



(Clockwise from upper left) Casey Moqrige, Racquel Fendley, Natasha Cole and Danielle Magnaghi are raising money for a trip to England and France.

Walled Lake Western cheerleaders seek funds to perform overseas

Four cheerleaders from Walled Lake Western High School have been named to an all-star ambassador team that will travel to Europe and perform in a New Year's Day parade.

But first, they need to raise the funds that will cover their travel and expenses.

Danielle Magnaghi, 16, Racquel Fendley, 17, Casey Moqrige, 18 and Natasha Cole, 16, will head overseas, either to England or France, in December. They were among only 10 girls who made the cut from a field of 25 at the United Cheerleading Association camp held July 16-19.

"We had to show a cheer, and a dance they taught, our best jump," said Fendley. "That was in front of the whole camp."

The girls will spend the time before the trip working with a tape that UCA will send them. Then they'll practice a couple of times after they're overseas, before the big performance.

Ranging from three to 10 years of experience, the cheerleaders made a big impression at camp.

"We were the only team that had four girls that tried out who made it," said Magnaghi.

In addition, they group received the "spirit stick" every day for showing their enthusiasm and had the highest spirit on Spirit Day.

Cost for the trip will be \$2,500 per girl, with \$500 due by Sept. 5. And that's not including expenses, which could range from \$65 to \$100 per day.

"We can't fund-raise through the school," Magnaghi said.

So the girls are relying on the surrounding community and local businesses. They're coming up with fundraising ideas.

To help, contact their coach Bruce Martin at brucemartinjr@hotmail.com

RoboHawks take 2nd in national competition

The Harrison High School robotics team, the "RoboHawks," came in second place out of an original 170 teams from across the United States in the National BotBall robotics tournament held June 29 through July 1 in Norman, Okla.

Team members who made the trip were: Jefferey Ziemba, Prashanth (Rob) Pandian, Kobey Shwayder, Christina MacLean, Troy Brown, Colin Chardavoyne, Dasol Kim, Tom Dotson and Taylor Dotson.

The BotBall competition is sponsored by the Kiss ("Keep It Simple Stupid") Institute for Practical Robotics or KIPR also located in Norman. KIPR was founded by noted robotics designer Dr. David Miller, who's Sojourner rover landed on Mars and sent video images back to earth while rolling around the landscape.

Dr. Miller wanted to come up with a contest that would allow middle and high school students to explore the field of robotics with specific goals in mind. Unlike other similar contests, the BotBall robots must be designed, built, and programmed entirely by the students themselves with coaches in a strictly advisory role.

The robots are programmed in advance to perform the tasks required in the competition and once the contest starts they are completely on their own with no guidance from their creators allowed.

The contest itself takes the form of a tournament, where the teams place their robots on one end of the 4 foot by 8 foot playing field and the opposing team puts their robots on the opposite end of the field.

Typically, each team has one robot dedicated to offense and one to defense. Points are scored by moving ping-pong balls from several types of enclosures to a goal area. The defending robots attempt to block their opponent to keep it from scoring points.

Over the past four years, the team has won a number of contests:

1999 Trinity College Robotic Firefighting Competition - first place

2000 National BotBall tournament - fourth place

2001 Lawrence Tech robotics competition first, second, and third places

2002 National BotBall tournament - second place

This year, sponsorships from Akebono Corp. in Farmington and Soar Technologies of Ann Arbor helped defray travel costs and entry fees for the contest and were much appreciated.

The RoboHawks are coached by Harrison Physics teacher Steve Dail and volunteer Barry Brouillette. Chuck Mullen also assists during the school year.

Brouillette feels that this year's competition was by far the most technically challenging of any of the contests the team has entered so far and was very proud of the hard work and dedication put in by the team to go as far as they did. "It would be a challenge for a group of professional engineers to do as well as this group of students did with the time schedule and material allowed."

Team captains Ziemba and Pandian and coach Steve Dail were invited to demonstrate their robot in Edmonton, Alberta at the American Association for Artificial Intelligence annual convention July 30.

Only four teams in the country were invited to the conference. Both captains are 2002 graduates and both are going to study engineering in the fall.

Ziemba will enter Lawrence Technical University while Pandian will start at the University of Michigan. The expenses for the trip to Canada are paid for by KIPR.

ROAD WATCH

Information for Road Watch is supplied by the Road Commission for Oakland County (www.rcocweb.org). Information is subject to change.

FARMINGTON

■ Road: Farmington Road, south of Nine Mile to Grand River - This section of Farmington is closed to south-bound traffic as the RCOC reconstructs and widens the road. During the project, the detour route for south-bound traffic is Grand River, Drake and Nine Mile. Motorists traveling north-bound on Farmington should expect delays and are encouraged to use the detour route as well. Completion is expected Sept. 30.

WALLED LAKE AND COMMERCE

■ Road: West Maple Road, Welch to west of Haggerty - As part of the M-5 project, the Michigan Department of Transportation has closed this section of road to reconstruct it as a boulevard. Alternate routes are 14 Mile, Welch, Maple, Decker and Pontiac Trail. Completion set for September.

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