



City Manager Pete Auger and Auburn Hills Christian School students.

Hackberry Marks Arbor Day

City officials joined students at Auburn Hills Christian School in a special ceremony and tree planting in honor of Auburn Hills' 15th Annual Arbor Day Celebration on April 26.

City of Auburn Hills Recreation Director Brian Marzolf served as emcee for the afternoon program. After a welcome and introduction, guest speakers Pete Auger, city manager, and City Arborist Don Grice each gave talks, followed by a question-and-answer session.

"It went really well . . . We

move the event around each year to the elementary schools within Auburn Hills and focus the event and information provided for grades 3 to 6," Marzolf said. "We had about 80 students, six classrooms worth of kids and their teachers at the event."

With the assistance of students, Auger planted the ceremonial tree, a Hackberry, which students carefully watered after it was settled into its new home.

Arbor Day, an annual holiday focused on planting trees, began April 10, 1872 in Nebraska.

Genisys Debuts Mobile Banking App For Owners of Android Devices

by Irena Granaas

Genisys Credit Union customers using Androids can now manage their accounts on the go with the release of Genisys' new free Mobile Banking app for Android devices.

The free app, developed for Genisys by Ann Arbor-based Logic Solutions, Inc., allows credit union members to access their accounts, check balances, view pending transactions, transfer money between accounts or to any Genisys member, deposit checks and more. The Android version also allows users to customize their home screen with drag-and-drop dashboard icons.

The Android app follows the credit union's successful launch in August 2012 of Mobile Banking on Apple's iOS platform, and the app was so successful it was named one of the best credit union mobile banking apps on the market by Nerd Wallet, which can be seen at nerdwallet.com.

Logic Solutions Marketing Director Angela Kujava said there's no way to overestimate the importance of mobile banking to today's consumers.

"As of August 2012, more than 40 million Americans used mobile banking apps to manage finances, and I can only assume that number has grown dramatically since," she said. "Mobile de-

vice usage numbers are staggering, as is the adoption of mobile technology in our daily lives. People have grown to trust the security of mobile transactions in many industries and for many purposes, so the demand for mobile banking is naturally high."

Kujava said the name of the game is increasing efficiency, adding that the types of apps Logic Solutions builds for customers like Genisys do just that.

"There are additional benefits such as brand awareness, loyalty, and even the 'cool factor,' but what users always want is something that makes their lives a little easier," she said.

"Member feedback on both our mobile apps has been extremely positive," said Ray Black, vice president of Marketing at Genisys. "Our members really enjoy all the functionality and the ease of use our apps provide."

Security is crucial for a banking app, and this one is fully encrypted and equipped to guard against unauthorized access for Genisys members' peace of mind when using their mobile banking features with Android devices.

Genisys plans to roll out significant enhancements on both the iOS and Android platforms in the coming months. Genisys Mobile Banking runs on Android OS version 2.2 and above and is available on Google Play.

Notre Dame Prep's 'Killer Bees' Capture Second Place in National Robotics Finale

by Irena Granaas

The cheers and shouting are over, thousands of participating students and 25,000 spectators have left the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis, Mo., and in the end, none of the 10 Southeastern Michigan area teams sponsored by Chrysler won the ultimate prize at the 2013 FIRST Robotics Competition.

However, out of the 400 teams competing, Notre Dame Preparatory of Auburn Hills' own Killer Bees, Team 33, finished second overall in the competition.

The Bees were the winners of the Archimedes Division, and also took home the Motorola Quality Award, which celebrates machine robustness in concept and fabrication. The championship went to an alliance formed by a team from Woodlands, Texas, and two Ontario, Canada, teams.

"They did a fantastic job," said Pamela Williamson, speaking about the Killer Bees. "They were competing in a very tough division, competing with a lot of teams from around the United States and also from outside of the United States."

Williamson is a Chrysler engineer working in the advanced concepts engineering department, in the human/machine interface (HMI) area. She's the FIRST Robotics team coordinator for Chrysler, which through its

charitable arm, the Chrysler Foundation, sponsored the Killer Bees and nine other Michigan teams at the championship.

"We're very proud of their performance," she said.

More than 10,000 students, ages 6 to 18, participated in the championship events. At nationals, teams were placed in four divisions of 100 teams each: Archimedes, Galileo, Newton and Curie. In the final showdown, the Killer Bees, competing in the Archimedes Division, formed an alliance with two other Michigan teams: Team 469, Las Guerrillas, Bloomfield Hills, and Team 1519, Mechanical Mayhem, Milford.

"It's the best performance we've had (among our sponsored teams) in a number of years," Williamson said of the Bees' second-place finish.

In this year's championship game, "Ultimate Ascent," two alliances made up of three teams each tried to score as many flying discs into their goals as possible during the two-minute-and-15-second match. According to the FIRST Robotics website, www.us-first.org, 2,546 FRC teams in 17 countries participated in 77 regional and district competitions.

Susan McGinnis, a chemistry teacher at Notre Dame Preparatory and faculty mentor for the Killer Bees, accompanied them to the finals in St. Louis.

"It was an amazing perform-

ance. The kids did fantastic," she said. "The idea that in January they got parts and plans for a robot, and that they designed the robot for performance and functionality and then went all the way - it was phenomenal."

Notre Dame Preparatory senior Keith Watzka, 18, said, "I had a great experience this year at nationals. It was especially emotional and awesome for me . . . Our team got second in the world competition," he said. "It's only the second time in the team's 18-year history, and it was especially thrilling for me as the operator of the robot in my senior year."

Watzka said the team placed second overall at FIRST Robotics nationals in 2001. He plans to study biomedical engineering at Tulane University in New Orleans next year.

The Bees weren't the only Chrysler-sponsored Michigan team to perform well at the championship events. Team 245, the Adambots from Rochester Hills, ranked 11th overall, partnered with Team 27, RUSH, from Clarkston in an alliance, and finished as quarterfinalists in the Galileo Division.

From Pontiac High School, Team 51, Wings of Fire, won four and lost four in the championship matches in the Archimedes Division and ranked in the top 50 percent of their division.

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