

Inside Wallops

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
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Wallops Assists Local Team in Robotics Competition

Teamwork. That was the word of the weekend for the more than 1,000 high school students who spent weeks working together and traveled to Richmond, Va., to attempt to prove that their robot was the one to beat.

This annual robotics competition - called For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) - was held March 2 and 3 at Virginia Commonwealth University's Siegel Center.

FIRST Robotics challenges teams of high school students and their mentors to design, assemble and test a robot capable of performing a specified task. The teams have only six weeks, a standard "kit of parts" and a common set of rules. The goal of the contest is to put round tubes onto various racks to earn points. It's a three on three competition---the team with the most points wins.

Arcadia High School participated in this year's competition. With a little help from Wallops employee Dave Moltedo, the AHS team prepared their robot for competition. The team's robot operated much like a fork lift, lifting the tubes onto the racks. Although this was only Arcadia's second year participating in the event, the students gained valuable experience. The AHS team consisted of three seniors--Jesse Twiford, Will Deuter and Devon Young-- and two faculty mentors, Dan Butler and Curt Dunn.



Photo by Rebecca Hudson

Arcadia's FIRST Robotics team members (L to R) Devon Young, Will Deuter, Jesse Twiford and Mike Taylor.

FIRST was founded in 1989 by Dean Kamen, the inventor of Segway Human Transporter. According to Kamen, the vision for FIRST is "to create a world where science and technology are celebrated... where young people dream of becoming science and technology heroes."

Wallops Shorts.....

Launch

The tenth and final launch, a NASA Black Brant XII sounding rocket, in the Winter 2007 Campaign at the Poker Flat Research Range in Alaska took place on February 28. The purpose of the mission was to study the correlation of high frequencies and auroral roar measurements. Dr. James LaBelle, Dartmouth College, was the principal investigator.

Early indications are there was an anomaly of the attitude control system and the Nihka flew 3.3 sigma long, however, all payload events occurred. Data from the payload is under evaluation.

Bill Payne, NASA Sounding Rocket Operations Contract (NSROC) was the mission manager. Libby West, NASA Range and Mission Management Office, was the campaign manager.

On the Road

Rebecca Hudson, NASA Public Affairs Office, and Ed Parrott, Wallops Teacher on Loan, participated in a Career Day event on February 28 at Northampton High School, Machipongo, Va., for students from Northampton and Broadwater Academy in Exmore.

Under Secretary of the Air Force Recognizes Wallops

"Please accept my sincere appreciation on behalf of the United States Air Force for the outstanding work by your Wallops Flight Facility launch team in preparing for and executing the successful launch of the TacSat-2 mission.

As the first space launch from an Eastern range in over a decade, your team consistently went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure a positive outcome.

I commend their hard work and flexibility in enabling an effective mission despite tight schedules.

The entire Wallops team consistently exceeded expectations and should be very proud of this success."



Dr. Ronald M. Sega

FEBrurrrrrrrrURARY by Bob Steiner, Meteorologist

February came and went leaving us with an average temperature of 33.0 degrees, which is 4.7 degrees below normal. Not a big surprise when we see that we experienced 20 nights below 32 degrees including 9 nights with minimums below 20 degrees and 7 days with a high of 32 degrees or below.



Strong gusty winds accompanied many of the cold temperatures in February.

We experienced 14 days with maximum winds of 29 mph or greater with the strongest gust being the 45 mph gust recorded at 3:46 pm on the February 22.

The highest recorded temperature last month was 60 degrees on the 20th. The lowest temperature recorded was the 11 degrees on the morning of the 6th. No record highs were set or tied. The 12 degree reading on the morning of the 8th set a daily record low. The previous low for that date was 14 degrees in 1977.

We received a total of 2.6 inches of liquid precipitation falling on 8 days during the month.. This was 0.6 inches below normal. The wettest 24 hour period occurred between the 13th and 14th with 1.14 inches recorded.

Measurable snow fell on February 7, depositing 0.1 inches on the ground. Normal snowfall total for the month is 3.03 inches normally falling on 2 days.

Spring is not too far in the future and we look forward to this with great expectations. April is the first full month of spring with average daily highs starting the month at 59 degrees and rise to 65 degrees by the 30th. Night time lows of 40 degrees greet the months beginning and warm to 48 for months end.

The record high temperature for April is 93 degrees, set on April 26, 1990. The record low temperature for April is 24 degrees, set on April 1, 1969. Rain is normally experienced on 10 days during the month leaving an average of 2.83 inches. The wettest April on record is April 1983 with 5.43 inches. The driest April was recorded in 1985, with 0.4 inches.

Step Up

NASA, Worcester County and the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance have joined in partnership to form the STEP UP (Science, Technology, Engineering Pipeline for Underserved Populations) internship program that is targeted for students attending Worcester County High Schools, WorWic Community College, Salisbury University and the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore (UMES).

High school and college students are being recruited to participate in an eight week summer internship at NASA Wallops Flight Facility or the Maryland Institute for Space Technology. The projected dates for the internship are from June 18 - August 10. The students will be given work projects and assignments that will allow them to explore careers in science, technology and engineering while benefiting the NASA mission.

Applications are due by March 12. For further information, contact Brenda Dingwall at x1412.

Congratulations

Dave Burkhead, NASA Sounding Rocket Operations Contract, has reason to be proud of his wife, Lou Ann, a kindergarten teacher at Kegotank Elementary School.

Early this year she was named "Teacher of the Year" for the school located in Mappsville, Va. At a ceremony honoring the Teacher of the Year from each of the Accomack County (Va.) schools, Lou Ann was named Teacher of the Year for Accomack County. Now that's special!

Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday

Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 11 and reverts to standard time on November 4.



NASA Safety Training Center Courses

Adult CPR and Basic First Aid
Week of April 16
Building E-2 Training Room

The registration form is located at: <http://sites.wff.nasa.gov/%7Ecode803/pages/training.html> See the web link for detailed information about each course.

Specific times and dates will be announced once the number of interested people has been determined.

Registration forms are due by March 6. These courses are offered at no cost to NASA and contractor employees

For further information contact Olive Finney at olive.v.finney@nasa.gov or call x2463.

Women's History Month

In celebration of National Women's History Month, the Women of Wallops will be holding a Pioneering Women Panel on March 15 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. in the Williams-burg Room, Building E-2.

The national theme for Women's History Month 2007 is "Generations of Women Moving History Forward".



It celebrates the many generations of women who, with their amazing intelligence, talent, courage and tenacity, testify to the myriad ways that generations of women have moved history forward.

For further information contact: Kathryn Redden at x2994 or kredden@scsc.wal.nswc.navy.mil

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