

August 2015



The Waste Wise season will open for registrations on August 3. Be prepared to look at trash in a whole new way!

There is now an Illinois Jr.FLL Yahoo group for coaches and parents to post questions about the Jr.FLL program or challenge, and to share coaching strategies and resources. It is a restricted group and will function similar to the FLL Yahoo group. The group name is jrfl_illinois. Jr.FLL coaches - if you have not yet done so, please complete the Jr.FLL [survey](#).

Specific questions may be directed to our Illinois Jr.FLL program partner, Mary Buchanan, at jrFLL-contact@ILfirst.org.



FIRST LEGO League teams in Illinois may begin registering now for qualifying tournaments for the Trash Trek season [here](#).

Dates and locations for many of the Illinois qualifying tournaments are posted on the [website](#). We will continue to update the information as the remaining tournament details are finalized, so please check the website regularly for any new tournaments.

Details for coach training sessions in Naperville and Peoria are posted on the [website](#). You must register to attend a training session.

The Trash Trek Challenge Release will be Tuesday, August 25th at 11:00 am CDT!

Specific questions may be directed to our Illinois FLL program partner, Diane Michalczuk, at contactflillinois@gmail.com.

FIRST Tech Challenge 2015-16 game reveal is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. CDT, Saturday, September 12th. Season Kickoff events are planned around the state in Elgin, Highland Park, Peoria, and Rockford. Some will include workshops and all require teams to RSVP by 9/8 to attend. Look for information in upcoming Illinois FTC team blast, US FTC Events and Illinois FTC Event pages.

Teams looking for more information on the [new required android technology system](#) and Java programming should be checking updates on the [FTC Technology Forum](#) on US FIRST. Manual currently being revised and will be available in the near future.

Java SDK Beta and MIT App Inventor Beta will be released by August 7 with competition versions released September 12th. Links will be on the forum page. You may find this [link](#) useful for the new platform.

If you know of anyone interested in starting an FTC team, US FIRST has \$575 [FTC Grants](#). The availability of Illinois FTC Rookie Grants, mentoring, and workshops will be announced by the end of August.

Decatur will have an event Sat., Sept. 19. The workshops will include the new communication system and Java programming primer.

We are hoping to invite 48 teams to the state championship tournament which will require teams to check in and go through judging on Friday night. The tournament will start at 9 AM Saturday morning, if all goes according to plans.

Specific questions may be directed to either of our Illinois FTC program partners: Sue Kunzeman at FTC-contact@ILfirst.org or Jonathan Weiland at jwFTCil@gmail.com.



FIRST® Robotics Competition



Welcome rookie teams from Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School and DeKalb High School!

Congratulations to the 5 FIRST FRC teams that represented Illinois at the Indiana Robotics Invitational (IR) on July 17-18. A good time was had by all that attended the 3rd annual Rock River Off-Season Competition (R2OC) on July 24-25. Thanks to FRC teams #81 Metalheads, #1625 Winnovation, #2039 Rockford

Robotics, #3352 Flaming Monkeys, and #4655 Stateline Robotics for another successful and smoothly run event.

Event registration opens on September 24. Be sure to have identified both a main and alternate mentor in TIMS and allow time for YPP compliancy in order to be able to register.

Our Wisconsin neighbors are again inviting Illinois FRC teams to the Maker Faire Milwaukee [RoboFest](#) for a competition on September 26 and/or exhibition on September 27.



SENIOR MENTOR CORNER

The Senior Mentor Corner is a potpourri of events and activities that may be of interest to teams or students of our Illinois *FIRST* teams. Some information will be directly from *FIRST* HQ. Other events/activities may not necessarily be sanctioned functions of *FIRST* or Illinois *FIRST* but may be of general interest to our teams regarding fun events, fundraising, etc.

FIRST ETIQUETTE

FIRST – is an acronym. It is not spelled F.I.R.S.T. nor First. LEGO is spelled with all capital letters. When referring to your team, especially with the press and social media, refer to your team as *FIRST* Jr. LEGO League, *FIRST* LEGO League, *FIRST* Tech Challenge or *FIRST* Robotics Competition. After referencing the full name, then it would be appropriate to use the shortened version of Jr.FLL, FLL, FTC and FRC.

Official logos for *FIRST* and all *FIRST* programs are available for your use. There are policies for their use. Information may be found on the *FIRST* website under [FIRST Brand](#).

TIMS

The Team Information Management System is open for registration for all *FIRST* programs. Teams are encouraged to verify the coach/mentor contact info is accurate. If there are additions to your mentoring staff, ensure they are acknowledged as a part of your team.

FTC and FRC teams affiliated with a school may want to consider inviting the guidance counselor as a scholarship contact to be kept informed of scholarships for our *FIRST* robotic students.

CHICAGO SOUTHSIDE MINI MAKER FAIRE

The 3rd annual [Chicago Southside Mini Maker Faire](#) will be on Saturday, August 8, at the Ford City Mall, 7601 S. Cicero in Chicago from 11am to 5 pm. *FIRST* FRC #1739, Chicago Knights has been involved since the event's inception.

FUNDRAISING

August is a great time for many teams to do some fundraising before school starts to avoid overlap with PTA/PTO, clubs, and sports. Several restaurant chains such as Applebee's, Chick-fil-A, Chili's, Chipotle, Culver's, Red Robin and TCBY all offer fundraising spirit nights. Most have an application process. Once accepted, your team will be responsible to distribute promotional flyers and/or advertise to your community to get as many people as possible to attend on your fundraiser date. There is no cost; the restaurant donates a percentage of sales back to your team. This may also be a great outreach opportunity if the restaurant will allow you to showcase your team's robot.

JOHN DEERE GRANTS

John Deere offers grants for *FIRST* teams located within 50 miles of their facilities in the Quad Cities, Champaign, or Dubuque (IA). If your team has a John Deere employee or retiree as a mentor, the distance can be even farther. [Application](#) deadlines are approaching.

FIRST FUTURE INNOVATOR AWARD

The FFIA competition is open to all FTC and FRC members. The award recognizes creativity in solving a real world, complex problem through the invention of a unique solution. [Submission](#) deadline is October 30.

FTC SERVOCITY SPONSORSHIPS

August 31 is the deadline to apply for one of five \$1,000 [sponsorships](#) for *FIRST* FTC teams by ServoCity.

NXT REPURPOSE PROJECT

Check out what our FTC neighbors in Iowa, Combustible Lemons, are doing with NXTs via their [Repurpose Project](#).

NASSP APPROVAL

The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed *FIRST* Tech Challenge (FTC) and *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC) on the [NASSP National Advisory List of Contests and Activities for 2015-2016](#).

BASIC ASSISTANCE WITH LEGO MINDSTORMS

The [Texas STEM Center](#) offers an online resource with basic construction and programming for LEGO Mindstorms.

WANTED: PTC VIDEO TUTORIALS

PTC wants teams to create [software tutorials](#). In return for a submission, you will receive a PTC goodie bag.

Diane Cabiness, *FIRST* Senior Mentor – Illinois
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