

The Night Before ECE Design Day

By Erik Goodman, April, 2005

'Twas the night 'fore Design Day, and all through the lab
All the students were working on robot rehab.
Solder suckers were going full-time on repair
While Team Ten guys were screaming, "The signal's not there."

The floor was all covered with pizza and wire,
(If the Dean sees the lab, I may have to retire.)
But off in the corner, like sound made in Heaven –
Some symphony music came from Team Eleven.

Two folks from the Lear teams appeared to be restin'
But the seats were from Lear, and they really were testin'.
The Hall effect sensors were tucked in the motor,
And Thirteen's design cut the power to the rotor.

Team Fourteen was checking the seat-track position,
Though to get it to work might require a magician.
But they tested, and color bar-coding worked fine,
Though I'm certain there still was some room to refine.

Some fighting broke out in the room, at the back –
'Cause Team Two's huge sensor could not find the track.
Team One had the robot, and wouldn't let go,
So the robot-on-wire might advance pretty slow.

Team Three and the ladar were ready to roll,
And the docker delivered the box to the hole.
The robot avoided the stuff in its path,
Also neatly avoiding its two sponsors' wrath.

On Docker, on Tracker, on Ladar, on Vision,
The robot rolled on with uncanny precision.
To the door of the lab, to the side of the hall,
To put up the posters, to stay through next fall.

When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature Sparty, with eyes to strike fear,
Into children at sporting events, and, my Lord,
He's talking, controlled by a chordic keyboard!

There wasn't a sleigh in the sky on this night,
But an airplane flew by, and behind it, quite bright,
Was an ad for Design Day, that really looked great,
Designed by the talented folks on Team Eight.

The ding of a microwave oven foretold
That Team Seven's burritos were no longer cold.
The oven was run, to my undying horror,
From the web, by Bill Gates, making use of Explorer.

Team Five and its wireless sensors asked clearance
To tell Team Four, "Kill your EM interference."
Their comb source wreaked havoc on all other stuff,
And the rest had decided that they'd had enough.

And as morning sun spread its warm glow 'cross the nation,
The lab underwent an immense transformation.
The wires were tucked in their boxes with care,
And the lab was cleaned out, not a poster left there.

You'll note I said "cleaned out," not "cleaned up" instead...
The clean UP is Friday – hint, hint – or you're dead!
It's been a great year... at least, I'm of that mind.
There are more students next year – leave SOMETHING behind.

You may not have slept, but you look pretty wise,
Dressed up in your Sunday best, suitcoats and ties.
And 'cause of the well-prepared way you behaved,
The judges don't really care much if you shaved.

The votes are all in, now the judges have spoken.
You've packed up your projects, before they've all broken.
You've done well – you have all earned my congratulation!
And I hope to see all of you at graduation!