

Students excited about robotic competition

Excitement is growing as the school superintendents from Warren, Northampton, Halifax, Hertford and Bertie Counties and the Weldon City Schools along with their staff are making final preparations for the Roanoke River Valley Education Consortium (RRVEC) Ulteneers 4th Invitational Robotics Tournament.

This year's tournament will be the largest tournament to date and will include teams from all six school systems. Plans are being made at Halifax Community College (HCC) to host this year's tournament where 22 teams and approximately 220 students will compete.

"The superintendents want to extend an invitation to business leaders, city and county officials and other interested people to attend from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday March 10, at HCC's main campus," said Joe Kronner of MUST-Innov8, Inc. "The students are really excited to show off their talents."

Teams of two-ten students are challenged to complete as many of the 14 possible robot missions as they can in 2 1/2 minutes on a 4 foot by 8 foot table. The teams were given a robot brain and over 1,000 Lego pieces to use to design and build a custom robot to perform complex tasks. Then the teams use a laptop computer

and special "drag and drop" software to program the robot."

Dr. Ray Spain, Warren County Superintendent explained, "It is a very cool sport for the mind that is designed to sneak up on kids and use a robotics competition to cause them to want to learn more about science, technology, engineering and math. The kids have so much fun that they have no idea how much they are learning."

"Kids find robotics almost as addictive as video games. The only difference is that robotics prepares them for exciting high paying careers. They acquire knowledge and skills that will be valuable no matter what they choose to do," explained Dr. Eric Cunningham, Halifax County Superintendent.

Dr. Anitra Wells, Weldon City Schools Superintendent, said, "The teams spend the first six to eight weeks designing, building and programing their robots. Then they begin to scrimmage against other teams. That is often an eye-opening experience when they see how other teams are taking creative approaches to completing the robot missions. It is all about causing students to think outside-the-box to find more efficient ways to complete the robot missions and score more points."

Dr. Monica Smith-

Woofter, Northampton County Schools Superintendent explained "While the teams are working on the robots, they are also working on a research project. They are given a theme for the season like Hydro Dynamics. The teams have to brainstorm to identify a problem or opportunity related to the theme. They have to research what has been done in that area and then develop their own creative solution to the problem. Each team, without their coach or team mentor, will present their research project to judges who are usually business executives and Community College Presidents. In addition teams are judged on their Robot Design Strategy and FIRST Lego League Core Values that focuses on how well they work as a team and being respectful of their teammates."

Dr. William Wright, Superintendent of Northampton County Schools remarked, "Teams need students with a variety of knowledge and skills in-order to be competitive in all areas. That is why students do not have to know anything about robotics or be strong in science. It is no different than most workplaces today...having a blend of talents and skills is important,"

Dr. Michael Elam, President of Halifax

Community College, said, "We are excited to be hosting this year's Tournament on Saturday March 10, on our main campus in Weldon. What excites me is that this program attracts kids from all back grounds and demographics. FIRST Lego League Robotics Competition often attracts kids that have never had success with science and math in the classroom. It can play an important role in changing attitudes and interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math."



Contributed
Warren County Students preparing for their Lego League Robotics Competition at Halifax Community College next Saturday.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be held by the Warren County Board of Adjustment (BOA) on Monday March 19, 2018 at 6:00 PM in the Warren County Armory Civic Center located at 501 US Highway 158 Business East Warrenton, NC 27589. The purpose of the public hearing (and meeting of the BOA) is to review and hear comment on the following petition for a Variance:

2018-01-CU01--- Conditional Use Permit for Five Forks Solar LLC (solar farm – photovoltaic) AR—Agricultural Residential District. Property is at 260 Robinson Ferry Road Macon, NC 27551 (Tax Map I2C-58 Six Pound Township).

For additional information contact Ken Krulik, Planning and Zoning Administrator for Warren County by email KenKruklik@warrencountync.gov or phone at 252-257-7027. Maps and/or additional information are available at the Warren County Planning/zoning and Code Enforcement Department 542 West Ridgeway Street Warrenton, NC 27589. All interested citizens are urged to attend these public hearings.

NCDOT TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED ROADWAY UPGRADES ALONG N.C. 305 FROM SEABOARD TOWN LIMITS TO HERTFORD COUNTY LINE TIP PROJECT NO. R-5757

The N.C. Department of Transportation will hold a public meeting regarding the proposed roadway upgrades and replacement of bridges and culverts along N.C. 305 from Seaboard Town Limits to the Hertford County Line.

The meeting will be held on March 8 at the Northampton County Cultural and Wellness Center located at 9536 N.C. 305 in Jackson from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Interested citizens may attend at any time during the meeting hours. NCDOT representatives will be available to answer questions and receive comments regarding the project. Please note that no formal presentation will be made. All comments received will be taken into consideration as the project progresses.

As information becomes available, it may be viewed online at the NCDOT Public Meeting Website: <http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/publicmeetings>

Anyone desiring additional information may contact John Abel, NCDOT Division 1, Division Project Engineer at 113 Airport Drive, Suite 100, Edenton, NC 27932, by telephone at (252) 482-1851 or by email at jabel@ncdot.gov. Comments should be submitted by **April 9, 2018**.

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled persons who wish to participate in this meeting. Anyone requiring special services should contact Tamara Makhlof via email at tmakhlof@ncdot.gov or by phone at (919) 707-6072 as early as possible, so that these arrangements can be made.

Persons who speak Spanish and do not speak English, or have a limited ability to read, speak or understand English, may receive interpretive services upon request prior to the meeting by calling 1-800-481-6494.

Aquellas personas que hablan español y no hablan inglés, o tienen limitaciones para leer, hablar o entender inglés, podrían recibir servicios de interpretación si los solicitan antes de la reunión llamando al 1-800-481-6494.

Lake Gaston Gazette-Observer's

First READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2018

Pick Your Top 10 for the Readers' Choice Awards

Use the official ballot below to enter your favorite choices in the Lake Gaston area. The Readers' Choice Awards category winners will be announced in a special section on March 28.

Ballots must be received by 5 p.m. on Tuesday March 13, 2018!

2018 Readers' Choice Awards Categories

Best Businesses	Pest Control	Nail Salon
Bank	Hardware/Building Supply	Garden Supply
Insurance Company	Appliance Store	Waste Management Service
Real Estate Company	Grocery Store	Massage Therapist
Home Builder	Furniture Store	Office Supply
Doctors Office	Pet Boarding/Grooming	Marina
Hospital	Photographer	Auto Repair
Golf Course	Funeral Home	Pier Builder
Heating & AC Service	Pharmacy	
Landscaping	Hair Styling Salon	
Best Restaurant	Biscuit	Breakfast
Seafood	Sandwich	View
Steak	Fries	Service
Dessert	Coffee	Cook
Hot Dog	Mixed Drink	Take-Out Service
Hamburger	Beer	
Best People	Attorney	Hair stylist
<i>Please list location of nominee</i>	Real Estate Agent	Waiter/Waitress
	Certified Accountant	

Rules: **1.** Write in your top 10 Choices from the categories listed. **Include a complete name of the establishment, person or place for which you are voting.** Choices must be businesses or people in the Lake Gaston area. Limit 10 votes per ballot. You may write in a category if it is not listed. **2.** To qualify, all entries must include the voter's legible name, address and phone number. Votes must appear on the official ballot forms. **NO PHOTOCOPIES WILL BE COUNTED.** **3.** Entries must be received by 5 p.m. March 13, 2018. They must be addressed to Lake Gaston Gazette-Observer, 378 Lizard Creek Road, Littleton, N.C. 27850. One ballot per person. **4.** 2018 Readers' Choice Award winners will be announced in a special section on March 28, 2018.

Official Voter's Ballot • Vote Your Top 10 Choices

DIRECTIONS: Write down the category name followed by the business' complete name of the first and last name of the individual and their place of business. Then mail to: Lake Gaston Gazette-Observer, 378 Lizard Creek Road, Littleton, N.C. 27850. Entries must be received by 5 p.m. on March 13, 2018.

Category Name	Your Choice
EXAMPLE: Pizza	The Pizza Restaurant
EXAMPLE: Realtor	Joe Smith at Smith & Son Real Estate Company

Voter Information:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Are you a Lake Gaston Gazette-Observer subscriber? Yes _____ No _____

If not, would you like us to contact you with more information? Yes _____ No _____