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FIRST® LEGO® League Season

By: Tom Bickford



Nature's Fury! The 2013 FIRST LEGO League (FLL) Season is upon us! And there are some great things happening this fall. **We already have 17 teams registered from Maine...** We're expecting over 80 by the end of September, don't miss out! Teams are made up of 9 to 14 year old students (15 if they were still 14 on 1/1/2013).

As always FIRST has managed to find a topic (Nature's Fury) that is constantly in the news. So this year it will be all about preparedness and response to Nature's more trying times. Whether a hurricane or an earthquake (or 4 other identified topics) your teams will be challenged to find solutions to real world problems. We can't tell you more because the season doesn't officially start until AUGUST 27th, when the FLL Challenge and Project details are announced.

Dates to Remember:

Maine Robotics is a Maine non-profit corporation that serves schools and families in Maine by providing STEM related activities for youth and adults.

Established in 2004 by the Director, Tom Bickford, Maine Robotics works with almost 100 schools and 1600 students each year.

Our largest programs are the FIRST LEGO League in the fall, the Robot Track Meets in the spring, and our Summer Robotics Camps.

- National Registration: REQUIRED, now open at <https://goffl.usfirst.org/>
- Qualifiers: There will be 3 qualifying tournaments in Maine this year. Each tournament will have from 20 to 35 teams and will be run the same as the State Championship. So teams will not miss out on any of the fun, but we now have too many teams to all hold at one event. The qualifiers will be **NOVEMBER 23rd**. South Portland, Oakland, and we believe Brewer will be our three locations for the qualifiers. You must attend a qualifier in order to attend the State Championship.
- State Championship: Is scheduled for **DECEMBER 14th** at the Augusta Civic Center. We'll have more details as the time gets closer. We anticipate 48 teams to be invited up from the qualifiers.
- Partnerships: We have already partnered with the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and are working on a couple of others. Our goal is to have resources identified for teams to use as they look at ways to be better prepared and to respond when nature strikes.
- Planning Committee: We already have 13 people signed up to help with planning the State Championship. But we know the Qualifiers will likely need help as well. Stay tuned for more information about that.

Check out our [Nature's Fury flyer](#)
Tom Bickford

Maine Robotics Summer Camps are finishing up!



Our Summer 2013 schedule is almost over!

We offered 32 weeks of camp at 20 different locations this summer. That means we'll have over 474 campers this spring and summer, our largest camp season ever!

We just posted some videos with a link on our home page.

FALL LEGO Robotics Workshops

Every fall Maine Robotics hosts workshops for teachers, coaches,

and parents who are getting "up to speed" on how to use the equipment and run a FIRST LEGO League (or other program).



Host sites needed

We already have 5 private workshops scheduled this fall and we would love to have one in your area as well. We typically try to hold one in Down East Maine; the Greater Bangor area; The Greater Portland area; Western Maine; the Capital area; and the Mid-coast area. If you are interested in hosting a workshop, we just need donated space (a classroom is great, but almost any larger room will do). We bring in all the equipment and set up a registration system. We can do weekday, afternoon-evening, or Saturday workshops. Although our Saturday's are starting to get busy.

RECENT GRANTS:

Maine Robotics has been awarded several grants recently.

- We received a Maine Girls Collaborative Grant to provide two workshops for Maine Girls. These will be held in Brunswick and Lewiston
- We also received a Maine Girls Collaborative Grant to provide a "train the trainer" workshop through the 4-H program in Falmouth, as well as a workshop in Hamden.
- We received an EQUIPMENT GRANT from LEGO and FIRST to supply 10 under served rookie teams with a new Robot Kit (NXT or EV3) as well as the FLL Playing Field. REQUIRES teams to purchase their own registrations.

DID YOU KNOW THE MAXIM BROTHERS?

That two famous inventor brothers came out of Sangerville and Orneville, Maine?



Hiram Stevens Maxim, born 1840 was born in Sangerville, and his younger brother Hudson Maxim was born 1853 in Orneville.



Between the two brothers the world was shaped in many ways. Hiram invented the machine gun, built the first powered machine capable of lifting from the planet surface (on rails), pioneered early lighting and

sprinkler systems, and developed the field of recoil-less fire arms.

His brother Hudson worked with him and specialized in explosives, resulting in early developments of smokeless gunpowder (which was a huge advantage over the early smoke from canons and artillery pieces).

For more information about [Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim](#)

For more information about [Hudson Maxim](#)

Both brothers suffered from work related problems. Sir Hiram became deaf from the his work with fire arms and explosives and Hudson lost a hand to an explosion in 1894.

Sir Hiram's son Hiram Maxim, Jr. (not born in Maine) invented the first suppressor (silencer) for fire arms after his father lost his hearing.

Please share this with your class, your friends, your family. We know we don't reach everyone out there that does robotics in Maine, but we hope you can help us reach everyone close to you that might be interested.

Sincerely,
Tom Bickford
Director, Maine Robotics