Radical Robotics

Submitted Photo

The Robotics Park competition at Martin Middle School in East Providence saw Feinstein's Robotics Club impress judges and spectators with their display.

Coventry middle schoolers get technical

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COVENTRY — The Robotics Club at Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School finished off the year on top, winning first place at its final competition earlier this month.

The Robotics Club, which begins every September, recruits students from sixth, seventh and eighth grade who have a passion for building and problem solving.

"I'm in the robotics class and I really liked it so I figured if I joined the Robotics Club it would be the same but a little more challenging," said seventh-grader Linda Cowen. "So I could learn new things, build new things and go to competitions."

The most recent competition attended by the Robotics Club was held on May 3 at Martin Middle School in East Providence.

The "Robotics Park" competition challenged the students to build a machine based on a certain theme that would be judged by adults, educators and engineers.

Eighth-grader Alec Belotti explained that the club decided to construct a chain reaction machine; the theme was "food."

He said in order for the machine to work, and the theme to be incorporated, club members included different types of food that acted as parts.

"The machine started by kicking a ball, which was an orange, over and then it followed several other tasks including knocking down dominoes that were actually toast," Alec said.

The students from Feinstein's club competed against seven different teams for the competition and were awarded the first

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Feinstein's award-winning robotics club. Front Row (l-r): Zachary Pierson, Aidan Pierson, Alex Lansberry, Linda Cowen, Victoria Kaplun. Back Row (l-r): Trevor Campbell, Ciana Martino, Alec Belotti, Allegra Richards, Andrew Lansberry.

Robotics club a success

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place "Judges Award" for their chain reaction machine.

"The judges gave us this award because we really incorporated the theme into our project," said seventh grader Victoria Kaplun.

The students said that for eight months the club met every Tuesday and Thursday after school, where members worked on projects for their various competitions.

Eighth-grader Andrew Lansberry said the chain reaction project took approximately 200 man hours to construct between all the members of the club.

"This year the team worked very hard as a group and they probably made the most success working together as a team and gained a lot of knowledge," said robotics instructor Rebecca Henderson. "This was a learning experience for a lot of them."

Seven of the 10 middle school students were new to the robotics club this year.

"They work really well under pressure, during meetings they get their stuff done. But the real thought process goes on during competitions because that's when they realize if something doesn't work," said robotics coach Scott Tennent.

The middle school students also competed in the Technology Student Association (TSA) competition on April 5 at New England Institute of Technology.

Seventh-grader Allegra Richards explained that Feinstein's team competed against eight others. During this competition, she said they had to make a board and program it to bring back items to different areas on the board in a certain amount of time.

"They are good at problem solving," said Tennent. "They know who is good at what and they would ask that person to do it. Zac is a great builder so they would say, 'Okay Zac, you have to get this built for us.'"

Some of the students said they plan on looking into the robotics club at the high school next year, while the remaining students said they plan on joining the middle school club for another year.