



GoodLife

LIFE



DIANE CEBULA/DAILY PRESS PHOTO

NASA Knights First Robotics team members James Burton, left, and Julia Thompson put the team's robot in place as Ryan Souther, right, removes the cart used to roll the robot onto the competition floor March 21 during a First Robotics Virginia regional competition in Richmond.

Automatically awesome

A team of local students' robot makes a good showing in competition

By Mark St. John Erickson
merickson@dailypress.com | 247-4783

Gaze into the faces of the kids on the NASA Knights First Robotics team and you'll usually see the kind of expressions you'd expect to find in a bunch of teen-age computer, electronic and engineering whizzes.

Though they're often unnaturally wise, they also can be awkward, inexperienced and just plain young — and hardly a moment goes by when they're not capable of being simultaneously silly and brilliant.

But put them inside the boisterous Richmond arena where the 2009 edition of the First Robotics Virginia regional competition is being held and this same group looks as if they've been transformed into comic book superheroes.

Most are decked out in sparkling blue hats and matching shirts. Some wear flowing full-length capes and glistening silver boots. And to a person, they've got their game faces on — just like hundreds of other wildly dressed teen-age combatants who've gathered for this a brainy but rough-and-tumble sport.

Cheering, fist-pumping groups of players and supporters fill the stands, producing great moving blocks of color and noise that combine the passion of a tribal gathering with the exotic garb of Mardi Gras. All eyes are on the middle of the arena, where a NASA Langley Research Center engineer has been reborn as an incendiary ringmaster who riles up the crowd with the antics of a wrestling announcer.

See ROBOTICS/Page 8



This is the final installment in a series of occasional stories about the NASA Knights First Robotics team. Go to dailypress.com/robotkids to see pictures, videos and previous stories about the NASA Knights and their 2009 robot.

FAMILY

Get comfortable and listen up

A professional storyteller links family lore with history

By Sam McDonald
smcdonald@dailypress.com | 247-4732

Preserving family history can mean more than safeguarding dusty photos and yellowed newspaper clippings.

It can also mean holding onto your grandmother's favorite church hat or protecting an auto-harp once played by an ancient ancestor.

But the most precious heirlooms, Tracy Ellis Turner would say, are intangible. They're the stories, songs and rhymes passed from one generation to the next.

For Turner, a professional storyteller, many of those stories



Storyteller Tracy Ellis Turner of Surry shares a story with parents and children at the Newport News Public Library on Main Street. DAVE BOWMAN/DAILY PRESS PHOTO

are set in Surry County.

"Everybody I know is from Surry," she said, speaking to a group of parents and children at the Newport News Public Library on Main Street. "Growing up, I knew all the stories from

there, I knew all the families, I knew all the plantations. I knew which plantations my family members worked on. I'm the youngest of six kids, so I used to

See STORIES/Page 9

MORE INSIDE



ARTS, PAGE 2
Exhibit unravels arresting yet puzzling imaginations



FAMILY, PAGE 9
First-time Mom Nicole Paitsel shares an activity known as "baby de-briefings"

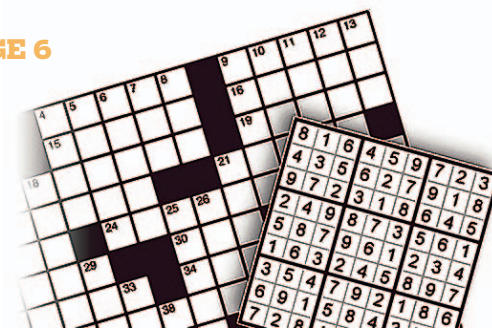
PUZZLES AND GAMES, PAGE 12


SPECIAL OCCASIONS, PAGE 11

BOOKS, PAGE 6

RELIGION, PAGE 5


TRAVEL, PAGE 13





Suttle Motor Corporation

2008 Model Closeout



	MSRP	CLOSE OUT PRICE
9-3 Aero Sedan - #7978 - Silver with 2-tone Leather, Auto, Sunroof, Heated Seats	\$37,865	\$26,995
9-3 Convertible Black Top - #7909 - Silver with Beige Leather, Auto, Heated Seats	\$43,855	\$32,995
9-3 Turbo X Sedan - #8567 - Black with Black Leather, Auto, Sunroof, Heated Seats	\$47,450	\$37,995
9-3 Convertible Beige Top - #8064 - White with Beige Leather, Auto, Navi, Heated Seats	\$47,395	\$35,995

Suttle

12525 Jefferson Ave
Newport News

CADILLAC • BUICK • PONTIAC • GMC • SAAB

www.suttlemotors.com

886-1700

ALL PRICES ARE AFTER REBATES, REBATES ARE IN LIEU OF ANY SPECIAL RATES. SALE PRICES ARE FOR INSTOCK MODELS ONLY. ALL PRICES ARE PLUS TAX, TAGS AND LIC AND \$75 PROCESSING FEE. SALE ENDS 4-5-09