

Odyssey of the Mind State Champions Advance to the World Tournament

Submitted by Beverley Sopak



Photo provided

Glorietta Elementary School's fifth-grade Odyssey of the Mind team - Sarah Inouye, Sullivan Jordan, Caroline Kim, Leah Sopak and Stephanie Wu, Coach Michael Kim and Amy Inouye - took first place last Saturday at the Odyssey of the Mind State tournament. This follows their first place finish at the regional competition. Their 15-gram, 8-inch tall balsa wood structure supported 530 pounds,

traveled down a ramp and then moved to the weight tester without being touched - all of this incorporated and presented in a creative 8-minute commercial. The team was judged on weight held, creativity and ability to solve a separate spontaneous problem. The team will be representing the state of California, Orinda and Glorietta at the World Finals May 22-25 in Michigan.

Moraga Rotary Team C Advances to Odyssey of the Mind World Finals

Submitted by Zhan Li



Photo provided

Moraga Rotary Club Team C members and coach, from left: Navid Boozarpour, Anshula Srivastava, Omid Boozarpour (coach), Meera Ramesh, Jake Oxendine, Maya Ramesh, Ming Qian, and Austen Li.

Every year the Moraga Rotary Club sponsors teams of all ages from local schools to compete in Odyssey of the Mind, which is designed to test creativity and intuition by giving teams open ended problems and challenging them to create unconventional solutions.

ple problem on the spot without any preparation. They took first place in the spontaneous portion of the regional competition by a large margin, boosting the team to second place overall.

The Moraga Rotary Club Team C, a team of eighth-graders from Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, successfully competed against 15 other teams and took second place in their division for their problem, "ARTchitecture: The Musical," March 2 at the San Francisco Bay Regional Tournament in Concord.

Reflecting on the competition, the team coach, Omid Boozarpour, a junior at Campolindo High School, stated: "Over the course of the season we had some struggles, at one point I wasn't even sure that they [the kids] were going to finish. But in the end they pulled together and got the win."

The competition consisted of two parts: spontaneous and long-term. For a team to win it must be fairly strong in both aspects. Teams decided on a long-term problem in last October and worked on their solutions, in this case an eight-minute skit, until early March. The Spontaneous section requires the team to solve a sim-

The second-place win qualified them for the state tournament held last Saturday in Brentwood where the team won a top slot, and a chance to compete at the World Finals held at Michigan State University in May.

The team would like to thank the Moraga Rotary Club for sponsoring them for many years.

TEEN SCENE

Technology Crosses the Line with Lulu App

By Youngjoo Ahn

With the recent boom of technology, the way we buy products has changed. Instead of going to a physical location, we now have the option of ordering everything from clothes to computer products to home furniture online. Websites such as Yelp.com offer invaluable services to compare different restaurants and other businesses for optimal quality. Applications like RedLaser and Price Check from Amazon allow users to compare prices for the cheapest buy.

of a first and last name, the opportunity for a first impression is erased.

"Although I wouldn't base my opinion of an individual on a rating, Lulu takes away the power of the first impression," junior Arianna Tong said. "Because even though we're taught not to judge people we've never talked to or met, we can't help but base our opinions off general opinions. It's human nature."

The prevalent use of social media has increased the potential for success and flop for businesses, museums, and even movies. Technology has enabled us to find the best product in the least amount of time at the lowest price. Why waste time in a terrible restaurant when Yelp.com is telling you that there's a fantastic Italian restaurant down the street? There are websites or apps for book suggestions, clothing and style suggestions, and even dating suggestions.

On blog.onlulu.com, the makers of this app state that finding love is complicated and time consuming. This app would allow women to narrow down their choices quickly and efficiently, like scouring Amazon.com for the best camera case. Love and relationships should be built on personal connections that have nothing to do with ratings. Relationships should take time and effort. This app and apps like this will cause nothing but idle speculation, gossip, and the loss of personal connections.

These websites may be incredibly helpful in everyday life, but when is technology going a step too far? There have been online dating websites like eHarmony or Match.com, where one can create an online persona and meet people through the web. However, the app Lulu goes one alarming step further by labeling men as one would label and rate a business or a movie. The categories for ratings include attractiveness, intelligence, manners, and more - all accompanied by a picture and basic information, like relationship status gathered from Facebook. Scarily enough, any guy who has a Facebook account has automatically been downloaded onto this program without any prior permission.

The Lulu App takes away the element of surprise and the excitement of a first meeting with a male. How far will we allow technology to invade our private spaces before saying no? Humans are not simple products that come with a bar code and a list of features. How reliable is an app that chooses our friends and lovers?

I rarely say this, but to me technology has crossed the line.

Miramonte High junior, Youngjoo Ahn is the Co-President of Club Be the Star You Are!® and Host of the international teen radio show, Express Yourself™

"I didn't even know my information was a part of this app. I don't understand how they could just access my Facebook profile like this," one male student commented.



This app has disregarded the fact that people deserve to be treated like people and not objects that can be bought and sold. I understand the usefulness of comparing restaurants and different types of rugs, but comparing people is a form of bullying. Whatever happened to the connection that people get from meeting face to face? This app is creating rumors about people and could possibly ruin relationships and reputations based on statements that may or may not be true.

First impressions are very important and have always been important, until now. Lulu introduces a person based on what other people think about them. With the simple search

Teen Scene is YOUR voice. If you have something to say or have writing skills and want to be part of our Teen Scene team, email our Teen Coach, Cynthia Brian, Cynthia@CynthiaBrian.com.

The opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

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Volunteers needed

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