

# LCHS Engineering Club Holds Competition at PCY

**By CHRIS SUTTON**  
**The Outlook**

La Cañada High School's 20-member Engineering Club recently held the second annual Engineering Day at Paradise Canyon Elementary School.

Club members mentored fifth-graders who formed teams in a tower-building competition. Given one 11-by-17-inch piece of paper and tape, each team had to construct a free-standing tower. The winning team's tower was 121 centimeters.

"It was fun to see the fifth-graders work together trying to design their tower," said Collin Chersi.

Trent Jones said his team had a lot of good engineering ideas right from the start and thinks a few of the fifth-graders will be future team members.

Traveling with the team, much to the delight of the students, was Foothill Flyer, the robot the team built last year.

The engineering team's proven skills are well-established. Last year, they received the All-Star Robotics Award in the Los Angeles Regional competition. The team qualified for the national competition in Atlanta.

This year, the team is preparing for the first Lunacy Robotics Competition, which will take place in March, with this year's entry being named Leviathan. In May, the team will compete in the Solar Cup, launching their 15-foot solar powered boat, piloted by a student. The members are also planning to launch a citywide battery recycling campaign.

"The club is a great alternative to those who are not on a sports team, yet are interested in team robotics competitions," said Matt Whitham. "It allows us to use our brain power to solve design issues and have fun."

Antonia Warner said she joined because she wanted an after-school activity that was intellectual, creative and a fun exchange of problem-solving ideas.

"I enjoy watching the students blossom in this environment and learn how to analyze and solve situations," said Steve Zimmerman, teacher and the team coach. "The students use their creativity and academic skills while working together."

LCHS engineering team members included Forrest Bourke, Chris Carpenter, Collin Chersi, Evan Chersi, John Gregg, Hima Hassenruck-Gudipati, Silas Hughes, Trent Jones, Ben Kellogg, Holden Kilbride, Nick Koepfen, Brian Lee, Kevin Lee, Russell Smith, Antonia Warner, Bryan Watson, Andrew Weiler, Matt Whitham, Catherine Wooten and Theodore Wu.

The club was started in 2007 by former LCHS student Brad Phillips, who wanted to learn engineering skills. He is currently a freshman at USC, majoring in engineering.

**Photos by Chris Sutton**  
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*La Cañada Engineering Club members include (kneeling, from left) Kevin Lee, Brian Lee and Nick Koepfen. First row: Andrew Weiler, Silas Hughes, Hima Hassenruck-Gudipati, Chris Carpenter, Holden Kilbride, Theodore Wu, Forrest Bourke, Antonia Warner and Catherine Wooten. Back row: Evan Chersi, teacher/coach Steve Zimmerman, Matt Whitham, Bryan Watson, Trent Jones, John Gregg, Russell Smith, Ben Kellogg and Collin Chersi.*



*Antonia Warner assists her PCY fifth-grade team.*



*Trent Jones, left, and Collin Chersi monitor their team's tower-building project.*

*Matt Whitham, Kevin Lee, Antonia Warner, Silas Hughes, Hima Hassenruck-Gudipati and Andrew Weiler show their 2008 robot, Foothill Flyer.*