

SCIENCE FAIR: Dozens of displays covered many aspects of field

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3D flight simulator.

“You get to fly it around like you’re piloting a real plane and you can see all the instruments, including the cockpit,” said Adam Novotny, an intern at the company.

Over at the Lego Robotics exhibit, Ramsey Schar, a student at Sisters Middle School, had her mousetrap car on display waiting for the Design, Construct, Compete (DCC) event to begin.

“I have four mousetraps powering my car,” said Schar. “You connect the long string to the axle and then spin the wheels, and let go. The mousetraps will pull the car forward. It goes slow, but it can go far.”

The DCC contest, which has changed from the catapult challenge to a contest featuring mousetrap cars, took place in the main gym conducted by physics teacher Rob Corrigan. The cars must travel a certain distance, then stop within a circle.

“We wanted to do something new and different this year. We wanted to try another challenge to demonstrate the students’ engineering abilities,” Corrigan said. “Some of the participants have been asking questions and calibrating for several weeks now.”

Doug Mohr, of Mohr Solutions, a local critical power and telecommunications company, had their very first exhibit at the science fair.

“One of my engineers is demonstrating how critical power works. We do critical power and during a weather event the lights stay on and communication systems continue to work,” Mohr explained. “There is a simulation for kids to operate to

create a wind tunnel. The wind will knock the tower over and the lights will go out. The power goes out on the grid, but our battery backup power kicks in right away.”

Some students taught spectators about the power of pulleys as they hoisted themselves up on a pulley system, while other students learned and demonstrated how just the right folding of a paper airplane could fly the greatest distance.

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 — Rob Corrigan

Volunteer Alan Scheidegger was keeping time and distance for the students as the small gym was converted into a testing zone for paper airplanes.

“Last year one of the students flew his plane the entire distance of this gym, and we already have one young aeronautic engineer getting close to that record,” Scheidegger said.

Mathew Falconer, Sisters Middle School student, decided to build a homemade grill out of old metal pieces, and with the supervision of his mother, Tammy, they demonstrated his invention by cooking little pieces of bacon on the grill set up on bricks.

In one corner of the fair the reverberating pop from the Ping Pong Ball exhibit, which operates solely on atmospheric air pressure, could be heard during demonstrations,

and every once in a while you could see flames of fire simulating a dust explosion at the exhibit appropriately named “Dragon’s Breath.”

SHS 12th-graders Matalie Marshall and Laynie Hildebrand were in cahoots creating a project that would simulate an explosion.

“We wanted to do something exciting, so we decided to educate people on how a dust explosion can happen so quickly, whether in a coal mine, sugar mill or flour mill, anywhere there is lots of dust. Just one spark of heat and it can cause a big combustion. It happens more than you think,” Marshall said.

Central Oregon Rocket Club had a display table with model rockets for viewing, and also had small model rocket launches outdoors in the baseball field for spectators to watch at two separate times during the fair.

“We are a group of enthusiasts that enjoy building model rockets as a hobby, and we like to emphasize scale modeling and fine detail. Some rockets are real simple in their design and use basic single parachute recovery systems, while other rockets are extremely complex using staged motors, advanced electronics,” said club member Chris McDougall.

Right around 2:30 p.m., a loud reverberating noise began that sounded suspiciously like a fire alarm. With all the noise from chatter and demonstrations going on, it was hard to figure out at first. An announcement let the hundreds of folks know to evacuate the building. Luckily the entrance to the high school was in view.

Students, spectators, volunteers and exhibitors waited patiently outside the front entrance, and about 17 minutes later all was well after Sisters Camp-Sherman fire department turned off the

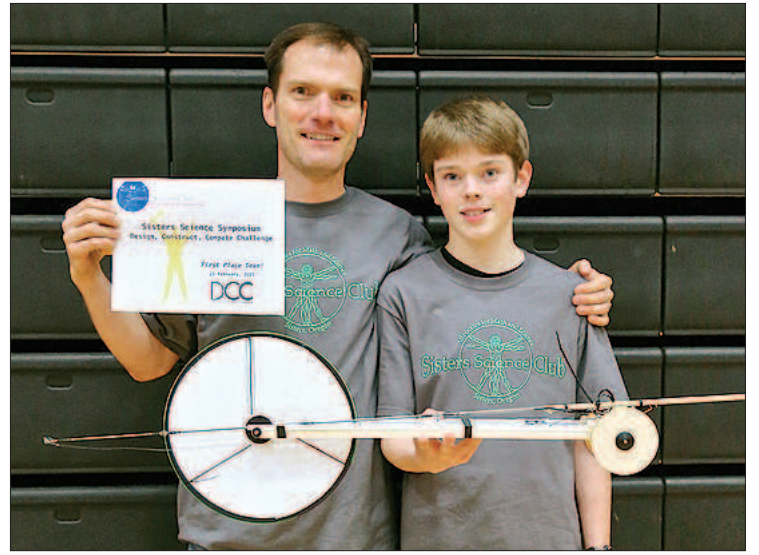


PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

First place in the mousetrap car challenge went to Josh Liddell and his dad, Eric Liddell.

alarm that was set off due to smoke particles from bacon cooking on the homemade grill exhibit.

Though a couple of minutes delayed, the mousetrap car contest, another tour of the star lab, and the last rocket launch went on without a hitch. After over an hour of competition, the first-place

winner was Sisters Middle School student Josh Liddell.

The SciArt contest featured photographs that were on display by Sisters students who captured science in the art of photography. There was a first-place tie for 7th-grader Dan Schmidt for his “Raining Fire” and his “Bee Awesome” photograph.

Beautifully maintained!

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Sasha Komar flew a four-prop helicopter drone during science fair action last Saturday.