



LASF Rube Goldberg Culminates in Energetic Evening

By Barbara Millman Cole, LASF Media Liaison

The Lafayette Arts & Science Foundation sponsored Rube Goldberg competition is based on the college level, National Rube Goldberg Contest and scaled back for Stanley Middle School science enthusiasts by Lead Science teacher Mike Meneghetti.

Sixteen teams participated in this year's Build a Burger theme. They spent months working on their ideas and perfecting their machines before the final competition that was held on March 27th.

Brothers Scott and Andrew Bertics took first place.

"We wanted to make an anagram for Rube Goldberg, so we named it Be Goldburger," said eighth grader Scott Bertics. Incorporating simultaneous ingenious energy transfers (steps), they used a catapult, funnel, ramps, rubber band gun, two pound weight and balance to get the burger on the bun and turn it gold with glitter.

Cody Gibb, Tommy Holmes and Luke Johnston took second for Fast Food Feeding Frenzy. They incorporated an electrical circuit that burned through steel wool causing the burger, securely taped to the spatula so it wouldn't exit the space, to flip onto the bun.

Jack Peterson and Spenser Tejada placed third. They programmed a robot to wait 21 seconds before moving its robotic arm to slow down the steps and win more points.

Tyler Sorensen, Nicolette Sorensen and Joshua Lee took Honorable Mention using a zip line and series of teeter totters to get their burger on the bun.

Daniel Escobar, Patrick Espe, Andrew Langley and Marcus van Duren spent hours packing as many ingenious energy transfers as they could into the specified space. They managed 23 steps, but spent so much time explaining how their machine worked that time ran out. Undaunted, they proudly ran the contraption twice, even though they knew they wouldn't win. At one point, everyone waited in anticipation as their one minute timer ticked. Applause rang out and the boys basked in triumph when the machine continued and completed the task.

"No more Factory Farms," read a sign attached to Just for You machine created by Julia Curiel, Grace Linderholm and Antonia Yu. Their theme was a protest against fast food with construction paper flames rimming the machine and photos of crowded cow barns and chicken coops.

Savannah Lane and Melissa Emerson were the only contestants to use a chemical reaction, dropping Mentos into soda to inflate a balloon.

LASF volunteer science coordinator Mary Ilyin said, "The best part was how excited the kids were to set up quickly so they could inspect each other's machines. It was great to watch them be amazed by their fellow contestants' ingenuity."



1st Place, Scott and Andrew Bertics

Photo Cathy Bertics



2nd Place, (L-R) Tommy Holmes, Cody Gibb and Luke Johnston

Photo Charlotte Gibb



3rd Place, Jack Peterson (left) and Spenser Tejada

Photo Cathy Bertics