



DALTON HUTSON, Kyle Bond, Alex Dahlstrom, Troy Hewitt and Angel Jones, are team "Bucket of Bolts," aka "Bob." The Robotics I team will compete in the First Tech Challenge (FTC) Tournament in The Dalles this Saturday. Not pictured: Team members Lizet Monzo and Ivan Castillo. Below Terri Hewitt and Garrett Kelly work on their Robotics 2 entry.

'Confidence will come'

FTC Robotics teams head to The Dalles for Tournament Saturday

BY TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer

Eight Robotics teams from Hood River Valley High School — along with two each from Hood River Middle School and Wy'east Middle School — are competing in the FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Tournament in The Dalles today, Jan. 31, at The Dalles Middle School. The Hood River County School District has the largest FTC Robotics team in the state, said HRVHS engineering and math teacher Jeff Blackman, who is taking teams from his Robotics I and Robotics II classes. The free event is open to the public and is the local qualifier for the international FTC robotics competitions for students in grades 7-12. Best public viewing is from 12-3 p.m. The Dalles Middle School is at 1100 E. 12th St.

HRVHS students have been constructing and fine-tuning their robotic entries since September, often putting in late nights after school. The team of Garrett Kelly, Cole Osborne, Terri Hewitt, Kiefer Kreps, and Maddy Graham, seniors, and



Payton Rigert, a junior, were still working on constructing their robot in Robotics II Wednesday afternoon — a common occurrence with over 30 students in the class and limited equipment time. Were they confident in their design?

"Confidence will come once we're all done," Kelly quipped.

In Robotics I, Angel Jones, Kyle Bond, Alex Dolstrom and Lizet Monzo, all freshman, and Dalton Hutson, Troy Hewitt and Ivan Castillo, sophomores, had their robot in the ring and were testing its ability to play the game they

would be judged in on Saturday: Teams compete on a 12-by-12 foot field, working to pick up plastic balls and place them into strategically placed cones around the game table; touching the cones results in an automatic deduction.

"It's been five months of trial and error," said Hewitt, noting that if something didn't work, it was quickly discarded in favor of another idea to turn the robot into "whatever this is now."

The students are learning real-world skills, such as problem solving, work as a team, and how to modify and change designs.

"Plus, the world is getting so mechanical, it's good to know this," said Hewitt.

"In the future, STEM jobs (science, technology, engineering and math) are going to be a top priority," added Jones. "Even now, there are lots of things to do with electronics."

Blackman is looking for FTC team sponsors, as entry fees for each event costs between \$150 and \$1,000. Right now, School Aid is the program's only sponsor. Those interested in sponsoring a team of five to 10 students is asked to contact Blackman at 541-386-4500 or Jeff.blackman@hoodriver.k12.or.us.

Filing period begins for May 19 election

The filing period has started for the Hood River County Special District election on May 19.

Filings for special district seats are accepted through March 19, which is also the deadline for districts to file a measure for the May election.

The positions are for all county special districts, including the county-wide Li-

brary District. Potential candidates can find the filing form on the Hood River County Elections website, www.hoodriver.co.us/elections.

All applications must be in the Elections office no later than 5 p.m. on March 19. For details contact the Hood River County Elections office at 541-386-1442.

FIRE

Continued from Page A1

daughter, Charmaine McCafferty, comforted her daughter, Gracie, 11, and their dog on a bench along Westcliff. Police officer Erin Mason carried Gracie to a warm car. The Red Cross is providing lodging and Suzanne's employer, Windermere Realty, got her a rental vehicle.

"They're shaken, but good," Sieverkropp said. Michael Maurer suffered superficial burns, but otherwise the four occupants were unhurt, according to Sieverkropp.

A fund has been set up to assist the Maurers, at U.S. Bank.

"It's overwhelming to start from scratch — medications,

eyeglasses and clothes, but they have enough for now to get by," Sieverkropp said.

The home is located next to a steep, heavily vegetated area overlooking the Columbia River, at the end of a 30-yard sloped driveway, making hose attacks possible primarily from the south and west sides.

Mason was first on scene and said the house was engulfed. "If there had been anyone in there at that time they would not have made it," he said. He checked the perimeter and determined that everyone was out safely.

Charmaine McCafferty said the family awoke when they realized there were flames in the garage.

The first is under investigation and the cause is unknown, according to Westside Fire Marshal Jim Trammell.

Create a scrapbook at the Parkdale, CL library

Create a handmade three ring 8-by- 8-inch scrapbook album at the library. Decorate the album with ribbons, tags, and other various elements. Classes will be held Saturday, Feb. 21, 2 p.m. at the Parkdale Library and Saturday, Feb. 28, 2 p.m. at the Cascade Locks Library.

Local mother of two, Pam Sanchez will teach the class. Sanchez has lived in the gorge for the past 20 years. Scrapbooking is a hobby for

Sanchez and she loves to preserve memories and stories. The presentation is free and open to the public.

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Help the Library win the million page challenge

A gauntlet has been thrown! Hood River County Library District has been issued a Million Page Challenge by the Pendleton Public Library and a combined team of the Harney & Lake County Libraries. This three-way race is to see which library's patrons can reach one million pages first. With help from patrons, Hood River County could win.

Libraries will count pages of library materials read by people aged 16 and over between Feb. 1 and March 15, 2015. The library that reaches a million pages first wins bragging rights. If no library has reached a million pages by March 15, the library with the most pages read wins.

Patrons can stop by any Hood River County Library District location to pick up a bookmark to track their reading, or they can keep track themselves on any piece of paper.

Books, magazines, news-



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

PLACARD near the library front entrance spells out details of the million page challenge, starting Feb. 1.

papers, e-books, and audio- library all count. They must be started and finished dur-

ing the challenge period to win. Participants will need to record the title and number of pages they read or listen to. To count audiobook and e-book "pages," library staff can help look up the number of pages of a print book of the same title. Pages can be turned in any time at any Hood River County Library District location.

For more information, please contact the Hood River County Library District at 541-386-2535, info@hoodriverlibrary.org, or visit their website at hoodriverlibrary.org.

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