

STUDENTS SHOW OFF THEIR SMARTS

• SCIENCE COMPETITION CHALLENGES HS STUDENTS

What do rubber bands, flying beanbags and mousetraps have in common? They are all found at SMARTS Challenge!

SMARTS Challenge is a science competition established by Martin Looyenga and Pam K. Wells of Mobridge-Pollock High School Science Department for grades 9-12.

Started in 2013, the “Smarts Challenge” is a competition for creative, science based learners and is a time to explore science in ways that are not always easy to accomplish in the classroom.

2013's competition hosted eight teams from seven schools with nine schools – many bringing more than one team – attending the competition in 2014.

The 2015 competition is expected to have more schools and teams involved.

As part of the SMARTS Challenge, students can create, build, and showcase their work. They can also work as teams to solve problems.

The competition consists of “make and takes” where the student teams will build a device and bring it to the competition and also on-site activities where students will be asked to solve engineering or science based problems.

Examples of the competitions include mousetrap cars, catapults/trebuchets, Rube Goldberg Machines, and rubber band powered airplanes.

One competition, “Thinking on Your Feet,” involves real-life problem solving skills. A team of three to four students works together to solve a real problem posed by a business or state agency. They develop a plausible solution and present it to a panel of corporate personal. The students must work as a team to find an answer to a real world problem.

Each team member receives a “SMARTS Challenge” t-shirt.



Awards are given to the top three qualifiers in each competition. The winning team receives a plaque and a scholarship to the EXPO at South Dakota State University. Also, each member of the winning team receives a graphing calculator.

Because of the generosity of the Mobridge-Pollock community and sponsorship from the CEO of MainStreet Bank of Virginia, Jeff W. Dick, the students will receive recognition for excelling in this science competition.

For more information of SMARTS Challenge look at: <http://smartschallenge.blogspot.com/>.

Due to the high interest in SMARTS Challenge, Looyenga and Wells have a team of students that participate in BEST Robotics at SDSU in Brookings.

The team consisted of members who were innovators, engineers, writers, presenters and marketers. Constructing a robot to perform a specific task was just a part of this exciting competition.

Students were to market their product (the robot) to a panel of investors/judges, assist others and show cooperative work. Displaying their work and creating an engineering notebook were integral in the overall success of the competition.

“Students are actively involved in the Mobridge-Pollock High School Science Department,” Mobridge-Pollock Superintendent Tim Frederick said.

“They are learning by doing. They understand the need for innovation in today's world and are willing to engage their skills into these competitions.”

ENGAGED IN A TRADE

• *M-P STUDENTS PREP FOR POTENTIAL CAREERS THROUGH CTE*

With increasing college costs, students are opting for more CTE field related opportunities, and the Mobridge Pollock School District is working to provide the necessary programs to assist the students with those choices to lifetime jobs.

Career and technical education is a path many high achieving students are choosing in pursuit of jobs right out of high school.

In Mobridge-Pollock the CTE classes are in demand by students for the hands-on learning and engagement, which are a direct reflection of the needs of the community.

The building trades instructor appreciated the chance to help the students take pride in serving the community in which they reside.

The newly settled culinary arts room features high end cooking and baking equipment focusing on students' connections to their core classes and increasing the rigor and accountability in learning.

Students help serve the community in various ways through culinary activities to raise funding. Recently, the students made casseroles of their choice to help raise funding for a hospital bazaar.



The Mobridge-Pollock School building and trades students recently accepted a \$2,500 check from the Mobridge Rodeo Association for the construction of a new building at the rodeo grounds. Students constructed a structure containing office space, restrooms and a concession stand.



The endeavor brought in more than \$1,100.

Advanced welding students are currently building an ice shack for a community member. Welding the framework requires applicable math skills to produce a successful product, and this is one of the great things about career and technical education.

CTE is emerging as a way for students to learn practical skills, which leads to more rigor and in-depth quality learning.

"Being able to use knowledge learned through applications in which students utilize CTE skills, has allowed our students to work with the industries in our community and our state," Mobridge-Pollock Superintendent Tim Frederick said.