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**Local Children Apply Research and Robotics to Explore
How to Improve the Quality of Life for Seniors in the
FIRST® LEGO® League “Senior Solutions” Challenge
Local Tournament to be Held at Camp Four Echoes December 1**

(WORLEY, ID-November 28, 2012): The University of Idaho Extension 4-H System is pleased to partner with *FIRST* to conduct the FIRST LEGO League (FLL) Program throughout Idaho. In the FLL program, youth ages 9-14 work together in teams on an annual challenge. The teams then attend a tournament to celebrate, share, and compete with other teams. FLL is a worldwide program and in Idaho this year there are 154 FLL teams that will be competing in nine qualifying tournaments located throughout Idaho. Some of the teams from the qualifying tournaments will advance to the north Idaho State FLL Championship Tournament 1/19/13 at the University of Idaho in Moscow or the south Idaho State FLL Championship Tournament 1/26/13 in Twin Falls, Idaho.

North Idaho area children, ages 9 to 14, are among the record 205,000 children around the world who have risen to the 2012 [FIRST® LEGO® League](#) (FLL®) “Senior Solutions®” Challenge to improve the quality of life for seniors by helping them continue to be independent, engaged, and connected in their communities. In the 2012 SENIOR SOLUTIONSSM Challenge, youth working in teams will explore the topic of aging and how it may affect a person’s ability to maintain his or her lifestyle – solving issues like getting around, keeping in touch, or staying fit. Teams will research obstacles and then suggest ways to improve the quality of life for the seniors affected. Teams will also build, test, and program an autonomous robot using LEGO MINDSTORMS® robot to solve a set of missions on an obstacle course. Throughout their experience, teams will operate under FLL’s signature set of [Core Values](#).

The Camp Four Echoes FLL Qualifying Tournament will host 12 teams (77 youths) from the region who will celebrate their accomplishments, share their work, and compete for one of the seven slots to advance to the University of Idaho North Idaho State Championship in January.

WHEN: Saturday, December 1, 2012, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

WHERE: Camp Four Echoes, 22270 South 4 Echoes Road, Worley, Idaho

The robot game is free and open to the general public.

This weekend’s Camp Four Echoes (Worley) FLL Qualifying Tournament is being sponsored by Idaho ROKS program and the Girl Scouts Eastern Washington and North Idaho council. The event is expected to draw as many as 250 participants and spectators. Camp Four Echoes is a GSEWNI owned and operated camp in Windy Bay at Lake Coeur d’Alene. The tournament will take place in the \$3.4 million lodge which was built in 2011. The camp will celebrate a 75th anniversary in 2013.

The FLL competition is judged in four areas: project presentation; robot performance; technical design and programming of the robot; and teamwork, with a consideration of the [FLL Core Values](#). The highest honor will go to the team that best exemplifies the spirit and values of the program.

Girls Scouts Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho teams have competed the last four years in the FLL. This year the council has six official teams and two teams practicing with the materials to prepare to compete next year.

“Women and girls continue to be significantly underrepresented in the science, technology, engineering and math fields,” said Peggy McDonald, GSEWNI’s FLL coordinator. “This year’s FLL Challenge is a perfect fit to engage girls’ interest in science while improving the lives of others. One of our Girl Scout teams, the Brain Busters, recognize that older individuals have unique challenges when grocery shopping. They have designed an adaptive grocery cart to meet some of those needs, including seating, memory aids and navigation help when in the store.”

FIRST LEGO League (FLL) is an international program for 9 to 14 year-old children (9 to 16 outside the U.S., Canada and Mexico) created in a partnership between *FIRST* and The LEGO Group in 1998 to get children excited about science and technology – and teach them valuable employment and life skills. Using LEGO MINDSTORMS® technologies and LEGO Education materials, children work alongside adult mentors to design, build, and program autonomous robots and create an innovative solution to a problem as part of their research project. After eight intense weeks, the competition season culminates at high-energy, sports-like tournaments. Like any other organized “sport,” teams also fundraise, create a team identity, and go on field trips.

“*FIRST* LEGO League provides a fun and engaging experience for children around the world to become innovators and creative problem solvers on a very relevant and real topic,” said Jacob Kragh, vice president, LEGO Group. “Using a real-world issue to drive a process where children are in control empowers them with a chance to take what they learn and apply it to their own lives, not only during this challenge, but also to their future adventures and endeavors.”

Currently in its fourteenth year, *FIRST* LEGO League anticipates its biggest season ever, with more than 20,500 teams in more than 60 countries competing in hundreds of Qualifying Tournaments and Championship Tournaments. More than 205,000 children will compete to win honors and recognition. Teams will also have the opportunity to participate at the *FIRST* LEGO League World Festival, to be held in conjunction with the *FIRST* Championship, April 25-28, 2012 at the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis. In addition, more than 16,000 6 to 9 year-olds are expected to participate in Junior *FIRST* LEGO League this season.

The Idaho FLL Program is managed through Idaho ROKS (Robotics Opportunities for K-12 Students), a University of Idaho program designed to promote, support, and manage a K-12 continuum of pre-collegiate programs to educate and inspire youth in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The University of Idaho is the official *FIRST* Partner responsible for managing the *FIRST* LEGO League (FLL; ages 9-14) and the *FIRST* Tech Challenge (FTC; ages 14-18) programs in Idaho. See: <http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/4h/robotics> for more information.

ABOUT GIRL SCOUTS EASTERN WASHINGTON AND NORTHERN IDAHO

Girl Scouts is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls, the leading authority on girls’ healthy development and is working with girls and women to transform the leadership landscape for girls into the next century. Girl Scouts of all ages are recognizing 2012 as the *Year of the Girl*, with council Centennial celebrations and campaigns held throughout the year. Girl Scouts Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho serves more than 8,200 girls and 2,600 adult volunteers in a region encompassing 67,000 miles that includes 20 counties in central and eastern Washington and 10 counties in northern Idaho. Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. Girl Scouts Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho is committed to discovering, celebrating and fostering the leader in every girl. Follow and “like” GSEWNI on Facebook at www.facebook.com/girlscouting, Twitter and YouTube. For more information about the council and the many ways to be involved with GSEWNI, visit www.gsewni.org.

ABOUT FIRST®

Accomplished inventor [Dean Kamen](#) founded *FIRST*® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) in 1989 to inspire an appreciation of science and technology in young people. Based in Manchester, N.H., *FIRST* designs accessible,

innovative programs to build self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills while motivating young people to pursue opportunities in science, technology, and engineering. With support from three out of every five Fortune 500 companies and more than \$12 million in college scholarships, the not-for-profit organization hosts the [FIRST[®] Robotics Competition](#) (FRC[®]) and [FIRST[®] Tech Challenge](#) (FTC[®]) for high-school students, [FIRST[®] LEGO[®] League](#) (FLL[®]) for 9 to 14-year-olds, (9 to 16-year-olds outside the U.S. and Canada) and [Junior FIRST[®] LEGO[®] League](#) (Jr.FLL[™]) for 6 to 9-year-olds. Gracious Professionalism[™] is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. To learn more about *FIRST*, go to www.usfirst.org. To learn more about the “Body Forward[®]” Challenge, go to www.FIRSTLEGOLeague.org. View the April, 2010 [FLL World Festival Photo Gallery](#).

ABOUT THE LEGO GROUP

The LEGO Group is a privately-held firm based in Billund, Denmark. The LEGO Group is committed to the development of children's creative and imaginative abilities through high-quality, creatively educational play materials, and its employees are guided by the motto adopted in the 1930s by founder Ole Kirk Christiansen: "Only the best is good enough." For more information, visit www.LEGO.com.

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