

# Stanfield FIRST Lego robotics team qualifies for state in first year, places 48th

BY MAEGAN MURRAY  
HERMISTON HERALD

The Stanfield FIRST Lego League robotics team may have just formed this year, but the students didn't let that hold them back in competition.

This year, the team, comprised of fifth- and sixth-grade students, qualified for the state competition after placing in the top three at its qualifying tournament at Eastern Oregon University early last month. Last weekend, the team placed 48th out of 60 teams at the state competition at Liberty High School in Hillsboro. Students competing included Amree Braithwaite, Jasmyn Hysell, Kendyll Cooper, Sissy Hurty, Kaisa Tynkila, Riley Houk and Katelyn Griffin.

During the state competition, the teams were scored on how they performed in a robot game, a project where they had to research a problem and come up with a solution, and their ability to demonstrate FIRST's core values — working as a team, finding solutions with guidance from coaches and mentors and honoring the spirit of friendly competition, to name a few.

"Considering this is the top teams of the state, I am very pleased," robotics coach and Stanfield teacher Don Walker said. "Our project, core values judging and robot design judging,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Stanfield FIRST Lego League robotics team prepares for its project presentation during a recent competition.

we do not get a ranking for, but I'd imagine we were ranked in the middle of the pack."

Walker said Stanfield was one of only two teams from east of The Dalles to compete. He said the majority of the teams were from the Portland area.

To prepare for the state competition, Walker said the team focused on four things. The first was designing the robot, which students had to program so

it would complete a number of obstacles autonomously. The second, he said, was preparing for their core values judging, where the students had to create a poster and explain the gains they made this year.

Walker said the students also practiced explaining why they chose their design and their most complex programming they wrote through coding. The fourth goal, he said, was increasing people's knowledge

about recycling, a main component of the challenge.

Walker said the competition season may now be over for the students, but they are already thinking about next season. Some of the students on the team will remain on the FIRST Lego League team while others will move on to the next level of competition, the FIRST Tech Challenge, as seventh-graders. At that level, students

work together to build a robot that has to complete specific challenges.

Walker said Lucas Tynkila deserves credit for helping the Stanfield program expand to include the FIRST Junior Lego League and FIRST Lego League teams. He said, while he worked with the already established FIRST Tech Challenge team, Tynkila mentored the students on the Lego League teams.

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— Don Walker  
Robotics coach

Walker said the FIRST program not only teaches students how to build robots. He said the program's goals are to inspire students to be science and technology leaders and expose them to high-demand fields like engineering and programming while promoting teamwork and leadership.

# Umatilla extends temporary ban on new strip clubs

Planning Commission continues to work on commercial zoning changes

BY SEAN HART  
HERMISTON HERALD

No new strip clubs will be able to open anywhere in Umatilla city limits for another six months after the city extended its moratorium Tuesday.

At the regular Umatilla City Council meeting, after an initial 120-day moratorium on additional adult entertainment businesses expired, council members voted to approve a 180-day extension of the temporary ban to allow the Umatilla Planning Commission time to complete regulations.

City Manager Bob Ward said state law only allows 120 days for an initial moratorium but also provides for an extension up to six months.

"The Planning Commission is still working on a very broad overview of all of the commercial zones including this (adult business issue)," he said. "They've

run out of time under the first moratorium, so the commission is asking for the state-allowed 180-day extension to that original 120-day moratorium in order for them to be able to conclude their work."

Ward has previously said neither the moratorium nor any new regulations adopted would affect businesses already open.

Planning Commission Chairman Boyd Sharp spoke in favor of the extension, stating the commission is making progress but needs more time. He said the city currently has four different commercial zones and a fifth zone is proposed, and the commission is attempting to provide much more specific guidelines than the current city code, stating exactly what types of uses will be allowed in each zone.

Sharp said the commission has created definitions of the intentions for each of the zones and is working through a long list of uses based on the North American Industry Classification System to determine where each will be allowed.

"There are 400 different kinds of commercial activities that can go on within a city, so we're looking at all 400 of those or more and

saying, 'All right, does this particular activity fit, say the downtown commercial (zone)? Does it fit the description that we have developed?'" he said.

The commission has worked through the list for the downtown commercial zone, Sharp said, and things should begin to move more swiftly now that the commissioners are more acquainted with the process.

Former Planning Commission member John Nichols urged the council to approve the extension "to do a job correctly that we can be proud to have behind us."

"Give the Planning Commission as much leeway and latitude as you possibly can so that they can do a good job for us," he said.

Councilman David Logue, who was required to give up his Planning Commission seat to join the council, said the commission has been doing "good work."

"I think these are at least baby steps towards an improved Umatilla, and that's what we're all after, going forward, is making a better community, and I applaud them."

The Planning Commis-

sion will continue working on the commercial zoning changes at the next meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday at Umatilla City Hall.

In other City Council news, Ward said the city

and Port of Umatilla are still working on the language of a potential agreement to settle a zoning dispute.

"The agreement in principle has not changed," he said. "The agreement on

the actual wording is a little bit more elusive than we thought it was going to be. ... I think a settlement is still within reach. We'll just have to work a little bit harder to get there."




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