HUNGRY TO HELP - Rend Lake College Reference Librarian Beth Mandrell (LEFT) and Vanessa Lawrence stand behind the food donations collected on campus for local pantries in time for Thanksgiving. (Nathan Wheeler / RLC Public Information)

RLC Computer Science graduates, students participate in first HackSI

REANNE PALMER
RLC PUBLIC INFORMATION

Computer fanatics and gadget experts, including five Rend Lake College computer science graduates and students, assembled earlier this month from all over Southern Illinois to participate in the first-ever HackSI event, hosted by Southern Illinois University-Carbondale (SIUC).

HackSI, also known as Hack Day, is a creative avenue for computer science students and grads to invent the next big thing. In fact, companies such as Google, Yahoo, Tumblr, Facebook and Twitter have hosted several similar events to recruit talent and ideas.

The 12-hour hack-a-thon hosted nearly 100 participants in the Dunn-Richmond Center of the SIUC campus. The contestants worked on various projects, from creating webpages and robots, to inventing phone and tablet apps. At the end of the day, all of the individuals and groups showed off their inventions.

Brad Helm, RLC Associate Professor of Computer Science, said there were future RLC computer science students from Benton and Mt. Vernon high schools present, in addition to the five RLC participants. He said the students created remarkable technologies for such a short amount of time.

"The hack-a-thon was

where people of all ages and technical skills came together to create something new and awesome," said Helm. "They worked individually or in teams on whatever project they thought would be cool. Some participants worked on automation and robotics projects, while others created websites using the latest Internet standards. Still others wrote software ranging from Android applications to a first-person-shooter game that runs on Windows computers."

Helm said he is planning to implement a class project that resembles a hack-a-thon in the future.

"We received some Lego Mindstorms over the summer, and we are integrating

them into our coursework," said Helm. "Likewise, many of our programming classes focus on games-based assignments and lessons to increase student interest and involvement. If my first semester Java class has time towards the end of the semester, I plan on letting them have a mini-competition as a class project."

Ethan Richardson of Benton, an RLC grad and SIUC student, wrote his first Android app at the event, but he wasn't the only one. Fellow RLC grad Harrison Teel, also of Benton, created an app that could process data from the Internet in real-time. Other RLC participants included David Randolph of Mt. Vernon, Jeremy Jackson

of Whittington and Nick Ahlfeld of Benton.

After his 90-second preview of his invention, Alex Bryant, a high school student from Murphysboro, won the "Coolest, Most Awesome Project" Award for building a device, from scratch, which could receive messages via Bluetooth and display them on a small LED screen.

Students from Benton and Mt. Vernon also built three robots with the Lego Mindstorms at HackSI, and many other projects included an Arduino-based robot, a first-person shooter game on Windows PC, a side-scrolling game like Mario Brothers, an

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South Central Illinois AHEC seeking award, internship students

REANNE PALMER
RLC PUBLIC INFORMATION

Three unique opportunities are available for students to continue their education in the health science field in the form of two monetary awards and an internship through the South Central Illinois Area Health Education Center (SCI-AHEC) at Rend Lake College.

SCI-AHEC Director Kelli Stover said the opportunities for students are an effort to both bring new faces into a growing field and keep locals in their rural communities.

"It is the mission of the South Central Illinois Area Health Education Center to

inspire, train, recruit and retain a diverse and broad range of health professionals to practice in rural communities, where the need is greatest, and these opportunities are just one example of how we plan to maximize the goals of our mission," said Stover.

The first award is the Community College Healthcare Hero award in the amount of $500. Applicants must be enrolled full-time in a health science program for the 2014 fall semester, and have at least a 2.5 GPA. Students are required to submit an application, a 2-page personal statement, a

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Emphasize safety when decorating for the holidays

METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Decking the halls for the holidays is a beloved tradition for many families. A home's exterior festooned with lights help create a festive holiday mood, while stockings hung by the chimney and a Christmas tree in the living room bring that holiday cheer inside.

Though the holiday season is a festive time of year, it can quickly turn tragic if revelers do not emphasize safety when decorating their homes. When decorating this holiday season, be sure to employ the following precautions so your holiday season is festive, decorative and safe.

• **Exercise extreme caution with holiday lights.** According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International,

150 home fires per year begin with holiday lights and other decorative lighting. Such fires may start because of frayed or bare wires, broken or cracked sockets or even loose connections. It's important that men and women be especially careful when decorating their homes with holiday lights, inspecting each set of lights for damage and discarding any damaged sets. When choosing lights, use only lights that have been certified for outdoor use on your home's exterior, and never use outdoor lights inside.

• **Purchase the right Christmas tree.** The Consumer Product Safety Commission notes that Christmas trees are involved in

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RLC, Jefferson County Health Dept. offering help to sign up for Affordable Care Act

The Jefferson County Health Department is hosting a workshop at the Rend Lake College MarketPlace in Mt. Vernon aimed at enabling uninsured local residents to sign up for insurance as required by the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

A representative of the JCHD will be on hand Thursday, Dec. 12, Room 338 of the RLC MarketPlace in Mt. Vernon to assist enrollees with clarification and questions. Times will run from
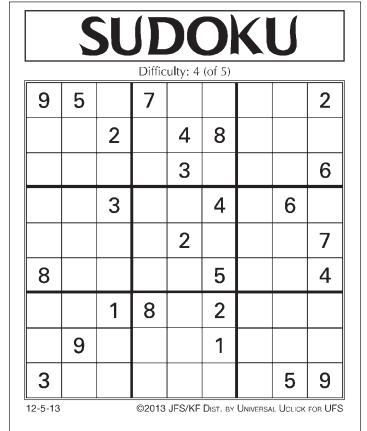

INSIDE:

SUDOKU

Difficulty: 4 (of 5)

9	5		7					2
		2		4	8			
			3					6
	3			4		6		
		2						7
8				5				4
	1	8		2				
	9				1			
3						5	9	

12-5-13 ©2013 JFS/KF Dist. by Universal Uclick for UFS

HOW TO PLAY:

Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.

Sudoku solution is printed on page 4.

Crossword

ACROSS

1 Crony
4 Light (Sp.)
7 Summary
12 Carte lead-in
13 "A Chorus Line" song
14 Entertain
15 Energy
16 Good product, idiomatically
18 Recede
19 Be frugal
20 Record
22 Id counterpart
23 Loathe
27 Possessed
29 "Clue" item
31 Cavalry unit
34 Guiding principle
35 Goes over the books
37 Weeding implement
38 Brewery output
39 Med. plan option
41 Creche trio
45 Eucalyptus eater
47 Heavy weight
48 Duke Ellington classic
52 Clear the tables
53 Give a speech
54 Deteriorate
55 Time of your life?
56 Thick
57 — Jima
58 Still

DOWN

1 Surfaced
2 Out of sorts?
3 "The Silence of the —"
4 Privation
5 One
6 Woody Allen movie
7 Engrossed
8 Ostrich's cousin
9 Scoundrel
10 Fool
11 Em, en, o, —, kue
17 Recognize
21 Psalm group
23 Seraglio
24 Mimic
25 Pirouette pivot
26 Conclude
28 Suitable
30 "The Name of the Rose" author
31 Bill
32 Regret
33 Praise in rhyme
36 Not barefoot
37 Empty
40 New Zealand native
42 Cornered
43 Overcharge
44 Smaller map
45 Dandling locale
46 21-Down member
48 Turf
49 Exist
50 Erstwhile M&Ms color
51 "— Impossible"

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Crossword solution is printed on page 4.

Insurance ....

8:30 a.m.-noon and from 1-4:30 p.m. People will be able to use the computers provided in the room to enroll. Coverage begins in the Health Insurance Marketplace on Jan. 1, 2014.

Judy McLaughlin of the JCHD said to get coverage starting Jan. 1, 2014, individuals must enroll and pay the first month's premium by Dec. 23. Those interested should bring their 2012 taxes, or a month's worth of paystubs, when enrolling. Knowing the Social Security numbers for all individuals in a household will also be helpful in the enrollment process. A green card will be accepted in place of a Social Security number.

"Typically, it takes about one hour to get through the enrollment process, but some of that time involves creating an email account if they don't already have one," said McLaughlin. "Also, they have to create a user ID and password. If someone already has insurance, then they don't need to apply; this is for those who are uninsured or do not have access to insurance through their employment."

Individuals can continue to enroll in the Healthcare Marketplace until March 31, 2014; however, enrollment after Dec. 23 will delay coverage from starting until May 2014.
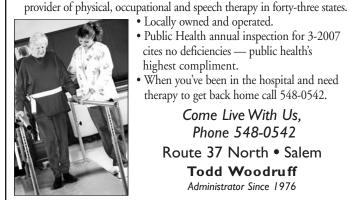
"If they do not enroll by that date (March 31, 2014), then they will have to wait until open enrollment again, which will be October 7 through December 15, 2014," said McLaughlin. "Those eligible for Medicaid will be able to enroll throughout the year."

To get ahead of the game, individuals can go online to www.getcoveredillinois.gov and start the process by creating account. Get Covered Illinois is a health insurance push from Dec. 7 through Dec. 23 to get people enrolled through Medicaid or Marketplace for the ACA.

For more information, contact the Jefferson County Health Department at (618) 244-7134.

Rend Lake College student David "The Mechanic" Randolph of Mt. Vernon works with Lego Mindstorms to build a robot at the HackSI event, hosted by Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Several RLC students attended the full-day event.

HackSI

app that will plot information graphically for a webpage and a Nintendo Wiimote controlled Quad-Copter.

Helm said he plans to start working on a Hack Day event to bring to the RLC campus for in-district students.

"My end goal is to get a hack-a-thon to come here to RLC to serve our local schools," said Helm. "I know it'd be a huge draw for our prospective students."

Co-coordinator Darryl T. Jones said the event was so successful that plans are already in the works for another hack-a-thon in the area.

"We've already begun planning the next event," said Jones. "It was great. I loved seeing how clever, passionate, focused, and hungry these kids were. We hear a lot bad about the upcoming generations, but this was an example of good. These kids really impressed me. It was a great day."

Anyone interested in finding out more information about the hack-a-thon or RLC's Computer Science program can contact Brad Helm at helmb@rlc.edu.
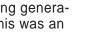

A Hack Day invention rolls across the floor during the HackSI event hosted earlier this month. This robot is made of Lego Mindstorms parts. (Submitted)

AHEC

current resume, college transcripts and a letter of recommendation from an academic advisor or instructor. Applications are due by 5 p.m. Feb. 14, 2014.

A second award called the Future Healthcare Hero award, in the amount of $500, is also available to students pursuing entry into a health science program for the 2014 fall semester. Students must have a 2.5 GPA to apply. Along with the applications, students need to submit a one-page personal statement, transcripts and two letters of recommendation. Deadline to apply is March 15, 2014.

A new internship this year is called the Rural Health Experience (RHE), and is aimed toward providing healthcare professionals to a medically underserved area. The RHE is open to graduate and professional level students enrolled in a health professional program and is a 40-hour experience in a rural community in south central Illinois.

Room and board for RHE will be covered by SCI-AHEC, as well as a $150 stipend to cover travel expenses. Students will be required to submit an 8-10 page reflection of their week. In addition to the application, students should submit a two-page personal statement, a current resume and a letter of recommendation from an academic advisor or instructor. Deadline to apply for RHE is March 14, 2014.

The goals of RHE are as follows: to learn about the social and health characteristics, needs and resources of a specific rural community, to understand the roles and responsibilities of different healthcare providers in a rural community and to reflect on a future career as a healthcare provider in a rural community and potential interest in this location as a future career location.

To apply for any of the above opportunities, students must reside in one of the following counties: Bond, Christian, Clay, Clinton, Crawford, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Jefferson, Lawrence, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Monroe, Richland, Shelby, St. Clair and Washington.

For more information or to obtain an application, contact Kelli Stover at (618) 437-5321, Ext. 1280, or email stoverk@rlc.edu.

SCI-AHEC is a network, in partnership with the University of Illinois – College of Medicine at Rockford, the Urban Medicine Program at the University of Illinois – Chicago College of Medicine and the National Center for Rural Health Professions, and is located on the campus of Rend Lake College. The network is designed to identify intelligent, capable and motivated individuals from our local communities and help them develop an interest in a health profession, support them through their educational experience, recruit them back to work in our local communities and retain them for a lifetime.

RLC Sports in brief

Taylor leads Warriors to victory over Lincoln Land

The Lincoln Land Loggers fell to the Warriors Nov. 26 on their home turf 82-65. Rend Lake is now 6-3 on the season. Rend Lake ended the first half with a 14-point lead on the Loggers, shooting 8/12 from the three. In the second half, they reached a 24-point lead with the help of sophomore Jeril Taylor (Louisville, Ky.) who had a double-double on the night with the game-high of 20 points and 14 rebounds. Rend Lake docked 49 rebounds during the game against Lincoln Land's 25. The Warriors will return home for two games, Southwestern on Dec. 4 and Southeastern on Dec. 7, before rounding up the year against Lincoln on Dec. 8 and Danville Area on Dec. 12. For all things The Lake, visit RLC online at www.rlc.edu/warriors.

Lady Warriors top Lady Saints in Ullin

The Rend Lake College Lady Warriors rose above the Shawnee Lady Saints Nov. 26 in Ullin for a 78-53 victory, and their fifth win for the season. The Lady Warriors are now 5-3. The Lady Warriors will finish 2013 with two home games — against Southwestern on Dec. 4 and against Southeastern on Dec. 7. For all things The Lake, visit RLC online at www.rlc.edu/warriors.

Solution to sudoku puzzle on page 2.

9	5	4	7	1	6	3	8	2
6	3	2	5	4	8	7	9	1
1	8	7	2	3	9	5	4	6
2	7	3	1	8	4	9	6	5
4	6	5	9	2	3	8	1	7
8	1	9	6	7	5	2	3	4
5	4	1	8	9	2	6	7	3
7	9	6	3	5	1	4	2	8
3	2	8	4	6	7	1	5	9

Solution to crossword puzzle on page 2.

Solution time: 27 mins.

P	A	L		L	U	Z		R	E	C	A	P
A	L	A		O	N	E		A	M	U	S	E
V	I	M		S	I	L	K	P	U	R	S	E
E	B	B		S	T	I	N	T				
D	I	S	C		E	G	O		H	A	T	E
			H	A	D		W	E	A	P	O	N
T	R	O	O	P				C	R	E	E	D
A	U	D	I	T	S		H	O	E			
B	E	E	R		H	M	O		M	A	G	I
			K	O	A	L	A			T	O	N
S	A	T	I	N	D	O	L	L		B	U	S
O	R	A	T	E		R	O	T		A	G	E
D	E	N	S	E		I	W	O		Y	E	T

Rend Lake College Athletics accepted Sports Hall of Fame nominations

The Rend Lake College Sports Hall of Fame is asking for nominations for the 2013-14 induction class ballot. Athletic Director Tim Wills said there is not a date set for the induction ceremony at this time, though it will be held during the spring semester. Any and all nominations are welcome, including former athletes and coaches.

The Hall of Fame Committee has the responsibility of evaluating all nominees to determine those individuals/teams to be inducted annually into the Rend Lake College Sports Hall of Fame.

Nominees may be from several categories – Former Athletes; Former Coaches; Former Teams; Alumni Coaches, and Sports Professionals (officials, writers, photographers and other professionals). Nominations are solicited each year from former players, coaches and students, college personnel and the general public.

To be selected, the nominee must receive a minimum of 75 percent of the highest number of possible affirmative votes that could be received by a nominee. The first year, a maximum of nine individuals/teams could have been inducted; in subsequent years, a minimum of one and maximum of five inductees will be honored.

Nominations were due by Monday, Dec. 2. For more information about the hall of fame, contact Wills at (618) 437-5321, Ext. 1250 or at wills@rlc.edu.

Hoilday decor ....

hundreds of fires causing an average of 15 deaths each year. In addition, such fires cause an average of $13 million in property damage annually. Though it can be tempting to purchase the most eye-catching Christmas tree you find, avoid acting rashly until you have learned a little about the tree. Artificial trees should be labeled as "Fire Resistant." Such trees can still catch fire, but they are more resistant to fire than trees without such labels. When buying a live tree, make sure the tree is fresh. The tree should be green, and its needles should be difficult to pull off of branches, which should not be easily breakable. Tap the tree on the ground before purchasing it. If the tree loses a lot of needles upon tapping the ground, it isn't fresh. Trees that aren't fresh are more susceptible to going up in flames.

• **Keep the tree away from heat sources.** Though it might seem more idyllic to place your Christmas tree next to the fireplace, it's a lot more dangerous as well. When choosing a spot for your tree, find a place that is away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators and vents. But homeowners also should know that even trees placed away from heat sources can still dry out, creating a fire hazard even if the tree was fresh and healthy when purchased. That's because Christmas trees can quickly dry out in heated rooms. Monitor the tree's water levels every day, checking those levels in both the morning and at night before going to bed. This prevents the tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard, and it also helps the tree maintain its aesthetic appeal through the holiday season.

• **Limit use of candles.** Like Christmas trees, candles are a popular yet potentially hazardous decorative item during the holiday season. When decorating with candles, be sure that all candles are extinguished before leaving a room and never leave them burning when you go to bed. Candles should be kept away from any decorative items, including Christmas trees, that can catch fire. Never place candles near curtains, furniture or presents. Holiday enthusiasts with little children or pets at home might want to decorate with fake LED-light candles instead of traditional candles. Curious kids or excitable pets may not recognize the potential dangers of lit candles and, as a result, might burn themselves or tips candles over.

The holiday season is upon us, and that means scores of celebrants will be decking their halls. Though festive decorations are a part of the season, safety should always come first.

The holiday season is upon us, and that means scores of celebrants will be decking their halls. Though festive decorations are a part of the season, safety should always come first. (Metro Creative Connection Photo)