

Mount Vernon News

Centerburg robotics team advances to international competition

By Pamela Schehl

March 11, 2009

CENTERBURG — After winning three trophies at the Buckeye Regional FIRST Robotics competition, the Centerburg Trojan Robotics team is heading to Atlanta for an international competition. Team members used science, math, technology and engineering skills to design and build a mobile robot. After eight rounds of preliminary competition and 12 to 14 rounds total over the two-day regional event, the Trojans brought home three trophies: A regional finalist award, the Highest Rookie Seed Award and the Rookie All Star Award, thus earning the right to attend the championship contest in April.



One of the coaches, Janine Hebenthal, said the opportunity to compete in Atlanta was an unexpected, but pleasant, surprise. Team members are busy raising the funds they will need to travel to the competition, and are working on making a few repairs to the robot and “tweaking” its programming. That is, the team is planning the repairs and tweaking they will do once they get to Atlanta. The robot is crated and already there, Hebenthal said.

Discuss Centerburg robotics team advances to international competition She explained the team will have about a three-hour window prior to competition to switch out components and repair things, but no major modifications are permitted. Team members are also working on their strategy a little bit, watching videos of the regional contest to get some ideas of things they could do differently.

Robotist Thomas Liwosz described how the team had six weeks to come together to create, design and construct the robot, and said they really did use stuff they had learned in school in the process, specifically mentioning physics, algebra and IT.

He said at first the group was a little nervous about the undertaking and working together, but now, he said, “We’re all really close friends.”

More information about the team and snippets of videos from the regional competition can be found on the team’s Web site www.centerburgtrojans.org.