "I want to get one myself."

LEGO, Kamen said, is a worldclass company whose philosophy "play should be educational, hard and fun" dovetails nicely with FIRST's.

The FIRST LEGO League, noted Wilson is "very similar to the FIRST competition. It's just on a different scale."

FIRST LEGO League members are given a Mindstorms kit and told to build a robot that will navigate a course on a four-by-fourfoot sheet of ply wood.

According to Kamen, who invented a portable insulin pump while still in college, the sports and entertainment industries have been designed to make individuals bigger than life.

"The good news is it's working. The bad news is it's working," he said, noting that thousands of youngsters devote their time to pursuing athletic prowess or the

fame of celebrity at the expense of academic pursuits.

"At our Florida competition, we had 10,000 to 12,000 kids. You should have seen it. They went nuts," he said.

"The problem with most science fairs," said Andrew M. Allen, president of the FIRST Foundation and a former shuttle astronaut, "is that they only attract kids who are already interested in science."

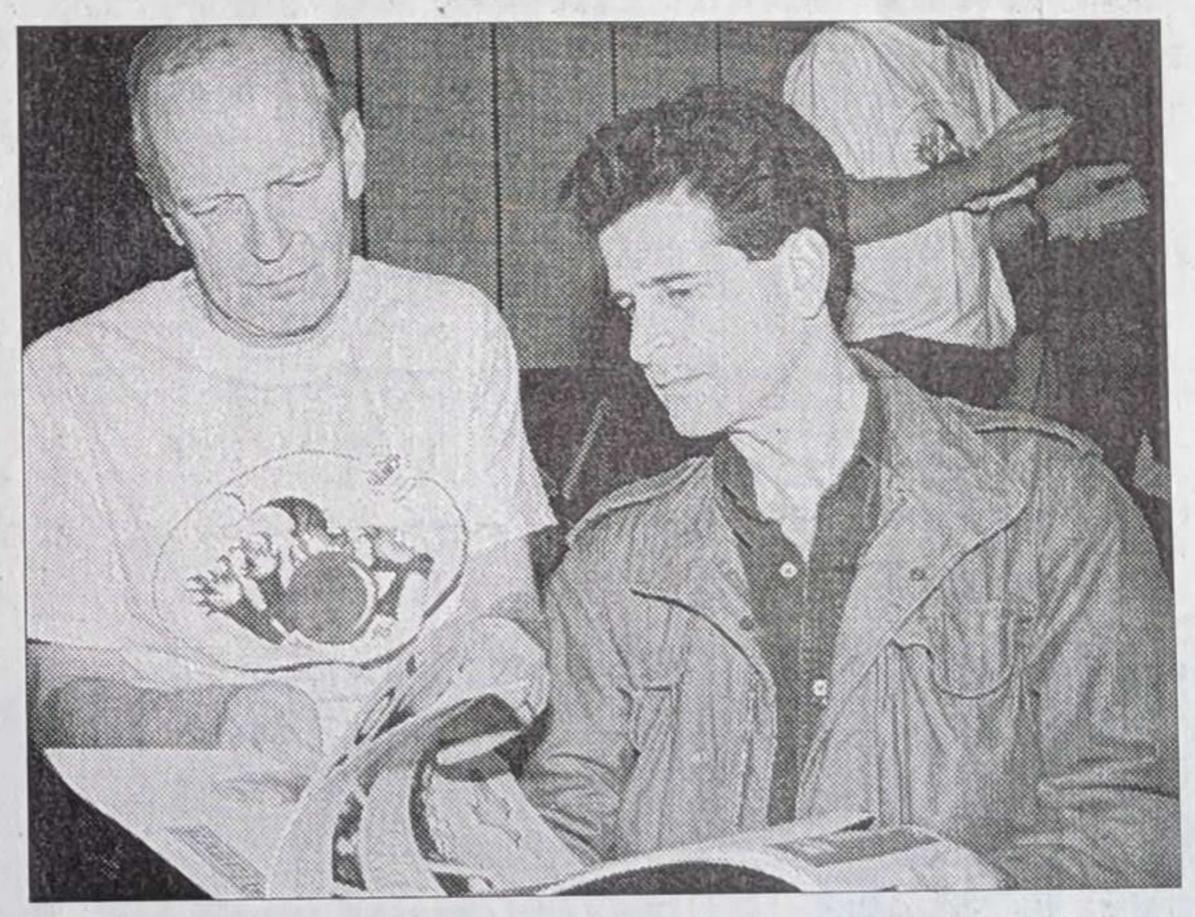
He said it was the exploits of John Glenn and other early astronauts that first got him interested in science and eventually lead him to NASA.

According to Allen, the FIRST robotics competition is getting students turned on to math and science by showing them that the people who use math and science in their daily work are exciting people.

Allen said he wants to see a FIRST robotics teams in every high school and a First LEGO League in every junior high and elementary school in the country.

Wilson expects to see the FIRST program expand at the Proving Ground. This year, 20 Proving Ground employees, along with three teachers from Milford and Lakeland high schools, worked with 53 students from the two schools.

Along with placing fourth out of 166 teams at the national Championships at EPCOT in Orlando,



IAN A. McEWAN, left, NAO Engineering director of Quality and Product Assurance at the GM Milford Proving Ground, shares the exploits of his facility's FIRST team with FIRST founder Dean Kamen.

H.O.T. won the Honeywell Leadership in Control Award and was one of five finalists for the event's Chairman's Award.

Third place at the Orlando event was claimed by the GM Powertrain-sponsored Pontiac Central Huskies.

DENTISTRY.... ...IN THE RENAISSANCE CENTER HOW CONVENIENT!

HOT team gears up for 1999 robotics competition

By Courtney Sutherby

Working together has always been a goal of the Huron Valley HOT Team, but this year cooperation takes on a whole new meaning.

The Heroes of Tomorrow (HOT) robotics team is made up of students and staff from Huron Valley high schools and employees of the General Motors Milford Proving Ground.

The team is busy working on the design of this year's robot for upcoming For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) competitions.

In past years, the teams built a robot solely to compete against other teams. This year, they must 'prepare to compete in an alliance with another team.

Why is this harder than before? HOT won't know who their alliance is until two minutes before game time, making it hard

for them to plan because they won't know their partner's capabilities, strengths and weaknesses.

1999 FIRST Beginnings

Before HOT representatives were even home from picking up the rules of the game in New Hampshire, the HOT team began preparations for its third year in the robotics competition.

The Heroes of Tomorrow (HOT) gathered on January 10 to learn the rules of the game.

The team now has six weeks to design a robot for competition, create a logo and animation for their team, and put together a Chairman's Award submission that shows what the team has been involved with throughout the year.

Who is HOT?

HOT is comprised of engineers from the General Motors Milford Proving Ground and teachers and

students from Huron Valley high schools. Each team member has dedicated themselves to working from 4-6 p.m. every day after school, and from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. (or later) on Saturdays.

As deadlines near, the students will put in more time as needed, including Sundays.

This year, there are about 40 students, 20 engineers and four teachers on the traveling team. Students interested in joining the team had to submit a resume and state why they wanted to be a part of the team.

Last year, there were more than 60 on the team, but Dave Verbrugge, Proving Ground engineer, said that was too many students to find something constructive for everyone to do.

General Motors allows HOT a \$100,000 budget, \$30,000 of which the students and parent boosters raise for travel to the competitions.

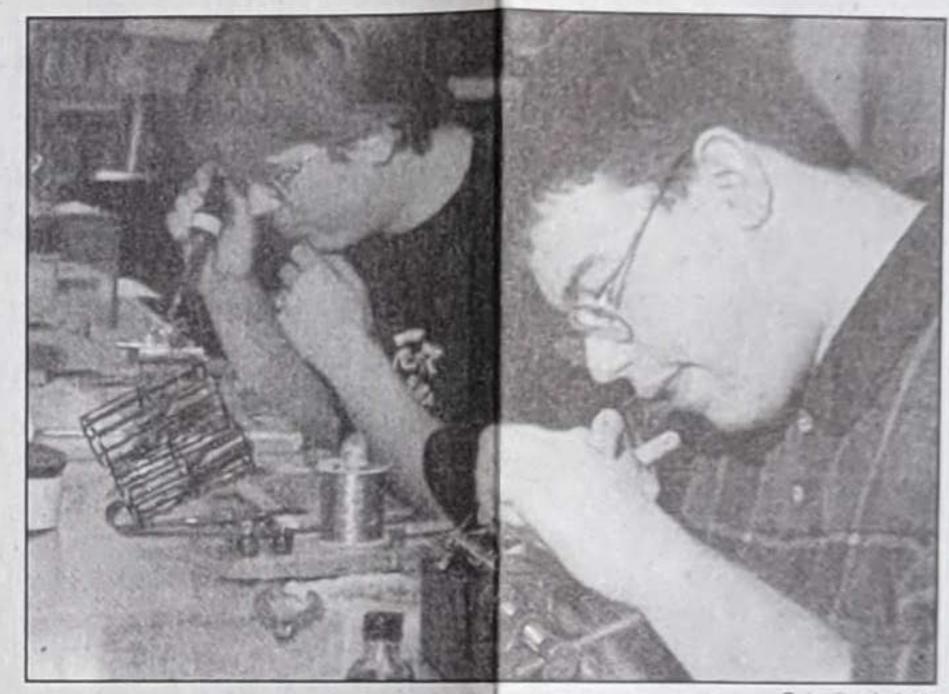
When the General Motors strike hit last summer, engineers were concerned that their involvement with FIRST would be cut back, but Proving Ground Director Ian McEwen saw the program as an important investment.

"Basically, FIRST happens because Ian McEwan wants it to happen," Verbrugge said. The Desert Proving Ground in Arizona also fields a FIRST team.

The HOT team will compete at three regionals in Chicago, Philadelphia and Ypsilanti, and the national competition in Orlando, Fla. More than 330 teams in the country are involved with FIRST this year,

Preparing for 1999 competition

The program helps to motivate students toward careers in engineering and technology, something



Submitted photo

The students who build the

robots through inspection before

competition to explain what differ-

ent parts are and how they are

"Our hope is that every team

member, not just the 25 working

in the robotics group, are able to

Students Rob Coppersmith and Jeff Shier make robot parts.

General Motors will ultimately ing before this," Verbrugge said. benefit from.

In previous games, HOT robot understand every compodesigned robots to compete with nent, Verbrugge said. FIRST now one or two others in competition. This year, it's a whole different game. Alliances between teams will be the key to competition this year. making communication a number one priority.

After the qualifying matches, the top eight teams will be announced. Each of those teams will be allowed to pick an alliance from any of the remaining competitors. Those alliances will stay together for the remainder of the finals.

Part of building a robot has to do with brainstorming a number of ideas. The HOT robot group has been working on design techniques and modifying their old robot to come up with ideas for this year.

"We're just now starting on components. We were just brainstorm-

Dana Sylvester, a Milford Junior in her second year with HOT, said the building is going well this year.

There is a lot of experimenting going on. We haven't decided on a permanent design, but we're getting things going," she said.

This year started out a lot different than last year, but that doesn't mean things aren't running smoothly, Sylvester said.

"Everyone thinks we're going to do really, really well this year," she

Lakeland senior Jeff Shier is in his first year with the HOT team. He wants to be an engineer, and the program offers him a taste of what his career will be like.

"Actually, I want to be a chemical engineer, but the thought process is the same," he said.

Shier is also a drafting student, and said it is interesting to see how drawings result in something being built.

Once the robot is designed. requires that students bring both the animation and Chairman's groups to be documented.

Documentation

The Chairman's Award Group is busy working on a compilation that will showcase what the team has accomplished. They have the job of showing the school's parttake it through inspection," he nership with the Proving Ground,

and their presence in the commu-

To do this, the group puts together a yearbook and video. complete with a script. The project will be top secret until their Feb. 18 deadline, but members of The Chairman's Group said they promise it will be better than ever.

Animation

The animation group is in the process of creating a storyboard that will be transformed into an animated 30-second infomercial detailing what the HOT team is all about. The team uses Autodesk 3-D Studio Max software for the pro-

The nine students in the animation group divided themselves into two groups: drawing the storyboard and creating the pieces on the computer.

Milford senior Josh Goodrum said the animation team's informercial should sell the team. and make the team into a "brand."

Goodrum, who works on the information must be passed on to computer, said having some returning members helps.

Communication is the key between all groups, Verbrugge said. The project each group works on makes up the entire HOT team effort

The HOT team will compete at their first competition Feb. 25-27 in Chicago.





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Lego learning projects help kids

By MIKE SCOTT
Special to The Oakland Press

Students in the Huron Valley School District may be working with Lego blocks, but their creations are not toys.

These youngsters are building robotic machines and vehicles out of the Lego brand Mindstorm Robotic Invention System. They're using transmitters, motors, a lighting system and various gears—even downloading computer programs into their robots.

District middle and elementary school children will join Milford

Lakeland The Lego high schools in participilot propating in a grams are national open to 1,400 program to encourage middle school interest in students and science, math and take place in technology. The FIRST several (For Midwestern Inspiration and Eastern Recognition of Science states.

Technology), which has existed for high school students for the past three years, has been extended to include students of younger ages across the United States.

The Lego pilot programs are open to 1,400 middle school students and take place in several midwestern and eastern states. Huron Valley, and its 435 students, is the only district involved in Michigan.

According to Angela Shupe, the district's public relations coordinator, Huron Valley's successful participation in FIRST for high schoolers was the reason for its



Oakland Press photos by TIM THOMPSON

Students at Kurtz Elementary School in Milford in the Huron Valley School District built robots and vehicles out of the Lego Mindstorm Robotic Invention System. Above, students look at their Lego cars. At right is one of several model cars that took top honors in the competition.

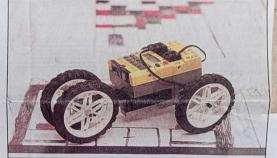
inclusion in the Lego pilot program at the younger grade levels.

"We've been very active with the high school FIRST program and have a lot of participation from the students and teachers," Shupe said. "The first year the (combined Milford and Lakeland high school) team participated they won Rookie of the Year."

Last season, the Huron Valley high school team, which builds more detailed and extensive robotic systems than the younger students, placed among the top five nationally in only its second year of being a part of the educational competition.

"It's a great program. The kids are actually building robots and are gaining a lot of experience with science and technology," said Shupe. "Plus, it's really a fun activity."

Students at Apollo, Baker,



Brooks, Highland, Johnson, Kurtz, Lakewood, Oxbow and Spring Mills elementary schools and Muir and Oak Valley middle schools are eligible to participate in the pilot Lego competition. They will be aided by volunteer parents and engineers who work at the General Motors Proving Ground in Milford.

"It's a really good opportunity for the students to learn from people who work in that type of field every day," said Shupe. "The employees there have really done a great job serving as mentors."

Without the help of Rudy Cender, coordinator of career and technology education with the district and a technology teacher at Lakeland High School, Huron Valley Schools likely would never have become involved with FIRST. He crafted the request for a Career Participation Grant from the state to help fund the program. He said the district is not stressing the importance of winning to the pilot students, consisting of fifth- and eighth-graders. But they are eager to compete at a high level nonetheless.

"Til tell you those fifth-graders are just as competitive as the high school kids," said Cender. "The program inspires kids to learn about an engineering career and puts them in contact with people they can look up to and learn from "But the education the students receive is more than just technical learning. Cender said the youngsters also learn creative problem solving, communication skills and much more.

SEE LEGOS/A-2

To

Ap

LEGOS

FROM PAGE A-1

Huron Valley sent three teachers to New Hampshire to study project

"It allows them to engage in interpersonal skills and learn how to work with others," he added.

The program's goal, according to FIRST founder Dean Kamen, is to teach children the values of math and science and to open up the possibility for pursuing a career in those fields.

the possibility for pursuing a career in those fields. Huron Valley sent three teachers to Manchester, N.H. earlier this year to undergo specific training about the program. In all, 19 middle and elementary school teachers will help Cender coordinate the program.

The pilot for middle and elementary schools began this past spring in New Hampshire with over 90 eighth-graders involved. Invention Challenge summer camps were held back east where children, ages 9 to 14, showed off their abilities and knowledge by designing and building task-performing robots in the first after-

oon. Approximately 20 school dis-

tricts, the majority of which are in Oakland County, already compete in the FIRST high school competition, which kicks off Jan. 9. A handful of Huron Valley team members will attend the opening ceremonies in New Hampshire to receive instructions of the robotic project they are to construct. Those individuals then bring that information back home with them to other team members and the final product must be presented by Feb. 25. Lakeland High School hosted the FIRST Lego League Championship, pitting teams from the district in an exhibition format recently.

A number of awards were handed out at the event, including awards for competition: the first place winner was Muir Middle School's Speed Demons; the second place award went to Brooks Elementary's The Stone Cold Stunners; and third place honor went to Kurtz Elementary's Roadrunners.

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Contest shows learning is fun

I am a parent of a fifth grade student at Kurtz Elementary who recently participated in the Junior Robotic competition that our Huron Valley district was fortunate to be involved in with Lego Corporation.

It was an extremely positive and energizing experience for all the children on many levels of learning. The staff, Mr. Lutz, Ms. McFarland, and Ms. Vezina, are to be commended for their dedication, enthusiasm and creativity.

Our principal, Mr. Orosey, provided the support and positive direction. They all worked above and beyond the scheduled work week for the past month to make sure that this pilot project would be a successful experience for the entire fifth grade student body.

These students learned to work as team members to take an idea — build it, refine it, promote it and compete with the finished product. What an opportunity this has been to see math, science, reading and the arts come together to take a concept from start to finish.

A sincere thanks to all those involved for letting our children see how much fun learning can be.

Kathy Zusuwa Milford