



## LEGO LEAGUE TEAM EARNS TEAM SPIRIT AWARD

**Keaton Norfleet**  
Staff Writer

LEGO League members won the “Motivate” Award at the Quad City Qualifier in Davenport, Iowa.

On Sunday, December 10, Matthew Cain and the members of the West Branch FIRST LEGO League club traveled to the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa to attend and compete in the Quad City Qualifier FIRST LEGO League competition.

Upon arrival, teams checked in and set up their pit station. Afterward, all members, mentors, and volunteers

headed to the Grand Lobby for opening ceremonies.

Fifteen teams competed at the event that came from Iowa City, Bettendorf, West Branch, Muscatine, and Davenport. In total, 10 West Branch LEGO League members participated in the competition. At the beginning of their season, the members were split into two separate teams, each team ranging in experience.

Team 62613: Craft0saurs, the largest of the two teams, included six members, sixth grader Rhys Arlen, and fifth graders Eli Finzel, Jack Seiberling, Jaxon Gray, William Nash, and Alex Heintz.

Team 61374: Crafty Patties consisted of four members, Eighth graders Eli Garrett, Noah Gray, and Chloe Kleinmeyer and sixth grader Marisol Murray.

Both teams designed t-shirts that they wore at the competition, as well as buttons and small 3D printed trinkets. Craft0saurs printed small t-rexes and Crafty Patties printed small pineapples.

During their season, the members of each team were assisted by high school robotics students who acted as mentors. This year, sophomores Audrey Watt, Wyatt Chapman, Ewan Arlen, and junior Keaton Norfleet assisted students with coding, robot construction, team engagement, and presentation skills.

Robot matches began shortly after opening ceremonies.

Each team played in three matches. To score points, a team must send their robot out onto the game mat to complete missions. Each mission completed will earn a team a range of points.

In their first qualification

match, the Crafty Patties earned 105 points, and the Craft0saurs earned 155 points. After the match, both teams had time to adjust their code and robot if necessary.

In their second qualification match, the Crafty Patties earned 175 points, and the Craft0saurs earned 95 points. In their third and final qualification match, the Crafty Patties earned 105 points, and the Craft0saurs earned 125 points.

At the end of the matches, the team's ranks were determined. The Crafty Patties placed in rank 10, and the Craft0saurs placed in rank 13.

After robot matches were concluded, teams made their way to the judges room, where both teams presented their innovation projects.

The Crafty Patties presented their project as “D&D but with cooking” according to Garrett.

The team created a chart containing all types of food, toppings, and sauces, and gave each option a number 1-20. The user would then roll a 20-sided die, and create a meal based on the results of the roll.

The Craft0saurs presented their project with live action skits about video games. The students performed two skits, the first being about the Nintendo action-adventure game, *The Legend of Zelda*, and the second being about the Epic Games action-battle royale game *Fortnite*.

All teams took a break for lunch before returning to the Grand Lobby for the closing award ceremonies.

The Crafty Patties received the “Motivate” award, which is an award that celebrates a team that embraces the cultures of FIRST LEGO League through team building, team spirit, and displayed enthusiasm.

Cain said, “They really worked hard to grow and were paid off with a really fun and successful event.”

With the closing ceremonies concluded, the competition ended. Students loaded up their pits and headed back to West Branch, but not before stopping for ice cream to celebrate the day.



(Above) Lego League advisor Matt Cain points out details on the game mat. Photo By Keaton Norfleet.



(Right) Sophomore Ewan Arlen assists Lego League member and younger brother Rhys Arlen with the construction of a LEGO structure. Photo By Keaton Norfleet.

## TREBLE ON THE HIGH SEAS: CJU45 BRINGS PIRATE SHOW TO LIFE

**Miley Shields**  
Staff Writer

The 2023-2024 show choir season is off to a start after the ending of the fall musical, “Grease”. The theme of Christopher Jive and the Uptown 45’s show was announced at the end of the 2022-2023 school year: pirates.

To go along with the theme, the songs picked for the show are “Don’t Back Down” by Mammoth WVH to open the show, followed by

“Shiver my Timbers” from the movie Muppet Treasure Island. From there, the show leads into an originally composed ballad titled “Sail me Away”.

The next song is a mix between the sea shanty “Wellerman” (sung by the tenors and basses) and “Bad Reputation” by Joan Jett and the Blackhearts (sung by the sopranos and altos). After the girls’ song, the guys come back to perform “It’s Going Down” from Descendants 2 as a full group.

To end off the show the singers will perform “Pirates of Dance” by DJ BoBo.

On December 21st, CJU45 will have their very first performance at the 5-12 vocal music concert at 7:00pm.

This year, CJU45 will host the annual Saturday Night Jive (SNJ) on January 20th at West Branch high school. SNJ is West Branch’s show choir competition where schools from many different parts of Iowa come to perform

for judges and try for the chance to go to finals and win a grand championship in their season. CJU45 will be performing before daytime awards are announced but will not be able to compete.

The very first competition West Branch will compete in is on February 3rd at Mount Pleasant high school. After that, they will perform at Pella high school, Central Lee high school, and Fort Madison high school.

When asked about the competitions, director Christopher Reed said “Finals are never guaranteed no matter what competition we go to since we’re constantly competing against 3A’s and 4A’s. I am still hopeful for this season since our choreography is a challenge and will make our singers better.”

Many students say the choreography for this show is very difficult, but it will make for a great show. Senior Peyton Braddock said “The choreo this year is really challenging this year compared to last year, but I think it’s going to push us to work harder and have a better chance against the bigger schools at competitions.”



Kaylee Kettler

Maddie Reed

Diego Carrillo

Emily Coleman

Auron Marsh

Claire Jarrett

Nina Torkelson

Madelyn Stout

Jade Gongora

Olivia Naber

Trenton Schutte

Peyton Braddock

Katey Noble

Ashlynn Nash

Maryam Martin

Jake Swisher

Joelle Haas

All photos contributed by Diana Borash and Tracy Schutte.

The set for the show was revealed on November 22nd and soloists were revealed for the show on December 7th. In “Don’t Back Down”, the soloists are Maddie Reed and Nate Hills; for “Shiver my Timbers” there are 6 soloists consisting of Diego Carrillo, Eli Farmer, Miley Shields, Robby Boaz, Caleb Pederson, and Kaylee Kettler. In “Wellerman” Nolan Staker will perform the solo and for “Bad Reputation” Nina Torkelson will be singing the solo. The closing song does not contain any solos.

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