

# Features

## Robotics team heads off to world competition

TY CLARKE

Rarely does a team from West Linn and Wilsonville make it to a world competition. Rarely does a team receive 3,000 dollars from NASA. However, Error Code Xero is not just any team.

Consisting of 25 Wilsonville students and six West Linn students, the team started its season on Jan. 8. On this date, teams all around the world were given the challenge: a two minute game consisting of hanging inner tubes in order on different leveled pegs and deploying a mini robot that climbs up a pole. They had six weeks to construct a robot. Error Code Xero consists of four sub teams: a market, mechanical, electrical and programming team. The group spent large amounts of time working together.



Photo by Rachel Nelke  
Ryan Bunn and Erik VonEggers, seniors at Wilsonville, work to construct their robot. Error Code Xero, a robotics team consisting of Wilsonville and West Linn students, will be heading to the World competition in St. Louis, Mo. on April 27-29.

"We spent over 18 hours a week working on it and met five times a week," Rachel Nelke, junior, said.

The competition to receive a spot in the World competition was held in Portland on March 24-26. Robotics competitions rely heavily on luck of the draw. At each

competition, teams are randomly paired up to create "alliances." These teams have not worked together before, and the fate of the alliance is held equally in both team's hands. A bad draw can

drastically affect the team, as was made evident in the competition for Error Code Xero.

"The first day of competition in Portland was qualifying. We had some really bad luck and were never on a good alliance so after the first day of qualifying we were ranked 30th out of 58 teams," Nelke said. "The top eight teams choose two other teams to go with them for final elimination matches in alliance selection. The third ranked team chose us to go with them. We won quarterfinals and semifinals and then lost in the final match because our alliance members' robot stopped working."

This failure in the finals led to a second place for Error Code Xero. According to Nelke, the team was disappointed because only first place teams are allowed to advance to Worlds. However, the team was about to be very surprised.

After announcing all of the first place finishes, the Engineering Inspiration Award was announced. The team

received 3000 dollars from NASA to help fund the entry fees to worlds. As Nelke put it, this award is "better than winning the Finals." Following the disappointment of the second place finish, Error Code Xero learned they had won the Engineering Inspiration Award.

The team would be going to Worlds after all.

Only four West Linn students will be going to Worlds: Lance Sheeley, freshman, Nelke, Jackson Carter and Rahul Gates, juniors, will be travelling to St. Louis, Mo. to compete from April 27 to 30.

### Wells earns Eagle Scout rank

JACK LAMMERS

"When you begin Boy Scouts, you learn valuable concepts and take them in," Taylor Wells, senior, said. "As you go through Boy Scouts, you begin to take that learning and use it to prepare for life and evolve as a person."

Wells made a commitment that has threaded its way throughout his life. This year, Wells ascended to the rank of Eagle Scout in Troop 149 of West Linn. With the ceremony still to come in June, he will have his defining moment in which his accomplishment is honored.

Last summer was a busy one, to say the least for Wells.

scouts as I was taught," Wells said.

Wells began with the scouts in elementary school when he joined the Cub Scouts. As the years have passed, his commitment has developed along with his personal accomplishments. Whether serving as an instructor in tomahawk lessons or as a future counselor at Camp Merriwether on the Oregon Coast, opportunities now present themselves to allow him to teach others.

Within Troop 149, Wells has involved himself in a variety of projects including his position as a youth committee chair for Relay for Life, in which he was able to

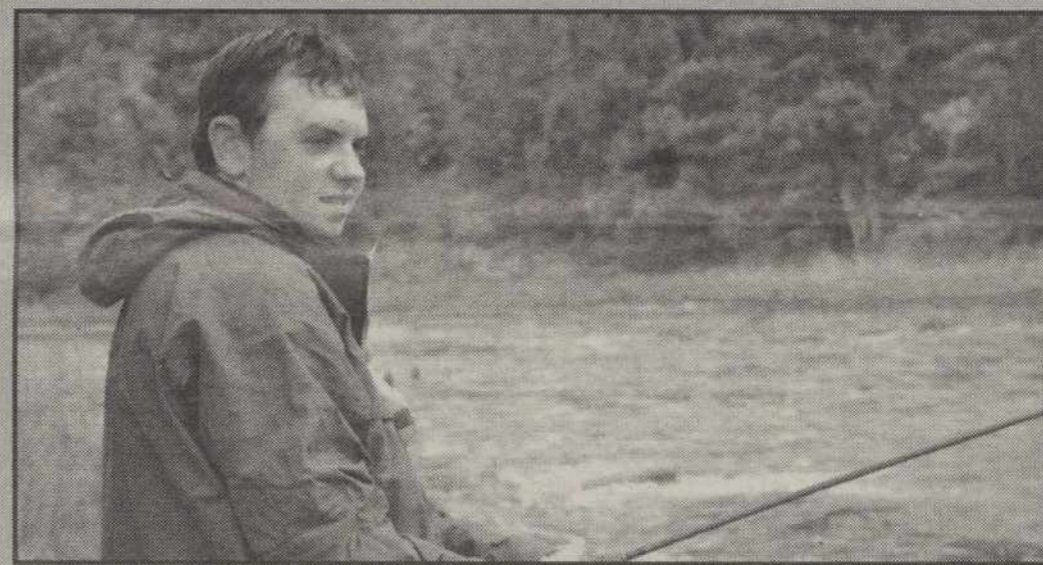


Photo courtesy of Jeff Wells

Taylor Wells, senior, casts a line before setting up a camp site with Scout Troop 149 on a trip near Bend. Wells' experience in Boy Scouts has included many experiences ranging from outdoor adventures to volunteer work in the community culminating in his achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout.

Not only was he preparing his community service project for Troop 149, but he was also acting out a rite of passage. By traveling to Washington D.C. over the summer for a Boy Scout jamboree held at Fort AP Hill in Virginia, he spent his last few days before his 18th birthday meeting scouts from all over the nation. While on the east coast, Wells also visited family he'd never before met before in his life, adding to the euphoria of the experience.

"It was an incredible experience to travel to AP Hill. It was great meeting new friends and uniting with lost family," Wells said.

One indication of Wells' connection with people from scouts all over is the assortment of Boy Scout patches he was able to trade with people from Hawaii, Alaska and New York, to name a few.

"When I was in Cub Scouts, I looked up to the older high school students, but now I see myself taking their place and I now get to teach younger

lead Troop 149 to raise the second largest amount of the teams participating. Among other activities, Wells spent months preparing his own community project by helping his church community to plan and implement a project to improve and work on its garden.

Along with his extensive service to the community, his activities include throwing javelin, shot-put and discus on the track and field team, playing intramural basketball, working with the baseball team and continuing his hobby of photography within and outside of the school. Next year, Wells plans on attending Portland Community College.

Wells is set on following through with his lifelong commitment to the Scouts and hopefully continuing to apply what he has learned.

"He has gained so many valuable lessons about leadership, friendship, engaging in the community and about himself," Suzane Wells, mother, said.

## P90X provides effective results for all

MARY EARP

From acting in school plays to participating in clubs, it can often be hard for teenagers to find ways to keep in shape. Along with the difficulty of a taxing schedule, many run into problems of finding a workout that shows real results. P90X, a 90-day workout program, may be just the solution.

"P90X is a regiment video workout series that incorporates flexibility exercise with endurance, fat burning and cardio training," Toran Almodovar, junior, said.

P90X, created by Tony Horton, exercise instructor, comes with 12 discs, each with a different workout focusing on a different area of the body.

"There are more cardio based DVDs and more weight training DVDs," Aidan Poor, junior, said. "The weight training DVDs have smaller breaks between exercises."

Along with the DVDs, P90X also comes with a diet guide with three phases. Phase One, "shredder," consists of a high-protein diet with a minimal amount of carbohydrates to jump-start fat loss. Phase Two, "booster," starts more carbohydrates in the diet, along with a balance of protein. The third phase, "maximizer," suggests an athletic diet.

"It's really hard to stick to the diet strictly," Poor said. "It's a lifestyle change, and if you aren't ready to make it, then it can be hard."

Almodovar has also tried out the P90X program. He

didn't follow the program strictly, though he still saw satisfying results.

"I didn't do the dieting portion of the program, so it could be harder if you're doing it for weight loss," Almodovar said. "My experience was difficult but satisfying."

The program has been said to be very difficult, though it is easily adjustable to your needs, according to Poor.

"The DVDs are really hard, though you aren't

Photo by Emily McNabb  
Rheid HeskamcJannet and Sara Frank, sophomores, try out the P90X "Core Synergistics" video. P90X has provided a manageable exercise program and reported fantastic results.

expected to keep up," Poor said. "It's a 'do-at-your-own-pace' workout."

Many of the exercises have been classified as intense by Poor, though they are able to be modified. For example, pull-ups are easily modified by using a chair for support.

If interested in the P90X program, there are many ways in which you can ready yourself for the intensive program.

"Anyone can do this program," Poor said. "You may want to prepare if you aren't in good shape right now."

Poor suggests starting mild exercise before the program if you currently don't currently

partake in physical activity. He also suggests starting the diet before starting the actual program because it can be a fairly drastic change.

The program has been shown to be very effective by Poor, though only if you persevere. Consistency is key during P90X, according to Almodovar and Poor.

"Mainly just stick to the program; it can do wonders if you can keep up with the daily routine," Almodovar said. "It doesn't do much for you if you push it really hard one day and then take a few days off."

"If you do your best, stick to the diet and push yourself during workouts, you will be in the best shape of your life," Poor said.

All you need for the program is the set of DVDs and a set of dumbbells or resistance bands. The videos cost three monthly payments of \$39.95, though are less expensive on craigslist.com. The program can be done inside your own house, no gym membership required. For more information about the program along with success stories, the science behind it and ordering information, visit the official P90X website at beachbody.com/P90X.

