

Three teams compete in nationwide competition: Team America Rocketry Challenge

By Allison Lackner
BUSINESS MANAGER

Three North teams competed in the Team America Rocketry Challenge this year. Two of the teams participated through Chemistry Club, and the other team worked outside of the club but has been competing in the challenge for years. North's Chemistry Club created two teams this year to work on the rockets and travel to the competition. The idea to start this project was brought up by a parent to Chemistry Club adviser Steven Kosmas. Kosmas helped guide the students through the building and launching process.

The Chemistry Club had a boys team and a girls team. Another group of students entered

the contest without being in Chemistry Club, and were working towards qualifying for the national competition for a third time. This team, composed of juniors Austin Albrecht, Keenan Bakowski, Danny Morrison and Thomas Supal, qualified and left for D.C. on Thursday, May 11. They are one in 100 teams that will be competing in TARC at the national level.

Supal is familiar with rocketry. His older brother and his father, Mark, used to compete and they introduced it to him as well.

Mark offered to help the Chemistry Club because this was their first year doing the challenge. He provided material like tubing, insulation and rocket noses.

The girls team included sophomores Polly Fitzgerald, Vivian Liagre, Jill Peters, Claire Williams and captain Mollie Szczepanski. The boys team was sophomores Christian Eckerman, Ryan Huizdos, juniors Michal Ruprecht and Isaiah Mahone, senior Ben Sosnowski and captain Sam Plieth. The girls team qualified as an alternate for nationals, coming in at tenth place, while the boys didn't qualify.

Sophomore Sam Plieth joined Chemistry Club because science is one of his passions and something he would love to go into. Even though Chemistry Club got a late start on the process of building the rockets, Plieth found the time with this team relaxing. "It was actually kind of revealing because it was something really fun and new to do, just to build a rocket," Plieth said. "It's really hands-on and something I have never really experienced in a club so far."

Sophomore Mollie Szczepanski wants to be a doctor and loves Chemistry, making her a good fit for captain of the girls team. She enjoyed spending time with her team building their rocket. "It was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed it. We met up at each others' houses and we were sawing and sanding things

for hours on end," Szczepanski said. "Then we were spray painting in the dark (when it was) 30 degrees outside and we didn't have shoes on and it was really cool, but I really enjoyed it."

Plieth's favorite part of the whole process was launching their finished projects.

"Once we got on the field it was a completely different experience that I have ever had it school," Plieth said.

Even though all the teams aren't going to Washington D.C., they have all started to draft plans for next year.

"This year on the team, it was interesting. We tried to make this brake mechanism thing where its flag came out on the rocket," Thomas said. "But, it didn't really work that well so we are going to try to do that next year."

Although the weather conditions worked against the girls team, Szczepanski learned a lot of values and is prepared for next year. "I learned a lot of things about responsibility and getting things done and (that) making a mistake is okay but just try not to make it again."

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Mollie Szczepanski
SOPHOMORE



CHALLENGE Team America Rocketry Challenge is sponsored by the Aerospace Industries Association and was founded in 2002. It aims at inspiring more students to consider a career in STEM. National qualifiers travel to Washington D.C. for the championship round.



BLAST OFF Rocket tournament participants pose with their prototype. "It was one of the coolest things I have had in a club here. It would go up 700 feet. It was one of the craziest things," Plieth said. "I'm definitely going to continue it here, all my years. It's really cool."

Collective Art Showcase

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"They're meeting with the artists themselves to kind of find out their thought process behind their pieces of work, so they can understand the product and then fill in and greet customers as they come in. (The students) talk to them and see kind of what they're looking for and guide them in the right direction. Some of what they're doing down in the school store but with art instead of clothing," Levinson said.

Foods teacher Julie Cutler's classes will not only be presenting dishes, but catering the showcase as well. She said she would like to see even more classes participate in the event in future years.

"The Commercial Foods class which has been primarily a catering and restaurants management type class is going to be catering the event," Cutler said. "Students will be making finger foods. We'll have them on

trays and students are going to walk around and allow the guests who are touring the art to take some of our bite-size appetizers."

While the electives are still preparing for their opening day, Lifeskills teacher Stacy Krzyminski is already looking toward the future.

"We want to keep growing," Krzyminski said. "We want to include eventually more of my classes (in the showcase) ... we have talked about including the elementary schools and the middle schools so it's all one GP in one area."

All the electives can agree that the Collective Art Showcase has required lots of work and collaboration across the departments. Warren is excited to see the show finally come together.

"I think it's really cool that the students are so much a part of every facet of planning, production and what's actually on display," she said. "It's all student done."



FINISHING TOUCH Students place the final touches on art that will be displayed on the Collective Arts Showcase.

Professional Learning Committee hosts Lunch and Learn

By Bella Lawson
STAFF REPORTER

Lunch and Learn, a program sponsored by English teacher Diane Montgomery's Professional Learning Committee, gives students the chance to meet and talk to people from various career fields, especially those that are out of the ordinary. The PLC consists of Montgomery, the counselors and Nicole Sturgeon. They organize for speakers to come visit a group of interested students during their lunch period.

The speaker usually begins by talking to the students about their background and education, then discusses how they found their way to their current job. They include positives and negatives of their job and daily lives, and they finish by answering questions that students may have regarding their profession.

"For the past few years, my PLC groups have always revolved around ways to provide more career exploration for students. This is one of the ideas we came up with," Montgomery said. "We had a stunt man, a friend of Mrs. Sturgeon's, and a former

GPN student, Bridget Reno, who works in a Karmanos cancer lab, and last week we had Phil Pierce, Mrs. Pierce's son, and a

co-worker of his. They both work for the Red Wings organization. Phil is in community outreach programs and his friend is in charge of social media for the Wings."

Although it may be difficult for some students to sacrifice their lunch to learn and explore ideas in relation to their future, junior Bea Castro attended many of the Lunch and Learn opportunities offered.

"I went to Lunch and Learn because I wanted to learn about other jobs that one wouldn't normally think about. It really taught me about jobs I didn't know about and how to look beyond a single job," Castro

said. "I took away that most people go into college knowing what they want to go into, but once they go into the world looking for a job and they can't get one and they keep trying, then they start to rethink their career but then sooner or later they end up finding a job."

Although the program is just in its starting phase, the PLC is working to get more students in attendance and a more diverse group of careers to showcase to students.

Counselor Jennifer Sherman believes that Lunch and Learn is an opportunity for not only students who are undecided about what career they would like to go into, but also those who have a strong idea about their future and interests.

The last speaker for this school year will be visiting on Thursday, May 18. Next year, students can listen to the announcements for more Lunch and Learn opportunities to

come.

"Often students have ideas about what career might be a good match. As students go to college, it is not uncommon for students to change their minds about career options and then need to change their major in college. Lunch and Learn gives students a chance to hear more about careers that might interest them. Hearing from our speakers might give them a second thought about what they were thinking or give them more confidence in their choice," Sherman said. "It is so important that you get as much knowledge about yourself and what your interests are in high school so that you have some direction as you graduate. Although many students go into college undecided, and that's ok, if attending a speaker inspired you to a certain career path, it would be very valuable information. I would urge all students to participate in these lunches next year—it's a great way to get to know more about a career."

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Bea Castro
JUNIOR