

Upcoming Events:

- ~E-Waste Collection 3/2/13
- ~SAC Regional 3/21-3/23
- ~Silicon Valley Regional 4/4-4/6



St. Francis
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

WHAT HAVE THE FEMBOTS BEEN UP TO?

Edited by Liz and Mikia

KICK-OFF

By Ty '13

Saturday, January 5, 2013. It was the morning of my last FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) Kick-off and I cannot explain to you the amount of excitement I was feeling. My first job was to greet people and make sure everyone knew where they were going to see the video. I couldn't stop smiling, and everyone seemed to be rather excited about finding out the new game for this season. When I was done greeting people, we went in to get the team ready for the presentation and a little surprise we had been planning for a few months in advance. A few minutes before the game video was released, music started playing and all of the Fembots got up to perform a flash mob as everyone stared in awe! I thought this was a great way to start the season. After we settled down, Ultimate Ascent



was released and explained; you could hear a dull murmur all around the bleachers. People were already starting to share their ideas and theories about how to tackle the challenge of either climbing or shooting the Frisbees. When the video was over, everyone got out of the bleachers to look at the game pieces. After all of the teams left with their kits, we began to strategize with our team and a few members of the new rookie team from Rio Americano, whom our team is mentoring. We had a productive strategy meeting, then we were able to go home and think over some ideas for our design meeting the next day. All in all, I'd say it was a pretty great kick-off and I'm proud to have been a part of the Fembots for my entire high school career.



Zaire, Mary, and Kathleen lift a kit of parts for an excited team.



Reanna poses with Zygy at Open House.

OPEN HOUSE

By Ria '13

The Fembots participated once again at St. Francis' annual Open House this past October. The team brought our practice robot, Atari, that was modeled after our competition robot, Zygy. The Fembots talked to families about the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) organization, in hopes that it would not only attract aspiring St. Francis High School students but also their parents and possible sponsors.

Senior and safety captain, Moriah, shared that when driving the robot around the gym, a little boy was amazed with our masterpiece and exclaimed that he hopes that one day he'll build something just as amazing. As Fembots and members of FIRST, we encouraged him to pursue his hopes of becoming an engineer and to join robotics. Presenting at Open House was a success and we hope that some future Troubies will now become future Fembots.



Far left: Sherry and Alex pose with Zygy
Left: Jaz and Maxine set up the drive controls

MAD TOWN THROWDOWN

November 10, 2012

Madera, CA

VETERAN POINT OF VIEW *By Mary '14*

On November 10th, the Fembots attended MadTown Throwdown, an off-season Robotics competition held at Madera High School. On Friday morning we helped to set up the field, and had the opportunity to meet members of MadTown, Madera High School's FIRST Robotics Competition team.

On Saturday, the day of the competition, the rookies were able to operate the robot and gain hands on experience. After the qualification rounds, our team was chosen to be in an alliance with the Buchanan Bird Brains and Duncan Dynamics.

Attending the MadTown event was so much fun, especially understanding much more of what was actually going on, given it being my second year on the team. I can't wait to go to MadTown Throwdown next year.



Above: After a long day at MadTown Throwdown, some of the Fembots hug to relieve the stress.

ROOKIE POINT OF VIEW

By Emma '13

MadTown Throwdown was my first experience at a robotics competition. I am a rookie to the Fembots, but am a senior in high school. Being a senior sometimes gives me a feeling of superiority—as if I can never be surprised—but my first taste of competition was different than what I expected. When I walked through the doors of Madera High School for the first time, the disassembled field was spread out in front of me. Many hands made light work of putting the field into working order. Soon we were released into the pits, where I spent the majority of my time.

The open gym was soon filled to the brim with teams and their robots. Each team differed in their approach of how to fit all of their tools, shelving, and their robot into the sliver of space they were allotted. The room was buzzing with conversation; wheels turned, computers powered to life, and drills grinded against metal. I started walking around the room studying the different designs and strategies conveniently laid out before me. I talked with different teams about how they came to



Above: Emma and our robot Zygy in the pits at MadTown.

build their robot, what techniques they used, the pros and cons of their designs, and a million more topics. I came away that first day physically drained and mentally charged at the same time.

Robotics provides an amazing and unique atmosphere I had never before encountered. In short, I'm hooked and extremely excited for all the things I'll learn, and the people I'll meet in the months to come.

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TAP Plastics

FIRST LEGO League

By Kathleen '16 and Mikia '16

In November, the Fembots hosted a FIRST Lego League (FLL) tournament on campus, for local middle school robotics teams. Our roles included: setting up the field, working as pit admin, and taking pictures of the pits. When setting up the field, we had the opportunity to see some of the robots and it was interesting to see students control them. The obstacles the participants had to pass were very challenging, but we were amazed by all of their interesting designs to get the job done.

Around lunchtime, all the teams and parents who came to support them ate burgers and hotdogs grilled by our parent volunteers. Our team even had some lunch on our break before we had to continue working again.

After lunch, we worked on pit admin; this gave us the opportunity to talk to various participants and overall learn a lot about how FLL works. We also got closer with our teammates who visited us and worked with us

while doing the job.

We took pictures of the pits where we saw many kids practicing with their robots. We saw teams bonding, the participants working hard, and everyone getting to know each other. The Fembots can't wait to see what these young minds will create in FIRST Robotics Competition!



Angeline and Mikia announce at the FIRST LEGO League tournament.

PLATT DEMO

By Rachel '13 and Liz '13

In October, the Fembots attended Platt Distribution Company's vendor fair and spoke with parts and electronics vendors about FIRST and the Fembots. This was our fourth year participating in the event, and we were prepared to speak about our team to various vendors.

When we arrived, we met with the other Fembots who were already there and prepared to speak about FIRST, our team, finances, and share our experiences with them. They asked us several questions about our great opportunity, being on the team. Many were shocked to know that we all were able to weld and had a marketing sub team.

After our presentation and a quick lunch, we began to talk to vendors again. We demoed our 2011 robot, Andy, for the vendors there. We all enjoyed operating and trying to parallel park Andy. It was a fun event to attend; we enjoyed talking to all the people there and teaching them about FIRST.



The Fembots pose after a presentation at the Platt Vendor Fair.

AS AN ALUMNA

Part two of Sherry's story.

By Sherry Bain

If you missed Part 1, check out the last newsletter issue at sfrobotics.com

Naturally I gained many other experiences while I attended Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, where I earned my BS in mechanical engineering. I was a part of the campus Filipino club, I participated in the university choir, I built robots in class, I did all sorts of things to enrich my college experience. I even tried to mentor First Robotics Team (FRC) 1388 in Arroyo Grande. It was a bit difficult because of the commute and my workload in school. In the end I don't think I helped out nearly as much as I would have liked.

I attended competitions as often as my schedule would allow me to. More often than not, the Sacramento Regional fell around spring break. I loved visiting the SF team, meeting the new members, and checking up on the team in general, but here I'll be honest. It was hard to be an outsider. Albeit, it's said that once a Fembot always a Fembot, but being an alumna will never have the same feeling. I could only observe in the pits. I could only watch the matches as a spectator. I had no real knowledge of the robots except for what was described to me. It's so hard to not do anything except be a supporter, but I returned as often as I could because the Fembots will always hold a special place in my heart.

Before I knew it, my college career ended. In the fall of 2008 I filled out all my graduate school applications, but I had no plans for afterward. The evening after I submitted my very last application, I received an invitation to join the Fembots at their kick off event the following morning by fellow alumnae Christine Luu and Jenny Cheng. At this point they were the last of the Fembots I knew personally, but I was happy to meet up with old friends and catch up with the Fembots' current doings. That early morning was rough (if you know me well, you know what I mean), but it was exciting to see what the new generation of Fembots were like. I fell in love with the 2009 game Lunacy, I was impressed with Coach Grau's direction with the team, and I was intrigued by how much the team had expanded in its capabilities, resources, and community. The Fembots certainly did more than I ever expected them to do. Without realizing it, I started to attend every meeting thereafter.

Stay tuned for the next part of Sherry's story in the following issue!

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Sherry and Christine '08 at the 2009 Sacramento Regional.

E-waste Collection

March 2 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, the Fembots are hosting their annual e-waste collection at St. Francis High School.

What to Bring: Desktop PCs, keyboards, TVs, Copiers, Printers, Fax machines, Laser Scanners, VCRs, DVD players, Speakers, PDAs, Digital Cameras, Telephones, Cell Phones, Calculators, Video Game Consoles, Mice, CD players and more!

What NOT to Bring: All Hazardous Waste, Solar Panels, Contaminated Electronic Waste, Non-Electronic Waste, Large Household Waste, Furniture



FIRST Team 692

The Fembots
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Do you have e-waste that you need to get rid of **now**? Email us a robotics@stfrancis.org