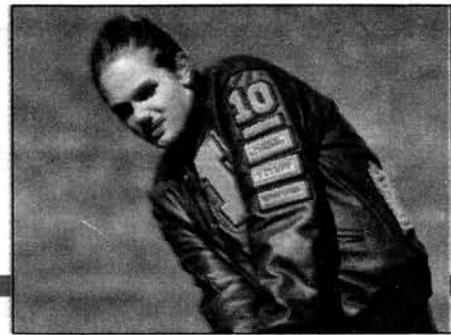


SUN FOCUS



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Engineering ingenuity

Four area high schools participate in FIRST Robotics program

BY ANNE CULVER SUN FOCUS

High school students from across the state, including three area teams, brought robots they built this year to the University of Minnesota's Williams Arena last weekend to compete in the Minnesota Regional FIRST Robotics competition.

FIRST Robotics is a national program that engages students to apply their skills and creativity in science, technology, engineering and math to solve a common problem by building a robot from scratch, according to a Medtronic Foundation representative. Medtronic sponsored eight high schools in the regional competitions,

including students from Fridley, St. Anthony Village, Blaine and Irontdale. The corporation also provided mentors for the students, giving them an opportunity to learn from professionals.

To begin the competition, each team received a kit of parts made up of motors, batteries, a control system and a mix of automation components. Teams and their mentors were given six weeks to construct their robots. This year's objective was to build a robot that could race around a track, knocking down 10-pound inflatable balls, while competing against two other robots.

Fridley High School

"We [built] a fast and accurate machine," said Michelle Stefanacci, Fridley team adviser. The team of 13 "incredibly creative

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Roseville official dies at 76

Tom Kough was Mayor of Austin, MN, prior to joining Roseville City Council

BY PAUL RIGNELL SUN FOCUS

Tom Kough, a resident of Roseville and elected member of the City Council, has died.

He passed away Sunday at age 76 nearly one year after undergoing surgery April 9, 2007, for removal of a brain tumor that tested positive for a cancer known as glioblastoma multiforme.

After his immediate recovery, Kough continued to serve on the Roseville City Council and on the board of commissioners of the North Suburban Access Corporation (CTV 15), among other involvements, into early 2008.

Before moving to Roseville, he lived in Austin, Minn., where he served as

mayor in the 1980s and during the time of a well-publicized workers' strike at Hormel, where Kough himself was employed as an engineer for 32 years.

Away from work or public meetings, Kough was known as a talented musician (founding the Banjo Bandits group) and as a championship diver into his senior years. In a conversation with Sun Focus after he had suffered and recovered from a stroke in 2006, Kough spoke of having performed as a background diver during his youth in some Esther Williams films.

Kough's immediate survivors include his wife, Carol, and four children. Two other children preceded him in death.

A celebration of Kough's life will be held during a public visitation planned for 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 6, in the Oval room at the Roseville Skating Center, 2661 Civic Center Drive (northwest of Lexington Avenue and County Road C).

For more information, visit www.tomkough.com.