

From: [Leah D Nixon](#)
To: [Archive](#); [Shelly L Armstrong](#)
Subject: Ferris Rube Goldberg Team Defends National Title
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Attachments: [FSU Rube Goldberg Team 08.jpg](#)

Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University's Rube Goldberg team. The 2007 Rube Goldberg Competition champions, the team will be competing for the national title again April 5 at Purdue University. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Ferris Rube Goldberg team heads to national championship

BIG RAPIDS – What starts with a quarter, travels across the U.S.A. in less than 40 seconds and ends with a hamburger 76 steps later? Seven students from Ferris State University have the answer with their latest Rube Goldberg machine.

So, don't come hungry to West Lafayette, Ind., on Saturday (April 5) as the team demonstrates its creativity and ingenuity when it enters the gauntlet at Purdue University with its "50 States" palette pleaser topped with ketchup, mustard, pickles and tomato – an icon among American fare foodies, the hamburger.

The team will go up against the likes of Purdue, Penn State and Texas A&M to earn the title of Rube Goldberg Competition champions – a title dominated by Purdue until Ferris' 2007 "Toy Factory" machine not only garnered the top spot at nationals but earned the team a place in the *Guinness Book of Records* for most steps in a Rube Goldberg machine, 229.

Rounding out this year's roster of team members are Captain Mike Dunakin, a sophomore from Grand Rapids studying Electrical/Electronics Engineering Technology; Nate Andresmooi, a sophomore from Hart studying Mechanical Engineering Technology; Kyle Hebner, a junior from Oscoda studying EEET; A.J. Nozal, a freshman from Lowell studying CAD Drafting/Tool Design; Scott McLain, a junior from Waterford studying EEET; Jason Shell, a junior from Godfrey, Ill., studying HVACR Technology; and Tom Sybrandy, a senior from Holt studying Product Design Engineering Technology.

After a disappointing finish in 2006 and a national title in 2007, the team this year simply wanted to come into the competition with a solid machine that could entertain audiences, the students said. And, they're on track with the obvious choices of a slot machine to represent Nevada and Mr. Potato Head to represent Idaho to the more-than-meets-the-eye items such as Buzz Lightyear, who represents John Glenn from Ohio.

Winning will be the icing on the cake for the team this year.

"We weren't trying to beat the world record but wanted to build an aesthetically-pleasing

machine,” Hebner said. “We all really just have fun building these types of things and that’s why we’re here; and if we win, it’s all the better.”

Dunakin agreed, adding, “What’s been the greatest part of this experience is working with students from different departments. Everyone comes together with a common purpose and is working, learning and having fun.”

Team Co-advisor Tom Hollen, associate professor of MET at Ferris, said cross-divisional teamwork is what makes the Rube Goldberg competitions so unique for students.

“The beauty of this is that it’s hands-on for students and they’re picking up things they just wouldn’t in the classroom because there is such a cross of disciplines involved,” Hollen said.

Associate professor of CDTD and Co-advisor Dan Wanink added that competitions such as Rube Goldberg allow students to flex their intellectual muscles. “This is great for students because they also gain real-world experience of how to work as a team, share ideas and communicate.”

Through their efforts last year, the team earned national acclaim, making appearances on “The Today Show” in New York City and “Jimmy Kimmel Live” in Los Angeles.

- 30 -

CAPTION – Ferris State University’s Rube Goldberg team will defend its national title this Saturday (April 5) at Purdue University during the Rube Goldberg Competition.

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FSU Rube Goldberg Team 08.jpg

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