

Wonders of the Imagination Science Exhibition

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

W. I. S. E. 2001

William L. "Bill" Werner, Science Fair Director

Contents

In addition to this Message to Parents, this entry form packet includes a science fair flyer, Instructions for Students, an Entry Form, and a Mentorship Record. To accommodate families with more than one student entry, this packet may include two Entry Forms and two Mentorship Records. (If more of these forms are needed, please make photocopies.)

Why a Science Fair?

Last year my job was eliminated because of financial problems at the community mental health center where I worked. Sixty years old and no job! But I remembered how much I had enjoyed raising and educating my four children and thought how much I missed them all now. Then I reminded myself that, although we owe a special stewardship to our biological children, all children are our responsibility. How could I be a special influence in the lives of children?

I offered to volunteer my time and energies to the children at the elementary school that my son and three daughters attended years ago. I also volunteered to serve on the school district's science curriculum committee. I remembered that when my children were young, there were more science fairs, and I hoped to promote them again. I worked with my children then in preparing prize-winning exhibits that reflected good science and visual appeal.

Recently I designed and volunteered to teach after-school community education courses. "Edison's Lab" provides help in creating science fair projects. "Robots at Your Command" uses Lego MindStorms to create and program robots using Legos. At one of these classes, a home-schooling mother expressed her wish for a science fair for home-schooled students. I immediately began organizing this science fair.

When I worked with my children on their science fair projects, many persons thought I was a scientist or a teacher. My son is an Internet entrepreneur who also does medical research, and my wife teaches college English, but my career was in healthcare, primarily in hospitals in the areas of management, finance, and information systems. However, I have always considered myself an educator. When our children were young, my wife and I worked closely with them, using the Montessori method. I designed many educational tools to use with my children. During my healthcare career, I was also involved in education, co-founding a national professional educational association. Now I hope to use these experiences for the benefit of children.

Why This Name, This Theme, This Slogan?

The name--"Wonders of the Imagination Science Exhibition" -- The book of Genesis tells us that "God saw all things that he had made, and they were very good." Science is the search for the good, the search for the wonders that God has created. It is the search for truth and beauty and understanding in discovering how nature works. It is discovering the wonders of the world and the physical laws that govern it. In formulating a hypothesis, the scientist imagines what could be. From his imagination can come wonderful discoveries.

The theme--"promoting the wise use of science" -- Wise science is responsible science. The science fair promotes the responsible use of science, its use for the good of mankind. Although science is neutral, its application is value-driven. It can be used for either good or evil. It can be used either to create life-saving drugs or to develop methods of abortion. It can be used either to clean the world's waters of disease-causing organisms or to pollute the world's waters with industrial waste. It can be used either to produce more abundant food supplies for the world's peoples or to develop better weapons of war to annihilate the world's peoples. The choice is ours.

How can science fair projects reflect this broad theme? Three projects that my young children did spring to mind. One project tested what color combinations a person could see best. This information could be used to create better traffic signs to ensure safety. A second project tested what temperatures of water cleaned clothing best when washed in a washing machine. Cold water worked as well as warm or hot. If this is generally true, energy could be conserved by using cold water for washing clothes. A third project tested the effectiveness of different soaps in removing bacteria from one's hands. Use of the best soap could reduce the spread of disease.

The slogan--"In science... the WISE ask the WHYs" -- When attempting to discover its physical laws, the wise scientist asks not only why the world works in the way it does, but also why he is pursuing the knowledge he seeks. Will the work benefit mankind, or will it be dehumanizing?

Logo Design Contest

An award will be given to the person whose logo is selected as the science fair's logo. The logo should be a simple graphic, incorporate the letters W, I, S, and E, and be easily reproducible in black ink (and also in colors, if the person wishes to provide the option). It would be ideal if the logo also reflected the theme "Promoting the wise use of science." It is preferable, but not necessary, that the design be camera-ready. Invite family members to

participate. Send the design (one or more) no later than December 31, 2000, to:

Science Fair Logo Design Contest
7658 Salter Court
Temperance, Michigan 48182

Commemorative T-shirt

A t-shirt, available to all family members, is being created for the science fair with the following design elements:

W. I. S. E. 2001
Wonders of the Imagination Science Exhibition
In Science...the WISE ask the WHYS
The winning logo in the logo design contest
Question marks in the background

The t-shirts will be sports gray in color. If the price of the shirts will cover the cost, the design will be in more than one color ink. For adults, the available sizes and prices are: XXXL (\$8.50), XXL (\$8.00), XL (\$6.00), L (\$6.00), M (\$6.00), and S (\$6.00). For children, the available sizes are: 18-20, 14-16, 10-12, 6-8, and 2-4, all priced at \$5.50. The t-shirts can be picked up when students register and set up their projects on the morning of the science fair. Then, if you wish, you can wear them to the awards ceremony that afternoon. Place your order on the Entry Form, being certain to indicate a size for each shirt ordered.

Publicity

Post the enclosed science fair flyer on your grocery store bulletin board, or, better yet, make copies and post it wherever you can. Tell your friends about W.I.S.E. 2001. Make a copy of this entry form packet for them, or tell them that they can request the packet by sending a stamped (with 55 cents in postage), business-size, self-addressed envelope to:

Science Fair Entry Form Packet
7658 Salter Court
Temperance, Michigan 48182

Completed entry forms will be accepted until December 31, 2000, or until forms for 200 entries have been received, whichever comes first.

Judges

Your assistance is needed in recruiting volunteer judges for the science fair. COSI Toledo has already volunteered judges. Parents, especially those in science and math professions, are encouraged to judge grades and branches of science in which their child is not an entrant. Family members can volunteer by including their names on the Entry Form. Possibilities for recruiting include schools at all levels, companies involved in scientific and engineering work, libraries, museums, metroparks, the zoo, the botanical gardens, conservation groups, public television, church associations, and friends. Persons interested in judging should send an e-mail to sciencefair@netzero.net (or phone 734-847-3446), providing their name, address, phone number, e-mail

address, and the grade level or branch of science in which they would like to judge. At least twenty-six judges are needed to judge the projects, in teams of two, one team for each grade level. In addition, judges with backgrounds in the sciences are needed. They will judge and determine awards for the exhibits classified according to the branches of science-biology (including anatomy, botany, entomology, herpetology, ichthyology, ornithology, and zoology), chemistry, earth and environmental science (including astronomy, ecology, geology, meteorology, and oceanography), mathematics and computer science, physics, and social science (including archeology, anthropology, and psychology). The judging time is from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., or earlier, if completed. Guidelines for judging will be provided. Students will not be present for judging. The judges' decisions are final.

Contributions

Awards will be given for winning exhibits in each grade level. Awards for the best projects in various branches of science and mathematics may also be given. This depends upon what contributions have been made to the science fair by individuals, businesses, and other organizations. Cash contributions can be undesignated or designated for awards, even specifying the particular grade level or branch of science. Contributors will be recognized both in the program booklet and at the awards ceremony. All contributions, including checks (made payable to W.I.S.E.), gift certificates, and actual science-related products, such as equipment, kits, books, magazine subscriptions, and computer software, should be sent to :

Science Fair Awards
7658 Salter Court
Temperance, Michigan 48182

Contributions can also take the form of services at reduced or no charge, such as artistic, printing/photocopying, banking, insurance, and legal services. If you have contacts to help in this regard, please e-mail the information to sciencefair@netzero.net.

Science Education for Home-schooled Students

Plans are under way to establish a not-for-profit organization that will plan and organize the annual science fair and will provide other educational services in which you express an interest, especially in the area of science. This organization will also provide liability protection to the persons involved in the organization's activities. Tell me what you want the organization involved in. Send me an e-mail at sciencefair@netzero.net, write to me at 7658 Salter Court, Temperance, Michigan 48182, or phone me at 734-847-3446.

If you know of anyone who would be interested in providing the legal services for establishing this organization, please let me know.